



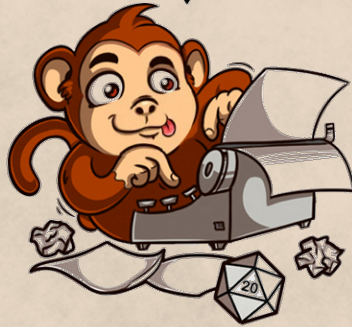
CHARACTER SECRETS

WATERDEEP: DUNGEON OF THE MAD MAGE

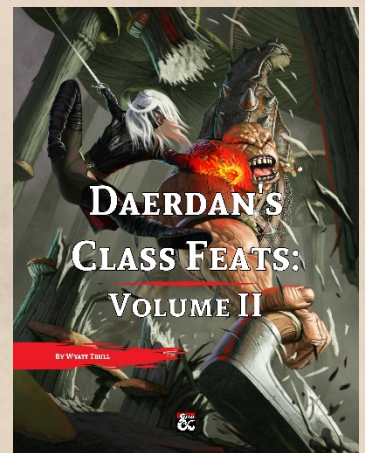
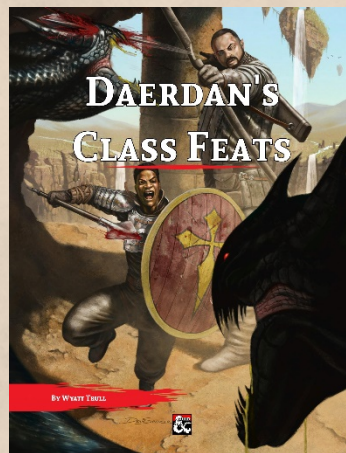
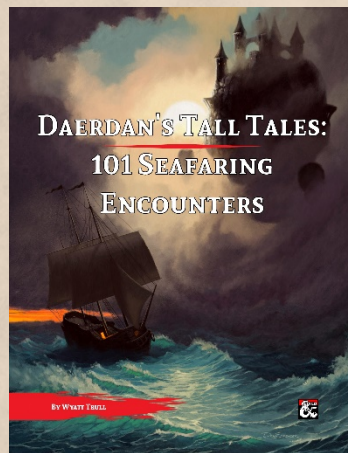
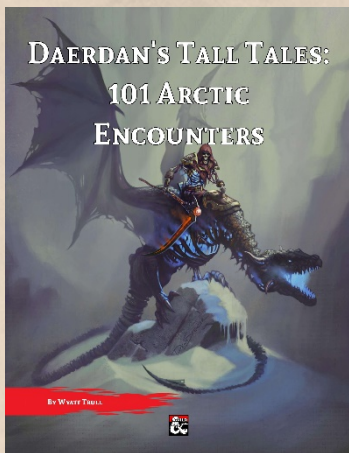
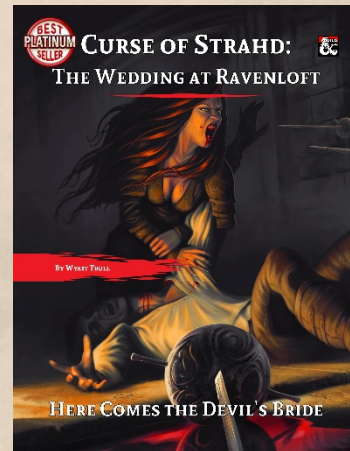
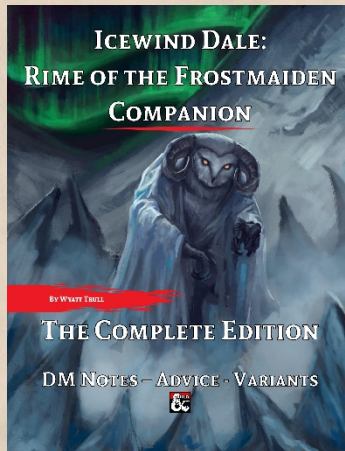


WYATT TRULL

WYATT TRULL PRESENTS



TTRPGs ♦ FICTION ♦ NONSENSE



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INTRODUCTION

Not everyone is an open book; most folk in this world are filled with shame and regret; player characters are no different. Some players even wish to embrace a checkered past when designing their character, but those details often have little to no relevance to the campaign, leaving it up to the Dungeon Master to incorporate or ignore those secrets. Cue Character Secrets: a lightweight system that enhances roleplaying and ties the past into the present with little work on the player or DM's part.

