

WYRMS OF THE REALMS

KLAUTH

USING “OLD SNARL” IN YOUR D&D GAME



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WYRMS OF THE REALMS

KLAUTH

"OLD SNARL"

Enormous, arrogant, and powerful, Klauth – known as Old Snarl because of a jagged mouth scar – has long been a staple of gossip and rumors in the taprooms and taverns all along the northern stretches of the Sword Coast. The red dragon is ancient, perhaps older than any other red dragon on Faerun, and has moved erratically from lair to lair for centuries, rarely settling in one place for long, at least until recently. This movement kept Klauth ahead of would-be dragonslayers, powerful archmages, and others who would seek to put an end to his wantonly destructive appetites.

Klauth's chief concern has been other dragons, however. He earned a reputation for aggressively attacking rival dragons and showing barbaric ferocity in his attacks. When Klauth senses a potential threat, he pounces – in his youth this was physical, but now that he has aged, he takes more deliberate and calculated actions that are no less lethal and precise.

Klauth is a potent force in the background of the Sword Coast, where he uses his potent magical abilities to watch over those in positions of power to gain not only knowledge but wisdom over their actions. Combined with his impressive spellcasting abilities, tactical planning, and appetite for destruction, Klauth is a true terror to face. However, those that align their motivations with Old Snarl can find an ally with considerable resources and influence – assuming those motivations remain aligned.

LEGENDS AND STORIES

Klauth is over 1,000 years old, and has flown over the Sword Coast North for most of that time. The following are stories and legends that pertain to Old Snarl that a party of adventurers could hear or learn about with research and rumormongering. How much of the stories are true is left for history to judge.

THE GREAT RED THIEF

Stories of Klauth's fierce rage and physical brutality are common in the North, but lesser known are the tales of his stealth and cunning when it comes to robbing other dragons of their eggs. Klauth has always been an intelligent hunter, and he has the patience of a stalking panther when he finds a target.

The first story of Klauth's dragon egg stealing dates back several centuries. Pyrokrayseth was a large female red dragon who laired in the Nether Mountains. She served the archmages of Netheril long before the fall of that magical empire, and she escaped the wrath of the phaerimm with a good deal of magical knowledge. Pyrokrayseth courted several younger red dragons, and the impetuous and violent Klauth was among them.

Pyrokrayseth chose another as her mate, but the courtship wasn't Klauth's true purpose. He learned the layout of the older dragon's domain in the Nether Mountains and planned to steal the unhatched offspring. After the clutch of eggs was produced, Klauth put his plan into motion. He lured Pyrokrayseth's mate out by stirring up the local orc tribes in the mountains.

Klauth then snuck into the mountainous lair through a series of secret tunnels he learned by communicating with elementals of rock and stone. He slithered his impressive bulk to the back of the red dragon's lair, then used Netherese magic to distract Pyrokrayseth. The magic was enough to pique her curiosity, and in that moment Klauth snuck in and stole her eggs.

The rage of the mother red dragon was intense, shaking the foundations of the Nether Mountains, but she never suspected Klauth's involvement. It is widely believed that Klauth destroyed the eggs to prevent rivals from growing and challenging his dominance in the North.

BLOOD FROM THE SKY

Klauth's fierce aggressiveness has largely been focused on other dragons over the centuries. He hunts dragons, ambushing them in their lairs or when they least suspect it, and always making sure the advantage is his to seize. However, in 1360 DR, Klauth's arrogance nearly brought about his downfall when a group of three chromatic dragons banded together to take down Old Snarl.

It started simply with Klauth hunting for food in the foothills of the Rauvin Mountains, chasing down a flock of mountain sheep for his dinner. The ambush came suddenly, with two white dragons and a blue striking suddenly from hidden caves in the surrounding region. The area served as the domain of Irdrithkryn, the blue dragon that led the assault, a

fact that didn't bother Klauth when he went hunting.

The tricky Irdrithkryn, known as the Blue Bruiser by the dwarves of Citadel Feldbarr, had suffered a terrible loss at the claws of Klauth when the red dragon destroyed the blue's eggs. She convinced the two white dragons, Aerihykloarara and Ruuthundrarar, to join in the attack – the whites laired in the Sword Coast North region but had been terrorized on several occasions by Old Snarl.

The ambush caught Klauth by surprise, but the larger red dragon was a fierce opponent. The four dragons whirled, fought, and chased each other in an aerial battle that took them from the Rauvin Mountains, west over the Silver Marches, and into the inhospitable lands of the Spine of the World. Dragon blood rained from the sky as each of the combatants fought with fang, tooth, wing, and spell.

During the protracted battle, Klauth killed Aerihykloarara relatively quickly, but her mate and the powerful blue Irdrithkryn redoubled their efforts. The red dragon was severely injured as the blue and white dragons focused their powerful breath weapons and magical forces, blowing a hole in Klauth's side that was first frozen and then shattered by lightning. In the end, however, Ruuthundrarar and Irdrithkryn were defeated by Old Snarl.

Broken and limping, Klauth wasted no time in using magic to claim the treasure hoard of Irdrithkryn from the Rauvin Mountains. He then winged away to the Spine of the World and collapsed in a secluded valley. No one saw the great red go down but it was several years before anyone heard from Klauth again. The place he settled in became his permanent home, Klauthen Vale, and now holds the fabulous hoard of the powerful red dragon in deep enchanted caves.

SCARLET SAVIOR

Not all of Klauth's legends involve his appetite for violence and aggressiveness. One story tells of Old Snarl coming upon the ruins of an elven village in Cormanthor. Jhanandra, an elven sorceress, arrived in the village too late to stop the bandits from ravaging her village, and she clutched an orphan elf in her arms as Klauth flew over.