This supplement contains thirty-three secrets tied to the events, characters, and factions of *Waterdeep: Dungeon of the Mad Mage*.

WHAT ARE CHARACTER SECRETS?

First featured in *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*, character secrets are meant to foment distrust and intrigue among player characters. These secrets are more than just background information; instead, they can, and should, factor into the campaign. Some secrets are benign or outright helpful, but most are shames or secret regrets that should color a character throughout the campaign.

Some character secrets are wholly narrative in nature, having a direct impact on the secret-bearer's development or the campaign itself. Some secrets also grant mechanical benefits to the secret-bearer, such as a language, skill, or even a cantrip, just as they do in *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*.

DRAWING CHARACTER SECRETS

Appendix A of this supplement contains a printer-friendly version of the character secret cards that you should print, cut out, and shuffle into a deck.

Before the campaign starts, you should determine how many of the player characters should have a secret. This number is left to you, but it is recommended that they all begin with one. A player draws a random card from the deck and decides whether to embrace the secret or reject it. However, a secret may not fit the character that that player wished to play, or that character might fail to meet the secret's prerequisites. If the secret is discarded, the player draws another card.

It is perfectly all right if not all players wish to adopt a secret; however, they should keep the card and inform you privately that they won't be playing with one, so that the other players don't just rule out the possibility.

Likewise, it's acceptable if a player character reveals their secret immediately, guards it forever, or waits for a later occasion to reveal it.

ANATOMY OF A CHARACTER SECRET CARD

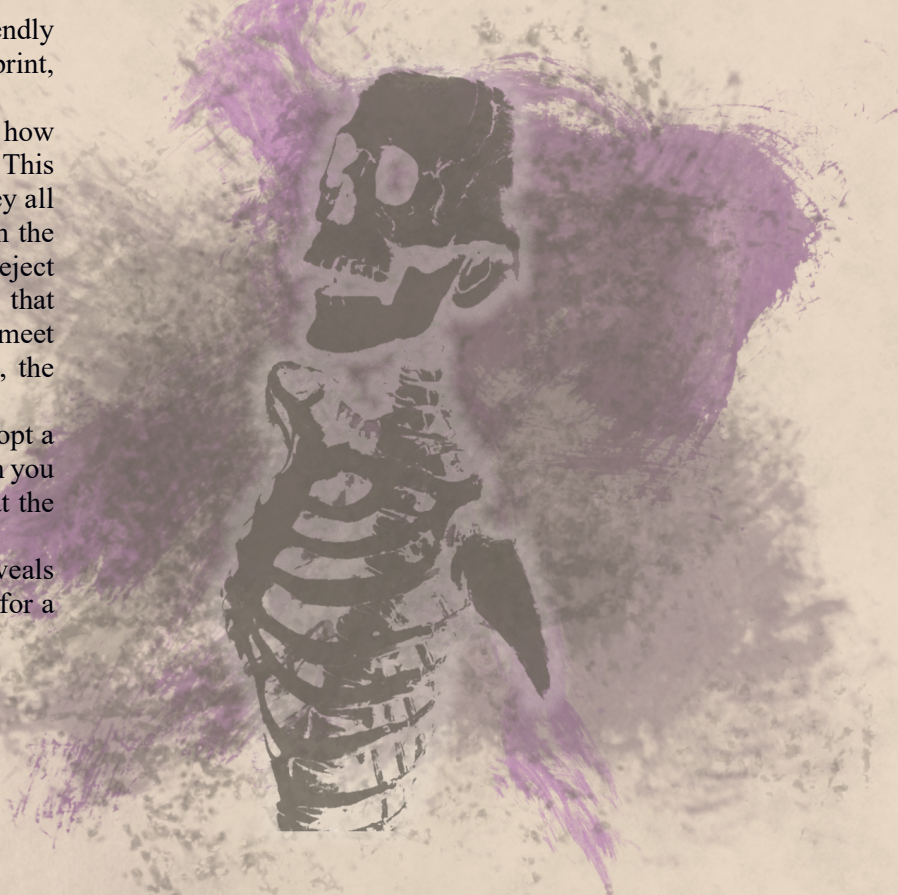
This supplement follows a formula for a character secret:

- **The Secret.** This section is for a player's eyes and briefly describes their secret. It is written in first person. This text is reprinted on the cards in Appendix A.
- **Additional Information.** A player can't help but retain details they glean; to prevent leaking too many secrets, some information is kept out of the player's hands until they commit to the secret that they drew. Not all secrets warrant extra information.
- **Using the Secret.** This section is for DM's; it describes how you can incorporate the secret in your campaign, be it by having certain NPCs react differently to the secret-bearer, by adding a twist, or allowing that person to bypass certain restrictions in the campaign.