What possessed Old Snarl to take his next actions is unknown, but he gently landed and conversed in a peaceful tone with Jhanandra. Shocked and awed by the fearsome bulk of the great wyrm, the elven sorceress stammered that the only remaining family of the orphaned girl were in distant Evereska on the other side of Anauroch. Klauth then picked up both elves in his claws as gently as a mother cradles a newborn, and flew off to the west.

They sailed over Anauroch and Old Snarl delivered the two to the borders of Evereska. Klauth then took off into the night without more than a murmur. Jhanandra relayed the story to Volo some months later, who scoffed at the notion of the legendary red dragon undertaking such an unselfish act. That orphan never forgot the act of kindness that brought her to her family in Evereska, though exactly what happened to her is not known.

What brought the legendary dragon to Cormanthor on that night, to that burnt village, to see an elven sorceress and an orphan alone? Sages and bards that study dragon behavior believe it reveals a blind spot in Klauth's rough exterior, but others say the actions are too deliberate and out of character for Old Snarl to believe. Some say Klauth had ulterior motivations in the act, perhaps even being motivated by the whims of divination and prophecy, and that the truth may lie with that orphaned elf rescued from Cormanthor.

OLD SNARL'S PROPHECY

There is more to Klauth's destructive actions than just an ill temper. He is haunted by a prophecy regarding his own demise. The exact prophecy isn't known as Old Snarl has not shared it completely with any living being, but enough has been gleaned from his comments over the years to piece together an intriguing tale.

The prophecy says that Klauth's destruction will be the result of a "great red beast," and this vague reference is what has brought him into direct and violent confrontation with every red dragon he can find. There is also a part of the prophecy that says "blood of the unborn blood" will be Klauth's savior. The most literal interpretation of this has driven Old Snarl to hunt for dragon eggs, but none really know what the red dragon does with them when they're found. Most assume he smashes them or devours them, but the truth remains elusive for the time being.

As he's aged, Klauth's preoccupation with this prophecy has driven him to seek out other sources of the "great red beast" from across Faerun. He uses scrying magic to seek out powerful people that could fit the description, and he has learned to work with the sniveling Cult of the Dragon in the past few years to help him out. It is said that when Klauth sleeps he sees the words of the prophecy etched in fire in his mind, and that he dreads slumber because of the haunting vision that has only grown stronger as the decades march on.

LOTS AND GOALS

Alone in his vast lair in Klauthen Vale, Klauth watches the movements of the mighty and powerful across the Sword Coast. He is a cunning opponent and has a well-earned reputation for considering all possible outcomes in confrontations, with a developed strategy for coping with each of them. He is an apex predator but over the past century, Klauth has learned the art of patience.

That doesn't mean he's resting on his haunches, however. He has several overriding plots that consume his time and efforts.

FACING THE PROPHECY

Klauth is obsessed with the prophecy of his own destruction, and every major move he has made has been about thwarting that key event. When he sleeps, he sees the words of the prophecy dance in his dreams, flaming inscriptions that have grown more intense as the centuries pass. The words speak of his destruction at the hands of the "great red beast."

In years past, Klauth assumed this was a reference to another red dragon, which spurred him into conflicts with others of his kind. He ambushed rivals, attacked potential mates, and kept himself isolated from others of his kind in order to prevent the "great red beast" from getting the best of him. Many other dragons have fallen to Old Snarl's fangs, claws, and spells over the centuries, but the words of the prophecy have not been thwarted. Instead, they've become stronger.

Since settling into Klauthen Vale after the ambush by the two whites and one blue over a century ago, Klauth has started to reconsider his interpretation of his mysterious challenger. It must be some great and powerful creature to challenge one so mighty as Old Snarl. He has considered the imprisoned dragon queen Tiamat as a potential candidate, but after the Cult of the Dragon's recent failure to bring about her arrival onto Faerun, the wily old red dragon has reconsidered this notion.

If not Tiamat or another red dragon, what other creature fits the description of a "great red beast"? Klauth has come up with few answers. The recent upheaval in the Underdark, spilling demons from the Abyss, has forced him to look at extraplanar options as well. A balor from some primordial layer of the Abyss could be a "great red beast," or a mighty pit fiend general from the Nine Hells. Perhaps Asmodeus himself, Lord of the Nine Hells, an immensely powerful figure known to some of his followers as the Beast, could fit the description.

Nothing has rung true for Klauth yet, but he keeps waiting and watching.

SEEKING EGGS

Long ago when he was still a young dragon, Klauth learned an ancient Netherese ritual for extracting the life essence out of dragon eggs and transferring it to another creature. The resulting infusion of life energy revitalized Klauth in an intoxicating way, granting him more power and abilities than he would normally possess. It has also allowed him to stay fit and sharp despite his advanced age, as he is well over 1,000 years old and still very capable of defeating almost any foe.

In order to keep himself in top condition, however, Klauth needs dragon eggs. His experimentations has revealed red dragon eggs are the best, perhaps because of an innate compatibility with his own species, but other types have proven somewhat effective. He perfected the art of luring other dragons out of their lairs and then moving in to steal a clutch of eggs through the magic of rock and stone.

The ritual requires intense concentration and drains the life completely from the unhatched egg, but after it is complete the recipient is filled with vigor and renewed power. It's been quite a few years since Klauth has partaken in the ritual, but recently an elf ranger has come into his world that helps with this task. Cairel Flamedream was that orphan elf saved by Klauth over 100 years ago, now grown up, battle ready, and completely devoted to the whims of Old Snarl. Cairel goes out into the world and seeks dragon eggs, using her own team of elite dragon-obsessed elves to do the bidding of the great red wyrm.

DOMAIN AND LAIRS

In his younger days, Klauth roamed the Sword Coast North from the Spine of the World to the Graypeak Mountains. He maintained several hidden lairs throughout the land where he stored portions of his hoard, but it was scattered. Still, he had accumulated quite an impressive treasure hoard as he plundered the lairs of defeated dragon opponents over the years.

Now, Klauth has settled in one location – Klauthen Vale in the Spine of the World.