SECRETS IN DUNGEON OF THE MAD MAGE

With but a few pockets of civilization in Undermountain, the character secrets in this supplement are centered on previous delves into the dungeon or acquaintances that are already inside. They are chiefly concerned with *why* the secret-bearer has decided to venture into the dungeon. As these secret-bearers have been in the dungeon before, and recently, they might have familiarity with some areas in the upper reaches of Undermountain.

Additionally, with *Waterdeep* being above the dungeon, a character's secret can be related to forces in the city, such as being an adulterer, fugitive, or criminal. See the *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist* edition of *Character Secrets*, as many are apt for *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*.





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CHARACTER SECRETS

The secrets are presented alphabetically:

A REAL BOY

I was nothing more than a wooden puppet fashioned by some foolish ventriloquist before the Mad Mage found and granted me life through a *wish* spell. The wizard did not, however, deign to grant me flesh, only an illusion to hide my true nature.

I count as a construct rather than a humanoid, except for the purposes of a spell of 1st-level or higher that restores hit points.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The secret-bearer's illusory appearance can be discerned through a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check made as an action. On a failure, a character can repeat this ability check once every 24 hours until they succeed.

USING THIS SECRET

After running into the secret-bearer again, the Mad Mage telepathically offers to turn the secret-bearer into a real person if they betray the other adventurers.

CONDEMNED CRIMINAL

I was convicted in the city of Waterdeep for crimes, but rather than languish in a prison cell or dangle at the end of a noose, I was condemned to Undermountain. Should I return to the city above, I will be put to death. A new and free life awaits me if I can find a passage to a land outside Waterdeep's jurisdiction.

USING THIS SECRET

The secret-bearer risks being arrested by the City Watch (whose officers have the statistics of **veterans**) whenever the party returns to Waterdeep to resupply. Two officers are drinking at the Yawning Portal the first time the party returns; they condescendingly remind the secret-bearer not to leave the inn. "There won't be a trial this time," one says with a smile.

CULPABLE ANIMATOR

Prerequisite: You must be an artificer or wizard. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret card.

I animated a suit of armor to act as my servant, but, in an attempt to grant it critical thinking, imbued too much self-will in the construct. After developing a taste for murder, it was chased into Undermountain by the Waterdeep City Watch. My hands are stained with the blood this construct has shed, and it is my duty to find and destroy it once and for all.

USING THIS SECRET

The animator's creation is an **animated armor**. It appears to attack the adventurers on Levels 2 and 5, as well as in Skullport. Every time it is destroyed, it is reassembled and gains a +1 bonus to its attack and damage rolls as well as 10 more hit points. Once the party reaches Level 9, the construct has become a **helmed horror** shaped in the visage of its creator. It speaks Common and can at last express its disdain for its creator. It can be destroyed twice more after this and continues to beleaguer the party until the campaign concludes or after it has been slain twice.

Surprisingly, the Mad Mage is not the source of the construct's newfound power but Trobriand, Halaster's apprentice. The tinkerer took a shine to the construct when he encountered it in the upper levels of the dungeon and taught it how to reassemble and upgrade itself.

CURSED SPELUNKER

I was struck with a strange malady when I last ventured into Undermountain: I can gain sustenance only by eating minerals, precious metals, and gemstones. It is for this reason others do not tolerate my presence in their party for long: sooner or later, I've devoured the loot. A spell of *greater restoration* can rid me of this malady.

To better secure my sustenance, I have a mining pick. A pound of rations is equal to one gemstone worth 10 gp or more, 50 cp, 25 sp, 5 gp, or a pound of raw minerals.

DISEASED ADVENTURER

I am cursed with an insidious disease that conventional healing and magic has failed to cure. With little of my life left, I have delved into Undermountain, seeking riches to leave behind for my family.

USING THIS SECRET

Wyllow (see Level 5) can purge the secret-bearer's illness but does so only if they wipe out the werabats (all of them, including the children).

DISHONORED LEGIONNAIRE

Prerequisite: You must be a bugbear, goblin, or hobgoblin. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret card.