KLAUTHEN VALE

Klauth claims a secluded stretch of the Spine of the World mountains west of Raven Rock as his current home. Known now as Klauthen Vale, this isolated valley is kept warm by the fierce dragon's innate connection to the land. Cows, sheep, and rothe graze all over the lush grasslands and gentle meadows of the valley's interior, all serving as Klauth's primary

food source.

The rugged mountains that make up the valley's borders are riddled with caves, most large enough to accommodate Klauth's great bulk. He has established several ledges along the mountains that grant him amazing views over the vale and the surrounding regions. Coupled with his constant scrying from within an enchanted cave deep below one of the peaks, little happens in or around Klauthen Vale that Old Snarl is not aware of.

Which is fortunate, since rumors of Klauth's treasure hoard have spread far and wide. He has accumulated a massive stockpile of coins, gems, jewelry, and magic over his many centuries, much of which being claimed from defeated dragons. The treasure remains in a secret cave within Klauthen Vale behind an enormous boulder that can only be moved by one with the strength of Klauth. Elemental warding magic and bound dao genies protect the treasure cave from magical intrusions as well.

Recently, Klauthen Vale has been visited by a splint group of Cult of the Dragon members. Led by the ambitious Delsephine Shamor from Baldur's Gate, the cultists came aboard an airship called the *Scarlet Tooth* and prostrated themselves before the great red wyrm. Klauth, amused and having seen their coming for several days, agreed to let them dock their airship in Klauthen Vale and serve at his whim. He cares little for their lives but understands when having such pawns out in the world can be to his advantage.

For their part, the cultists are wholly devoted to Klauth and are willing to die serving his will. They were disillusioned after the Cult of the Dragon failed to bring about Tiamat's release from the Nine Hells, but they've found new purpose in serving the needs of Old Snarl.

AGENTS AND ALLIES

Klauth has long believed he can achieve his goals by himself, and to that end he is not afraid to get up and get his claws dirty with the tasks that need to be done. In the past few centuries, however, he has realized his own limitations, and has become keenly aware of his vulnerability especially since the attack that led him to Klauthen Vale over 100 years ago.

The great red wyrm still prefers to do his scrying on his own, but he has learned to work with a few select agents that do his bidding throughout the Sword Coast and beyond. He considers all of them disposable, however, and keeps an eye on their movements as closely as he would any enemy.

DELSEPHINE SHAMOR

Cult Captain of the Scarlet Tooth

The docks of Baldur's Gate have long been a haven for pirates, smugglers, cutthroats, and murderers, dating back to the earliest days of the city. Ships carrying goods, gained illicitly or through legitimate trade in the southern cities, sail along the Chionthar River, unload their cargo for good coin, and then spend that coin in the seedy taverns and brothels of the Lower City.

This is the environment Delsephine Shamor was brought up into. She was an orphan in the Lower City of Baldur's Gate, stealing food and money to scrape by while avoiding the attention of the larger thieves' guild that runs the underground operations. This plan worked for many years, but eventually she caught the attention of one of the Guild's kingpins and her days thieving in Baldur's Gate were numbered. Delsephine stowed away aboard a pirate vessel just leaving the harbor and used her natural acrobatics to impress the captain enough to not throw her overboard.

Delsephine learned how to sail aboard that vessel and proved herself a capable crewmember in a fight. Ruthless, determined, and not afraid to put a dagger in someone's back when they weren't looking, she spent several years pirating up and down the Sword Coast, making a name for herself and her pirate crew. Until one day, her ship came under sudden



attack by a black dragon while sailing near the Mere of Dead Men north of Waterdeep.

In the attack her ship was destroyed and the crew killed but Delsephine managed to survive. She was picked up by a passing vessel that happened to be ferrying a mysterious group to Luskan. They were Cult of the Dragon members, and Delsephine picked up on their identity quickly. She had been awed by the sheer power of the dragon that attacked her ship and she yearned to learn more. She joined up with the cult in Luskan, met the charismatic leader Severin who was taking the cult away from their dracolich ways of the past, and she never looked back.

Delsephine was given command of an airship by Severin himself and with it she and her crew ran secret supply runs between cult enclaves all over the Sword Coast. The ship was named *Scarlet Tooth* and they had a near perfect record by avoiding the conflicts going on across the North. Severin and the Cult of the Dragon were moving forward with their grand plan – free Tiamat from the Nine Hells by unleashing a titanic hoard upon a volcano.

The *Scarlet Tooth's* final mission from Severin was to contact Klauth in the Spine of the World and convince him to join up with the Cult of the Dragon. Delsephine and her crew sailed around the mountains and eventually stumbled upon Klauthen Vale by nothing more than Klauth's will. Old Snarl greeted the airship and the cult members with amusement but he agreed to let them serve him in some capacity. Awed by the mighty power of the great wyrm red dragon, Delsephine pledged her life and service to Klauth.

ORLO KAZZAREEK

Unhinged Dragonborn Sorcerer

Klauth has long held a fascination for sages of draconic lore along the Sword Coast. His aggressive behavior towards other dragons, cunning skill at stealing dragon eggs, and destructive power put him in a different league than other red wyrms, such as Hoondarh and Balagos. Old Snarl is also one of the oldest living dragons on Faerun so his breadth of experience cannot be discounted.

All of these factors and more made Klauth an obsession for Orlo Kazzareek, a dragonborn sorcerer studying at Candlekeep. Himself a descendant of red dragons, Orlo firmly believes his ancestry can be traced directly to Old Snarl, so the obsession is personal as well as professional. The dragonborn spent a decade poring over tales of dragon lore at the renowned library, cataloguing references to Klauth throughout the centuries.

DELSEPHINE SHAMOR

Medium humanoid (human), chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (studded leather)

Hit Points 65 (10d8+20)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Acrobatics +7, Intimidation +5

Damage Resistances fire

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Draconic

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Dark Devotion. Delsephine has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

Flourish. Delsephine adds her Charisma modifier to the damage roll for its scimitar attacks (included in the attack).