I am a faithful officer of the Legion of Azrok that has been exiled in disgrace. A disastrous defeat against the drow was pinned on me by a rival after I discovered a growing conspiracy within the legion. I must save my lord and people from this shadow cabal, but to step back into the legion's territory is to guarantee my execution.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The secret-bearer is familiar with Stromkuhldur (Level 3), the Legion of Azrok, and the drow of House Auvryndar. Most of the legion's soldiers recognize the secret-bearer and consider them a disgrace or even a traitor. Only Kliyuse the Skull Cleaver, a hobgoblin captain, believes the secret-bearer to be innocent.

USING THIS SECRET

The legionnaires of Level 3 react with outright hostility to the secret-bearer; some even go so far as to attack them. If Kliyuse the Skull Cleaver (see area 17A) encounters the secret-bearer, and is convinced that they are here to help the Legion, he smuggles them into Azrok's Hold.

Unbeknownst to the secret-bearer, they have stumbled upon the illithid Ulquess's (see Area 21G) plot to implant intellect devourers into legionnaire skulls so as to control the Legion of Azrok. Once Ulquess learns of the secret-bearer's return, it sends four **goblins**, two **bugbears**, and a **hobgoblin captain** to quietly kill the secret-bearer. An **intellect devourer** infests the skull of each of these warriors.



DRACONIC DESCENDANT

Prerequisite: You must be a bronze dragonborn or a draconic sorcerer with bronze dragon ancestry. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret card.

My draconic lineage can be traced to Glyster, a bronze dragon that befriended Lord Vanrak of House Moonstar. As the rumors go, the two descended into Undermountain, never to be seen again.

USING THIS SECRET

During the confrontation with Umbraxakar on Level 18, the secret-bearer has advantage on Charisma checks to persuade the dragon into turning back from its dark and morose path.

DWEOMERCORE DROPOUT

Prerequisite: You must be an artificer, wizard, or sorcerer. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret card.

I once attended Dweomercore, the fabled wizard academy buried beneath Waterdeep and presided over by the Mad Mage himself. I was not up to task, and warned never to return, but if I just show the headmaster how much I have grown since my expulsion, surely he will reaccept me!

My time at Dweomercore has taught me two extra spells above the number of spells I know for my class level. The extra spells I choose must be of a level that I can cast.

USING THIS SECRET

The secret-bearer knows Dweomercore's layout and can navigate it with ease. They are aware of the fatal traps in Area 24. The Headmaster does not remember expelling the secret-bearer, hinting that Halaster does not actually preside over Dweomercore.

EX-CULTIST

I am a former member of a cult operating in the shadows of Undermountain. The cult's icon is tattooed somewhere on my body.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The secret-bearer belonged to the Vanrakdoom cult, led by the vampire cleric of Shar, Keresta Delvingstone. They know that Vanrakdoom was founded by the disgraced Lord Vanrak Moonstar, a Waterdhavian noble who fell from grace and rose as a death knight—before committing suicide in the year 1436 DR. They are also aware of the shadow dragon Umbraxakar, Vanrak's faithful friend and companion, who remains in Vanrakdoom.

USING THIS SECRET

The secret-bearer can navigate the halls of Vanrakdoom with ease but is unaware that the cult has melded the dungeon with the Shadowfell. Keresta and most cultists recognize the secret-bearer and reveal their affiliation.

FAILED SAVIOR

When a gaggle of Waterdhavian miners fell into Undermountain years ago, I was one of the spelunkers assigned to rescue them. We met our bloody end in that dungeon. Faced with monsters, I was forced to choose between saving the stranded or my own sorry ass. Much to my shame, I chose the latter.

USING THIS SECRET

The **manticores** of Level 1 recognize the secret-bearer and mock them for abandoning their charges long ago.

FINE FELLOW OF DAGGERFORD

I was once a card-carrying member of the murderous Fine Fellows of Daggerford, a cutthroat adventuring party that menaced the Sword Coast. The crimes we committed for the sake of gold, glory, and power are far too numerous and horrible for me to describe.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The secret-bearer is familiar with each Fine Fellow of Daggerford and can recognize them on sight. They consist of the following bastards:

- The craven human thief, Kelim the Weasel
- The half-elf cleric of Waukeen, Halleth Garke
- The dwarf thief, Copper Stormforge
- The human priest of Shar, Midna Tauberth
- The human warrior, Rex the Hammerer

USING THIS SECRET

The Fine Fellows react with distrust or outright hostility when they meet the secret-bearer. Kelim is likely to throw themselves at their mercy; Waukeen insists they redeem themselves by assisting him in his quest for vengeance; Copper flees and Midna insists by-gones ought to be by-gones. Rex, for his part, launches into battle.