Sea Legs. Delsephine has advantage on ability checks and saving throws to resist being knocked prone.

Multiattack. Delsephine makes three attacks: one with her hand crossbow and two with her scimitar.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d6+6) slashing damage.

Shape Up, Ye Dog (2/Day). Whenever a friendly creature within 30 feet of Delsephine that can hear her misses with an attack, Delsephine can yell perilous threats to allow that creature to reroll the attack roll.

Orlo's fascination eventually caught the attention of Klauth himself. He was impressed with the level of knowledge the dragonborn had attained and watched with fascination through scrying and covert wingovers as the sorcerer fell deeper into an obsessive madness. Orlo eventually knew he had to meet Klauth in person, and he used potent magic to travel to Klauthen Vale. Old Snarl was waiting and confronted the dragonborn in an impressive display of aerial prowess.

Humbled and terrified, Orlo asked only to learn at the great dragon's feet. Klauth was amused and entertained Orlo for a few months, sharing crumbs of knowledge while learning more about the ambitious and now deeply obsessed dragonborn. Eventually, however, Old Snarl tired of the lesser creature and ejected him from Klauthen Vale using powerful spells.

The experience shattered Orlo's fragile grip on sanity. Hurling violently from Klauth's side, Orlo took his obsession to the next level. He wanted to become Klauth, to be as mighty and powerful as the great wyrm. The sorcerer used his extensive knowledge of Old Snarl's history to track down the Netherese magic used to absorb the life energy of dragon eggs. But the spell was incomplete.

Orlo is an unhinged dragonborn sorcerer looking for the lost pieces of the Netherese spell used by Klauth to wrench life from dragon eggs. Klauth still keeps an eye on the dangerous sorcerer as Orlo scrambles about the Sword Coast North hunting down any clue that can help unlock the secrets of the egg spell.



ORLO KAZZAREEK

Medium humanoid (dragonborn), neutral evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 104 (16d8+32)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws Con +6, Cha +9

Skills Arcana +7, History +7, Religion +7

Damage Immunities fire

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Dragon Wings. Orlo can manifest or dismiss his wings as a bonus action.

Fire Affinity. Orlo adds his Charisma modifier to any spell he casts that inflicts fire damage.

Metamagic (1/Turn). Orlo can tap into the weave of magic to produce an effect once per round when he casts a spell. He can choose to cast the spell as a bonus action if it has a casting time of 1 action, or he can reroll up to 5 damage dice if the spell inflicts damage.

Spellcasting. Orlo is a 16th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). Orlo has the following sorcerer spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *blade ward*, *fire bolt*, *light*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *true strike*

1st level (4 slots): *burning hands*, *chromatic orb*, *shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *Aganazzr's scorcher*, *invisibility*, *scorching ray*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell*, *fireball*

4th level (3 slots): *polymorph*, *wall of fire*

5th level (2 slots): *immolation*

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

7th level (1 slot): *fire storm*

8th level (1 slot): *incendiary cloud*

ACTIONS

Breath Weapon (1/Day). Orlo breathes a 15-foot cone of fire. Creatures caught in the blast must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, suffering 26 (6d6+5) fire damage on a failure, or half as much on a success.

Fire Bolt. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +9 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d10+5) fire damage.

Quarterstaff. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.



CAIREL FLAMEDREAM

Dragon Egg Hunting Elven Ranger

Many people have heard the story of Klauth rescuing the orphaned elf and transporting them as gently as a mother to their home in Evereska after bandits destroyed her home. The tale is true, but those that have studied the machinations of Old Snarl know there must have been more to the great dragon's act than simple kindness or sympathy.

And they would be right to believe that. Klauth was drawn to Cormanthor over 100 years ago by the burning words of the prophecy that haunts his vision. He didn't know why at the time, but when he came upon the ruined village and the two elves huddling together in the wreckage, Klauth knew the orphaned child was important to his own destiny. He conversed with Jhanandra and learned the elf child's only family were in Evereska on the other side of the Anauroch.

He picked them both up and flew them to the elven land, depositing them on the outskirts so as not to arouse the suspicion of the elven warriors. Klauth learned the name of the orphan before leaving – Cairrel – and the great red wyrm noted the event for future reference. The prophetic impulse satiated, Old Snarl returned north to his stomping grounds.

Cairrel grew up in Evereska but was marked with a vengeful streak uncommon in her kind. She had

CAIREL FLAMEDREAM

Medium humanoid (elf), chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (leather armor)

Hit Points 105 (14d8+42)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	21 (+5)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +9, Wis +6

Skills Perception +9, Survival +9

Damage Immunities fire

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 19

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Evasion. If Cairrel 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.

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

Mark Prey. Cairrel can use a bonus action to mark a target within 60 feet as her prey. She inflicts an extra 3 (1d6) damage on attacks against her prey. Cairrel senses the location of her prey as long as they are within 1 mile of her, and the target gains no bonus from cover or invisibility against her attacks.

Slayer. Cairrel inflicts an extra 7 (2d6) damage with attacks (included in the attack).

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Cairrel makes two attacks.

Flame Tongue Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (3d6+5) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) fire damage.

Longbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, range 150/600, one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8+5) plus 7 (2d6) piercing damage.

dreams of fire, which were equated to memories of the night her village burned, but Cairrel felt a stronger presence in that licking bonfire. She took the name Flamedream upon reaching adulthood, and though she was an expert hunter and tracker, she decided to strike out from Evereska on her own. Her path took her from wilderness to wilderness, unmoored by obligation or desire.

She grew sullen as the years went by, talking less and hating everyone around her. Cairrel firmly believed they were lesser than her, and she started to talk to the flames in her dream. She was quite surprised when they spoke back, and beckoned her north to the Spine of the World. Reluctantly, the elf ranger followed the directions, and eventually she came upon Klauthen Vale.

Cairrel met Klauth as dusk settled over the valley.

The massive red wyrm spoke gently to the elf, triggering long buried memories, and Cairel knew that she had found her purpose. For his part, Klauth found someone willing to do what he could no longer – hunt down dragon eggs. He imparted his vast knowledge of egg hunting to the eager elf who drank it up with a voracious appetite. Cairel had found her calling.

Cairel has been known to travel with a group of thieves and brigands in her questing for dragon eggs, especially red dragon eggs, for Klauth to consume. She never forms bonds with her companions, however, and considers them little more than disposable bodies there to absorb dragon breath and provide distraction. She has managed to bring Old Snarl a dozen eggs already and she has plans to do so much more in the future.

Klauth gifted his most prized hunter with a flaming shortsword from his vast hoard, a token of his appreciation – but also a means of control, as the weapon is directly linked to Old Snarl at all times. He uses it to communicate to Cairel through her dreams as well, encouraging her to succumb to her most violent desires.

TOOLS AND MAGIC

As befitting a dragon of his size and age, Klauth has rare and potent spells at his disposal along with a veritable arsenal of magical items in his hoard. In combat, his formidable dragon prowess is enhanced using magical wands attached at his wings. He never leaves Klauthen Vale without a pair of them mounted, usually a *wand of lightning bolts* and a *wand of paralysis*. Around his domain, he usually keeps a *wand of polymorph* and a *wand of fear* mounted and ready.

Klauth's use of magical wands is rare among dragons but it is not unheard of, and rumors say he stole the trick from Iymrith, a powerful blue dragon known as the Doom of the Desert. Along with the wand mounting capability, Klauth stole a Netherese trick from Iymrith as well that allows him to trigger both wands simultaneously!

Klauth's greatest magical trick is the Netherese ritual for leeching life energy from unhatched dragon eggs. The magical formulae is complicated but the Old Snarl has it committed to memory, or so he claims at least. Rumors persist that there is an ancient tablet from Netheril that contains the ritual details somewhere in Klauthen Vale, but if true the great dragon would have it well-guarded and likely away from his main treasure hoard.

The ritual is known to improve the vitality of the recipient for a period of time, assumed to be over

multiple tendays. Those who have studied Klauth believe he has a number of preserved dragon eggs hidden in his lair for emergency use, but his faithful elven ranger Cairel Flamedream is always on the hunt for more to bring to her savior.

RECENT ACTIVITY IN THE REALMS

Klauth remains passively active in the great events of the Sword Coast, especially in recent years. He has come to believe that a time of great change is upon all of Faerun, and he is every watchful for rise of the “great red beast” prophesized to bring about his own demise.

TYRANNY OF DRAGONS

The Cult of the Dragon's plan to release Tiamat from her prison in the Nine Hells has brought renewed interest and vigor to the old group. Their new leader, Severin, has recovered the five dragon masks necessary to break the seal, and the cult has made efforts to work with all of the known dragons in the North.

Klauth is visited during this time by Delsephine Shamor and the *Scarlet Tooth* airship, who come seeking Old Snarl's aid in the glorious campaign to return the Dragon Queen to Faerun. Klauth has no real interest in doing this – privately, he views Tiamat as more of an equal than a deity, but he is no hurry to prove that. Instead, he uses Delsephine and the cultists aboard the airship to help ferret out information from around the Sword Coast, and ends up sending them on random errands that keep them from the ritual at the Well of Dragons.

Characters may run into the *Scarlet Tooth* during this campaign as Klauth sends the cult crew to investigate an area in line with the party. Klauth certainly has an interest in possessing the dragon masks for himself but he is also careful to avoid arousing the full might of the Cult of the Dragon too early. He may even be convinced to help stop the ritual at the Well of Dragons by loaning some resources, but he refuses to go himself.

ELEMENTAL EVIL

The rise of the elemental cults in the Dessarin Valley proves amusing to Klauth, and their use of *devastation orbs* intrigues him greatly. He uses his scrying magic to watch over the activity of the group, especially the Cult of the Eternal Flame, and he finds the tiefling fire prophet Vanifer a fascinating if flawed

target.

Klauth may involve himself by privately sponsoring Vanifer or one of the other prophets. He may provide them the use of the *Scarlet Tooth*, or feed them key clues about the activity of the characters or other Elemental Evil cults. Old Snarl wants one of the *devastation orbs* for his own use, to study and replicate, and he's not above betraying a prophet at the right moment to get it.

A great wyrm red dragon with a *devastation orb* is hardly better than a crazed cult with one, but Klauth has no intention of squandering such a powerful item without forethought.

RAGE OF DEMONS

The release of the demon lords through the botched ritual in Menzoberranzan sends shockwaves throughout the entirety of the Underdark. The centrally affected region is directly below Klauth's lair, so he has a keen interest in keeping the chaotic demon lords contained – or at least redirecting their rage to one of his enemies.

During the course of the campaign the characters are sent into the Underdark by Bruenor Battlehammer of Mithral Hall in order to put an end to the demon lords. The undertaking could be quite large, and Klauth makes sure he has a well-placed magically enchanted spy in their midst. Perhaps Cairel Flamedream joins up with the party as a hunter and scout.

Klauth's agent is instructed to communicate back to the dragon at regular intervals as the faerzress energy makes scrying unpredictable and dangerous. The agent's goal is to monitor the situation and watch for anything particularly magical or powerful, and to steal it away at the earliest possible moment. Old Snarl has not been on the best of terms with drow in the past and he's not looking to make friends now, but an Underdark full of demon lords benefits no one but the demon lords.

STORM KING'S THUNDER

Klauth's airship arrives to help the party after they visit the Eye of the All-Father. Klauth knows about the sundering of the Ordning, and he is prudent enough to know that a concentrated effort of giants along the Sword Coast could mean bad

things for himself. Like most dragons, Klauth has a natural enmity with giants and he destroys them at every opportunity.