FUGITIVE

I am a fugitive who escaped a Waterdhavian cell. With enough gold, my crimes can be forgiven, or at least forgotten, by the authorities. With a 5,000 gp bounty on my head, I must perpetually be wary for bounty hunters.

USING THIS SECRET

If an adventurer learns the secret-bearer's true name, they can attempt a DC 15 Intelligence (History) check to recall the secret-bearer's crimes, and, more importantly, that the Waterdeep City Watch has been put a 5,000 gp bounty on their head, dead or alive.

Inevitably, a LE human **blackguard** (see *Volo's Guide to Monsters*) named Daria enters Undermountain to track down the fugitive. Thanks to a seer, she has divined the secret-bearer's location in the dungeon. She is inclined to slay the secret-bearer and drag their corpse back to the city above.

If you do not have access to *Volo's Guide to Monsters*, Daria is instead an **assassin**.

GEAS VICTIM

The Mad Mage placed a *geas* spell on me when I last ventured into Undermountain. His instructions were to "Deliver adventurers into my domain and betray them at their weakest moment. Speak nothing of your curse lest you incur my wrath. You have but one month to deliver or else!"

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The secret-bearer's encounter with Halaster occurred 1d6 + 2 days ago, giving them just over three weeks finish their task. As described in the *geas* spell, a *remove curse*, *greater restoration*, or *wish* spell removes the *geas*.

USING THIS SECRET

Halaster periodically contacts the secret-bearer through telepathy to remind them of how much time they've left before the *geas* spell triggers, or insist they "do it" when the adventurers are weak.



HEIR OF MELAIR

Prerequisite: You must be a dwarf. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret card.

I am one of the many descendants of Melair, king of the Melairkyn dwarves, who settled Undermountain long before Waterdeep was even established. The legacy of my sires—of my people—lie buried below and it is up to me to bring its relics, art, and philosophies to the surface.

USING THIS SECRET

As an heir of King Melair, the secret-bearer can open the basalt doors in Area 15B of Level 6, much to the shock of Skella Ironeye.

HEIR TO MADNESS

Prerequisite: You must be a human, half-elf, or half-orc. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret card.

I am the secret child of Halaster Blackcloak. My distant guardian, Taselgryn Velldarn, spirited me away to an orphanage in Waterdeep shortly after my birth. Tas made infrequent visits over the years, but she left me with one warning: never enter Undermountain.

Because the blood of such a mighty wizard flows in my veins, I know one sorcerer cantrip of my choice. Charisma is my spellcasting ability for this spell.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The secret-bearer knows Taselgryn, the human archmage of Skullport, and that she has a *teleportation circle* linked to a Waterdhavian orphanage.

USING THIS SECRET

Taselgryn Velldarn (see Skullport) is shocked when she meets the secret-bearer and *demand*s they leave Undermountain immediately, even going as far as to shove them into her *teleportation circle*.

Halaster is mainly oblivious that his child has entered the dungeon, but once he realizes the truth, he vacillates between "testing" them ("The Heir to Madness must be mighty indeed!" he shouts) and showing them mercy. If the secret-bearer dies and there is no chance for them to be resurrected, Halaster casts a *wish* spell to reverse time, restore them to 1 hit point, and teleport them to the nearest safe haven. This magic catches the entire party, granting them the same benefits. The adventurers' memories are cloudy but they can all remember fighting and/or dying.

Inevitably, Halaster corners his child, *wishes* a *flame tongue shortsword* into his and their hands, and begins a duel. At the duel's zenith, he demands that they join him to "rule Faerûn as father and [son or daughter]." If the secret-bearer refuses, Halaster cuts off their hand.

ILLITHID THRALL

I am a mind-controlled thrall of a mind flayer colony that lurks in the depths of Undermountain. My mission is to deliver impressive heroes into my masters' clutches so that they too may serve the colony.

My repeated exposure to the illithids' psionic energy has granted me the ability to cast *detect thoughts* once per long rest and *mage hand* at will; whenever I cast *mage hand* in this way, the hand is invisible. Intelligence is my spellcasting ability for these spells.

USING THIS SECRET

The secret-bearer is frequently compelled to save their allies throughout the campaign—anything to deliver them to Seadeeps on Level 17. The githzerai of Level 15, Area 24 sense something off about the secret-bearer, whereas the githyanki of Level 16 and 17 are oblivious. The many illithids of Level 17 can sense the thrall's secret allegiance and clear a path to Extremiton, who thanks the thrall for their service.