Particularly troubling to Old Snarl are the efforts of Duke Zalto at Ironslag to recreate the Vonindod, or "titan of death." This immense magical construct was used by ancient giants to fight and kill dragons, and if Duke Zalto is successful Klauth has much to worry about. He views the plots of the remaining giant lords as beneath his worry – he knows the *Ring of Winter* is nowhere near the grasp of the frost giants, he sees the petty antics of Chief Guh as too ridiculous to warrant a thought, the destructive machinations of the stone giants are focused on the works of civilization and thus beneath him, and the cloud giants are too scattered to be a real threat.

Never one to trust to luck, however, Klauth orders Delsephine and the *Scarlet Tooth* to help out the characters in their journey no matter which giant lord they face. He's not worried about the characters though, and if they come to his vale to collect on



their promised “payment,” Klauth is happy to flex his muscles and show them the truth face of destruction.

TOMB OF ANNIHILATION

Acererak’s Soulmonger in the depths of Chult is a curiosity to the long-lived Klauth. He has never been brought back from the dead so he has little to fear from the soul withering curse sweeping across the land, but the great dragon is fascinated by how the archlich created the device. The powerful magical wards and enchantments over Acererak’s tomb thwart even Klauth’s scrying attempts so he sends Cairel Flamedream to check it out for him.

Cairel can run into the characters while they travel through Port Nyanzaru before heading out into the jungle itself. The secretive elven ranger knows firsthand that to journey into Chult alone is a fool’s errand as she’s been through the jungle a few times in service to Klauth’s will, and she recognizes capable adventurers when she sees them. Cairel offers her services as a guide to the party and though she is selfish her interests line up with the group to begin with.

At the Tomb of Annihilation, however, Cairel’s true colors reveal themselves. She doesn’t want the Soulmonger destroyed but is instead interested in learning more about it from Acererak in order to report back to Klauth. Powerful though he is, Acererak is not yet at the heights of a great red wyrm like Klauth, and he recognizes the potential in the alliance. How this plays out is up to you!

WATERDEEP: DRAGON HEIST

Lord Neverember’s sudden departure from the position of Open Lord of Waterdeep drew Klauth’s attention immediately, and he surmised the fool had secreted away a tidy sum of gold during his tenure as the city’s de facto leader. He was right, but the dragonwards around Waterdeep and the power of the Blackstaff keep Old Snarl from entering the city itself.

The gang war between the Zhentarim and the Xanathar Guild means the city is preoccupied so Klauth takes the opportunity to send in Delsephine and her cultists to scope out the situation. They hone in on Lord Neverember’s son pretty quickly but keep their distance as the characters enter the scene. When a new tavern opens up in Trollskull Alley a cultist makes it his regular hangout in order to watch the party and see where they go.

How much Delsephine and the cultists interfere is up to you. They could ally themselves with the chosen villain of the story, offering their services and the backing of Old Snarl to the Cassalanter,

the Xanathar, Jarlaxle, or Manshoon in exchange for some knowledge. Klauth’s ultimate goal is not the gold in the Vault of Dragons but the destruction or dismantling of the dragonward over Waterdeep that keeps his kind out.

BALDUR’S GATE: DESCENT INTO

AVERNUS

Klauth has enough on Faerun to keep him busy, but even so the disappearance of Elturel becomes an intriguing bit of news he can’t pass up. Old Snarl has no love for devils of any kind nor any interest in saving Baldur’s Gate from being sucked into Avernus yet he recognizes an opportunity for profit and power when he sees one.

Klauth tries to lure the crazed dragonborn sorcerer Orlo Kazzareek to Baldur’s Gate with hints of secret knowledge contained within the now disappeared holy city of Elturel. Orlo unwittingly serves as Old Snarl’s pawn in the events, running parallel to the characters as they face the cultists of the Dead Three and eventually travel to the Nine Hells. Orlo can be found in Elturel searching for lost tomes related to dragonkind, specifically the great wyrms of the North, and his madness can cause him to see the party as allies.

Old Snarl has no interest in seeing Tiamat freed and serving as the new Lord of Avernus, and by extension Orlo has the same desires (as planted in dreams by Klauth of course). How far the deranged dragonborn goes is to be determined by the circumstances of the adventure and the other agents in the Nine Hells jockeying for the top spot.

MONSTER STAT BLOCK

Klauth is one of the oldest dragons on Faerun with a well-earned reputation for brutality and efficiency in combat. If a fight starts to go badly for him, Old Snarl is canny enough to seek the quickest way to end the battle, whether through tactical retreat or some cataclysmic action.

These statistics for Klauth incorporate some elements from [The Book of Dragons for 5th Edition](#) by Conner McCall, a fantastic resource that includes more options for making dragons unique and deadly.

KLAUTH

Colossal dragon, chaotic evil

Armor Class 24 (natural armor)

Hit Points 635 (31d20+310)

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft., fly 80 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
32 (+11)	10 (+0)	31 (+10)	20 (+5)	15 (+2)	24 (+7)

Saving Throws Dex +8, Con +18, Wis +10, Cha +15

Skills Perception +18, Stealth +8

Damage Resistances cold

Damage Immunities fire

Senses blindsight 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 28

Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven

Challenge 28 (120,000 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. Klauth's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 23). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

1/day each: *banishment*, *etherealness*, *find the path*, *locate object*, *prismatic spray*, *suggestion*

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

Special Equipment. Klauth carries a *wand of lightning bolts* and a *wand of paralysis*, and he wears a *ring of cold resistance*.