MADDGOTH AND THE COMPANION

The infamous serial killer Maddgoth is only haphazardly featured in *Dungeon of the Mad Mage*. His return is necessary to make the most of the Maddgoth's Revenant secret. As it is recommended in the *Dungeon of the Mad Mage Companion*, written by the same author as this supplement, Maddgoth should return to his castle while the adventurers are exploring it during the events of Level 7.

If you utilize the *Companion's* changes, the adventurers are sure to know that Maddgoth is a cold-hearted killer. Likewise, Maddgoth will recognize the secret-bearer and know that there can only be violence. Skip Act II of *Maddgoth's Dance* and proceed with the battle tactics outlined in Act III.

MADDGOTH'S REVENANT

Prerequisite: You must be a wizard. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different card.

I was hunted by the wizard Maddgoth, a serial killer that targets other wizards for sport. The bastard defeated me in single combat, and, presuming I was dead, left with my spellbook and wand. Were it not for a passing healer, I would have succumbed to my wounds.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Maddgoth cozied up to the secret-bearer before launching his attack, as he does with all his victims. He mentioned that he would be returning to Undermountain "after 'this' was done" (he then attacked). Therefore, the secret-bearer knows Maddgoth lairs in the dungeon. Additionally, the secret-bearer's +2 *wand of the war mage* was taken as another trophy. The secret-bearer has since fashioned a new spellbook—but the original was irreplaceable!

USING THIS SECRET

The secret-bearer's spellbook is one of the many found in the lacquered desk in Area 25B on Level 7. Their +2 *wand of the war mage* is embedded in the plastered walls.

You can replace the +2 *wand of the war mage* with any other uncommon or rare wand.

OFFWORLDER

I am not from this world; I was brought here by a magical vessel known as *Scavenger* that prowled the void between worlds... but I was not a crewmate. Instead, I was kept as cattle for its mind flayer captain whose fondness for fresh brains necessitated the keeping of live prisoners.

The ship crashed in the depths of Undermountain; a sudden portal delivered me to Waterdeep.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A "crazed old man" stole the engine of *Scavenger* after it crashed in the dungeon. The secret-bearer doesn't know just how a spaceship crashes in a subterranean cavern but that hardly matters now. The ship's crew consisted of orcs and shapechangers. The secret-bearer's memories from before being brought aboard the ship have been scrubbed by repeated exposure to the illithid's psionic mind.

USING THIS SECRET

A spell of *greater restoration* returns the secret-bearer's memories. They recall that they were raised on H'Catha, a wheel-shaped planet ruled by beholders.

OOZE CLERIC OF GHAUNADAUR

I am a secret hierophant of Ghaunadaur, the deity of oozes and pariahs. My lord has bid me to visit Its shrine in the depths of Undermountain, where I will become one with the ooze, *fhinala-pehta-een-een-pa-pha! Paaa-pha!*

As I am the chosen of Ghaunadaur, I can cast the *acid splash* cantrip (Wisdom is my spellcasting ability for this spell), and I have resistance to acid damage. I can also periodically call upon Ghaunadaur to supply me with an oozeling in battle.

USING THIS SECRET

Thrice in the campaign, the secret-bearer can summon an ooze to assist them: the first ooze is a **gelatinous cube**; the second is a **gray ooze** with the Psychic Gray Ooze variant described in the *Monster Manual*; the third is a **black pudding**. The ooze appears in an unoccupied space of the DM's choice within 60 feet of the secret-bearer. After 1 minute, it harmlessly dissolves. To summon the ooze requires no action.

Although the secret-bearer may believe otherwise, the ooze was summoned by Halaster Blackcloak, who is also masquerading as Ghaunadaur, as described on Level 19. His ultimate goal is to trick the secret-bearer into willingly surrendering to the shrine in Area 12 of Level 19. If they do, he transforms them into an ooze through a *wish* spell. The character becomes an **adult oblex** under the DM's control. If you do not have *Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes*, the secret-bearer instead becomes a **black pudding** that retains its Intelligence, Charisma, and Wisdom scores.

POTENTIAL CONSORT

Prerequisite: You must be a druid, ranger, or Nature cleric. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret card.

I have been invited to the surreal court of the archdruidess Wyllow, an elven maiden who has grown lonely in her domain in Undermountain. She seeks company among Nature's champions and has offered her hand in marriage.