Spellcasting. Klauth is a 14th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 21, +13 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand*, *mending*, *minor illusion*, *prestidigitation*

1st Level (4 slots): *comprehend languages*, *detect magic*, *expeditious retreat*, *identify*

2nd level (3 slots): *darkness*, *detect thoughts*, *Melf's acid arrow*

3rd level (3 slots): *clairvoyance*, *counterspell*, *haste*, *nondetection*

4th level (3 slots): *greater invisibility*, *ice storm*, *stoneskin*

5th level (2 slots): *cloudkill*, *scrying*

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

7th level (1 slot): *mirage arcane*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Klauth can use his Frightful Presence. He then makes three attacks: one with his bite and two with his claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +19 to hit, reach 20 ft., one target. *Hit:* 22 (2d10+11) piercing damage plus 14 (4d6) fire damage.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +19 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d6+11) slashing damage.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +19 to hit, reach 25 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (2d8+11) bludgeoning damage.

Crush. Klauth throws himself at a target creature and lands centered on that creature's space. All creatures within the dragon's new space must make a DC 27 Dexterity saving throw; the target creature suffers disadvantage on the save. On a successful save, a creature is pushed to the nearest unoccupied space. On a failed save, the creature takes 50 (6d12+11) bludgeoning damage and is restrained by Klauth. Restrained creatures can attempt to escape as if trying to escape a grapple and if successful they enter the nearest unoccupied space.

Frightful Presence. Each creature of the dragon's choice that is within 120 feet of the dragon and aware of it must succeed on a DC 23 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 the dragon's Frightful Presence for the next 24 hours.

Fire Breath (Recharge 5-6). The dragon exhales fire in a 100-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 26 Dexterity saving throw, taking 105 (30d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Dual Wand Wielder. If Klauth is carrying two wands, he can use an action to expend 1 charge from each wand, triggering the effects of both wands simultaneously.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Klauth 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. Klauth regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

Detect. Klauth makes a Wisdom (Perception) check.

Tail Attack. Klauth makes a tail attack.

Wing Attack (Costs 2 Actions). Klauth beats his wings. Each creature within 20 feet of him must succeed on a DC 27 Dexterity saving throw or take 18 (2d6+11) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone. Klauth can then fly up to half his flying speed.

ENCOUNTER

Klauth can be introduced to almost any of the campaigns set in the Sword Coast. He is an immensely powerful figure with an intense interest in the goings on around him, and while his agents are few his impact on the region over the last few centuries cannot be denied.

The following encounter can be used to highlight Klauth's influence as the characters travel around the Sword Coast.

LAST EGG OF PYROKRAYSETH

Tier 2, any urban setting

The last remnant of Klauth's first dragon egg theft, stolen long ago, resurfaces in a crowded marketplace. The characters find themselves suddenly in the middle of a monster attack, but the real problem is happening behind the scenes. Can the characters track down the stolen egg before it falls into the clutches of Klauth?

SETUP

Klauth's goal of finding and consuming dragon eggs has been a driving obsession for much of his life. The first big theft he managed to get away with was from the lair of Pyrokrayseth, a powerful female red dragon that Klauth had courted with full intentions on stealing her eggs. He did so, sneaking in and getting away with the clutch of four eggs.

He performed the Netherese ritual that extended his life at the expense of the unborn dragon, feeling the surge of power and becoming intoxicated by it. He wanted to save these eggs so he magically preserved them for future use. Then, after his near fatal battle with two white dragons and a blue dragon, he was forced to crawl into a new lair. When he went to retrieve his hoard he found the last egg of Pyrokrayseth, preserved for over 500 years, was missing.

Klauth's rage was incalculable but in his weakened condition he couldn't track down the thief. Now, over a century later, he has time and a powerful agent, Cairel Flamedream, to track down eggs all over the Sword Coast. And he's placed special attention on the last egg of Pyrokrayseth, which has passed between multiple hands and finally ends up in the possession of Balwar Silverbeard, a down-on-his-luck dwarf merchant.

USING THE ENCOUNTER

This encounter can be placed in any city with a thriving marketplace in the North, including Luskan, Baldur's Gate, or Mirabar. The initial scene involves a trio of rampaging fire elementals causing havoc, which sets up a distraction for Cairel's hired thugs to steal the preserved egg from Balwar's wagon. The thugs hide out in the basement of a burnt warehouse elsewhere in the city, waiting for Cairel Flamedream to show up.

A lot of how this encounter plays out is up to the interaction of the characters and the events unfolding around them. If they choose not to engage with the scenario after the fire elementals are dealt with they unwittingly put a powerful item in the claws of a dangerous red dragon. It's still possible for Cairel to end up with the egg, especially if the characters don't recognize the significance of the item.

Assuming she survives, however, Cairel notes the presence and abilities of the characters for future encounters. She may end of needing their services for some future situation, or she may need to deal with them directly before they become too much of a thorn in Klauth's side.

RAMPAGE OF FIRE

The encounter begins in a crowded market on a bright day. Cairel Flamedream has hired on two corrupt gnome conjurers, Harren and Darren Muckaren, to cause a distraction. The characters are up to their own business, perhaps shopping for supplies or looking for a specific item, when the air is shaken by an explosion and a roar! Read or paraphrase the following to begin.

The noise and bustle of the marketplace is overcome suddenly by an explosion! Wooden beams fly and a gout of flame rises into the air as a primal screech erupts from the heart of the burnt building. The flames rise up and take on the form of three vaguely humanoid figures, large and comprised of crackling fire.

The three **fire elementals** are the result of *conjure elemental* spells cast by Harren and Darren Muckaren, two NE male gnome **conjurers** along with a broken *elemental gem* from a **veteran**. The three are a short distance away from the blaze and direct the elementals to burn everything in sight. The sudden appearance of the monsters throws organized militia or guards into a frenzy, so the characters must take a stand against them if they hope to stop the elementals from burning everything.

The real crime is occurring nearby, however. Balwar Silverbeard is a dwarf merchant transporting goods out his covered wagon. He's a short distance away from the elementals but still concerned about his wagon and the contents. That doesn't help him when four **veterans** knock him out on the third round of combat with the elementals, break into his wagon, and steal the preserved dragon egg inside. Balwar got a good look at one of them before he was knocked out, which can help in the search for the egg afterwards.

Harren and Darren were hired by a "red-haired elf with a mean snarl and intense eyes" to summon the fire elementals to burn as much of the marketplace as possible. They were told where to start but nothing else, and they were given the aid of the veteran to handle an *elemental gem* to help with the mayhem. The gnomes are cruel and selfish but ultimately interested in self-preservation, so they talk about what little they know if caught. For his part, the veteran was given the magical gem by an elf matching the same description and told to follow the gnomes.

HUNT FOR THE EGG

Once the elementals are dealt with, the gnome conjurers flee into the city if they weren't discovered during the battle. After a short time, Balwar Silverbeard stumbles into the party. He's a well-dressed mountain dwarf with a braided black and silver beard nursing a stinging head wound. He

HIGHLIGHTING THE PILLARS: RAMPAGE OF FIRE

Combat. The elementals stop their burning of the buildings and turns to engage hostile characters in melee. The monsters fight ferociously as directed by the gnomes who watch from a short distance away. For their part, the gnomes try to keep a low profile but if their cover is blown they let loose with magical spells and try to escape.

Exploration. It's obvious the fire elementals are targeting buildings to set them ablaze, and on a DC 16 Wisdom (Insight) check the monsters seem to be targeting nothing but flammable buildings and items. Seeing the gnome brothers direct the movements of the elementals requires a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check.

Social. The elementals are monsters that can't be bargained with, but the gnomes are not. Harren and Darren are selfish and willing to call off the elementals if their lives are in danger. The veteran is more dedicated and doesn't call off his summoned elemental under any circumstance.

explains that he was jumped during the elemental attack and someone robbed him of the only thing he had that was worth anything – a preserved red dragon egg. Balwar was hoping to find someone to buy it here and had made a few inquiries into the local wizard circles about it.

The dwarf did recognize one of the thugs that jumped him, a black-hearted mercenary named Bas Lankhorst hired by one of his rival merchants in the city from time to time. Balwar wants that egg back and is willing to pay the party for their trouble, though he doesn't have much gold. If pushed he could be convinced to cut them in on the profits from selling the item, though he only reluctantly agrees to this.

Balwar points the party to the Cheap King Tavern, a hangout for mercenaries and unscrupulous warriors, where Bas Lankhorst was known to frequent. If the characters are from the city they may know of this place anyway. The Cheap King is a rundown place in the shadow of a dirty alley, where the drinks are cheap and the talk is loose.

The tavernkeeper is Madam Mary, a one-eyed halfling woman with a mean streak a mile wide, but she talks if convinced with 20 gp or more. Madam Mary knows Bas recently got a job with a few other thugs and said it was going to be a "real hot one." They were hanging out in the basement of a burnt warehouse not too far from the Cheap King.

Cairel hired out Bas Lankhorst and a few of his cronies as she needed to move fast to get the egg from Balwar. Normally, the cautious elf ranger doesn't hire well-known locals but she needed the help quick and was willing to pay for it.

BURNT WAREHOUSE

Bas Lankhorst and the rest of the gang are hiding out in the basement of a burnt warehouse in the rundown portion of the city. Whatever blaze gutted the building happened months ago but hasn't been cleaned up yet, so it's become a popular spot for toughs and thugs to hangout away from the prying eyes of the watch.

There are two **veterans** hiding in the shadowy rubble of the warehouse on the lookout. If they spot someone suspicious, one of them heads downstairs to warn the others. They don't go anywhere together but one could be lured away from their post by an illusion or some other trickery.

The basement is a simple layout consisting of two rooms. The first is large and open, having long been cleaned out, with a few support beams propping up the crumbling ceiling. The second is behind a closed door. There are five **veterans** (one of them Bas Lankhorst) hanging out in the basement. They have the egg locked away in a chest in the back room, with

Bas Lankhorst holding the key. Opening the lock without the key requires a DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools.

If the characters observe the warehouse without being detected or leaving a trail of bodies outside, **Cairel Flamedream** shows up in the next hour to collect the egg and deliver payment. She learned it's best to pay hired thugs but to tell them as little as possible in order to keep them from blabbing about something they shouldn't. This time, however, the elf ranger is in a hurry and has been a bit more sloppy.

Cairel carries a *bag of holding* with the promised payment (100 gp gemstones, one for each of them). She moves quickly and efficiently to exchange the payment for the egg, which is about 2 feet long and weighs 50 pounds. The egg is dull red with dark spots over the shell and radiates a slight warmth at all times. A successful DC 14 Wisdom (Survival) check identifies it as a red dragon egg but under some magical stasis effect.

CONCLUSION

Do the characters recover the egg of Pyrokrayseth? Or does Cairel get away with it and return it to Klauth? The party likely has little idea of what they've stumbled into by meddling in Cairel's mission, which puts them on Klauth's radar. The powerful red dragon keeps an eye on the characters going forward and may move to thwart them at some future point, or lure them into a false sense of security by offering assistance at a critical moment.

HIGHLIGHTING THE PILLARS: BURNT WAREHOUSE

Combat. The veterans are flush with pride over their successful job and wade into combat with overconfidence. Cairel can show up during the combat to try and sneak in to get the egg, defending herself as necessary but trying to stay out of the way.

Exploration. The ceiling of the basement is weak, and if targeted with 5 or more points of damage can collapse onto a single target. The collapse buries the target, knocking them prone and incapacitated for one round.

Social. Bas Lankhorst is the de facto leader of the gang, and while he's not a smart man he realizes the value of the object they've just stolen. He offers to sell it to the characters for 1,000 gp, but can be negotiated down to 800 gp after some haggling and back and forth. Cairel is likely to stir up trouble in this case by inciting the veteran gang to attack.