Wyllow's favor, even as a potential consort, has imbued me with a *charm of animal speaking*. I can cast *speak with animals* thrice, after which the charm disappears.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The secret-bearer was contacted by Wyllow spells of *animal messenger* and other magic.

USING THIS SECRET

As the secret-bearer learns, Wyllow has contacted other potential suitors, who may arrive while the adventurers are on Level 5. These other suitors are:

- Fostyr Goldveins, a N shield dwarf **priest**
- Serena of Oakhelm, a NG wood elf **druid**
- Grindel Elkhardt, a CE human **warlock of the archfey** (see *Volo's Guide to Monsters* pg. 219). Grindel is the sole survivor of the slaughtered Cult of Malar that once inhabited Wyllowwood. To avenge his fallen kin, he struck up a pact with the Queen of Air and Darkness. He has since masqueraded as a champion of nature to fool Wyllow.

PUBLIC FAILURE

What a fool I was to boast of my prowess to all who would listen. I bid the patrons of the Yawning Portal goodbye, insisting I would return a rich and powerful adventurer. Instead, I surfaced stained with vomit, shame, and the blood of my fallen comrades. My name has since become synonymous with "fool" and "failure." My arrogance cost the lives of four good adventurers.

USING THIS SECRET

The Yawning Portal patrons mock the secret-bearer and are fond of using their name as a verb. Even the taciturn Durnan expresses surprise when the secret-bearer returns to the tavern, remarking, "Didn't expect to see you here again."

Additionally, one of the secret-bearer's fallen comrades has become a **revenant** hellbent on vengeance. It attacks the secret-bearer on Level 6 or beyond.

RUINED PARAMOUR

It started as a tryst and ended with an attempt on my life. My affair with a Waterdhavian noble has driven me into the depths of Undermountain until a time comes when I can afford a ship to a new land. My assets have been taken and my belongings destroyed. With nothing but the gear I have now, I must secure a fortune in the dungeon below.

USING THIS SECRET

Once during this campaign, the adulterer's spouse sends an **invisible stalker** after the secret-bearer.

SHADOWDUSK INHERITOR

Prerequisite: You must be a human, half-elf, or half-orc. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret card.

I am a distant family member of House Shadowdusk, a noble house whose family manor in Waterdeep burned down years ago. A recent letter has informed me that they have sought refuge in Undermountain and that I am to inherit a portion of whatever wealth our ancestors were able to save.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The letter read, "Family is everything, and we must remain strong of heart and sound of mind in these dark times. Come forth, cousin, and be with us in the light. House Shadowdusk shall never fall."

USING THIS SECRET

The Shadowdusk family traffics with the Far Realms on Level 22. Periodically, star spawn and other horrors visit the stronghold. Some, such as star spawn seers, require a mortal vessel to inhabit. The secret-bearer may have been invited to be a sacrifice to the Far Realms. For details on star spawn, see *Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes* pg. 236.

SKULLPORT PEN PAL

I have maintained monthly correspondence with a citizen of Skullport for years. Their most recent letters described a brutal takeover by the Xanathar Guild. Desperate, they have bid me to the Port of Shadows and rid its downtrodden people of their cruel tyrants.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The secret-bearer has been kept up to date on the Xanathar Guild's ranks and operations up until a week before they descended into Undermountain. They are aware that the half-ogre Sundeth commands sixty bugbears, seventy humans, and at least ten duergar. Krystaleen's letters often lament, "if only the Skulls' minds were restored!" (this refers to the thirteen flameskulls that once ruled the port).

USING THIS SECRET

The pen pal is Krystaleen (see Area 13). If this secret is used in the campaign, she has been enthralled by the **mind flayer** that haunts Skullport. Eager for new blood (and fresh minds to devour), the mind flayer uses Krystaleen to invite distant pen pals to Skullport.

Once the secret-bearer arrives in Skullport, the illithid waits to see if they can help restore the port to its once-bustling way of life. Thereafter, it has Krystaleen offer the adventurer lodgings; in the dead of night, it enters their quarters to devour their brain. Krystaleen has three extra rooms in her home, but lies and says she only has room for the pen pal. If her lie is discovered, she explains that she isn't comfortable with so many strangers staying at her home overnight. She can easily be convinced otherwise.

TREACHEROUS ADVENTURER

This is not my first foray into Undermountain. Long ago, my comrades and I delved into this accursed place only to be whittled down by disease, famine, and monsters. The monsters were already there when we made it back to the Yawning Portal's entry well... and to save my own skin, I pushed my comrade towards the beasts and fled up the rope, leaving them all behind to die.

USING THIS SECRET

The **manticores** of Level 1, having cornered the party long ago, recognize the secret-bearer and mock them for their cowardice. They waste no time telling the other adventurers, "This one left their kin to die. And just as they did before, surely they shall again. Trust this coward only to leave you behind in the abattoir."

Additionally, two surviving members of the party reside in Skullport. They are a **duergar** named Dunmara Earth-trodder and a **drow** named Jegrius Daevykur. They team up to assassinate the secret-bearer upon learning of their arrival in town. They hire two **duergar** and a human **thug** to assist them in the attempt. Jegrius carries 75 gp and a ruby amulet shaped like a spider worth 150 gp.

TROLL CANCER

I survived on troll meat for a month while lost in the dark depths of Undermountain. By when rescuers found me, I had grown four extra fingers, a rash of tumors, and countless warts. It seems the regenerative capabilities of trolls are a curse all their own...

Because of my regenerative cancer, whenever I start my turn with 0 hit points, I am stabilized. If I take fire or acid damage, this trait doesn't function until the start of my next turn. A spell of *greater restoration* can rid me of this prolific cancer.

USING THIS SECRET

On Level 5, Wyllow recognizes the secret-bearer as the abomination that they've become and demands they leave her demesne.

TROVE-HIDER

Prerequisite: You must have an evil alignment. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret.

On a previous foray into Undermountain, I was forced to hide my trove of gold from allies and enemies alike. While I was away, my comrades perished in battle; I was too concerned to secure my fortune—but who wouldn't be when they've found a thousand *platinum* pieces?

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The trove is buried in a sack in Area 16 of Level 8, the "subterranean swamp" as the secret-bearer's party called it. Slitherswamp was occupied by yuan-ti when the secret-bearer was last there.

USING THIS SECRET

The trove has since become the lair of Hexacali, the **bone naga**. It consists of 1,000 pp, which is worth 5,000 gp.

When the secret-bearer digs up their treasure, the **ghost** of one of their fallen comrades appears to condemn them for abandoning the party. The ghost cannot rest until the secret-bearer is slain; if it is destroyed, it reappears in Area 16 again 24 hours later. It reveals the secret-bearer's crimes and then attacks. If the ghost has its way, it possesses the secret-bearer and slits their throat.

TYR'S REDEEMER

Prerequisite: You must be an aasimar, cleric, Celestial warlock or a religious paladin. If you don't meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret.

My divine mission, as ordained by my deity, is to delve into the depths of Undermountain and redeem Fazrian, an angel of Tyr that has fallen from grace.

USING THIS SECRET

The secret-bearer can sense a growing warmth as they delve deeper into Undermountain. They can sense if the angel is on their current dungeon level. This perception is a double-edged sword, for Fazrian can also perceive the secret-bearer's approach.

UNDERMOUNTAIN ADDICT

I cannot explain it, but I have fallen prey to the seductive call of Undermountain. Try as I might, I can't leave the dungeon for an extended period of time without getting the shakes. I only feel content inside Undermountain or the Yawning Portal.

While outside Undermountain, I must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw to gain the effects of a long rest.

USING THIS SECRET

Much like Halaster and other denizens of Undermountain, the secret-bearer suffers from withdrawal whenever they leave the dungeon. You can use this as a plot device to continue the campaign, even if the adventurers wish to leave the dungeon for good. They may be led to believe that a cure can be found, but, as the Mad Mage can attest, there is no such antidote that can overcome the Knot in the Weave's influence.

UNDERTAKER

I belong to the Undertakers, a disaffected group of failed actors who masquerade as vampires in Undermountain to scare adventurers into paying a toll. My mission is to lure fools from the surface into their clutches. Many have died or become impoverished because of our schemes.

I have proficiency in Performance and Deception.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The secret-bearer knows each Undertaker and that Uktarl and Harria have recently ended their relationship in the messiest way possible.

USING THIS SECRET

The secret-bearer may be roughed up by the Undertakers to hide their affiliation but is otherwise unharmed. If the battle turns south, one bandit shouts out, "Well, don't just stand there!" blowing the secret-bearer's cover.

VICTIM OF THE FINE FELLOWS

The adventurers known as the Fine Fellows of Daggerford murdered my loved ones and destroyed my livelihood. No longer content to be a sheep among wolves, I have come to Waterdeep to revenge myself on these monsters. Word has it that they have descended into the lawless depths of Undermountain.

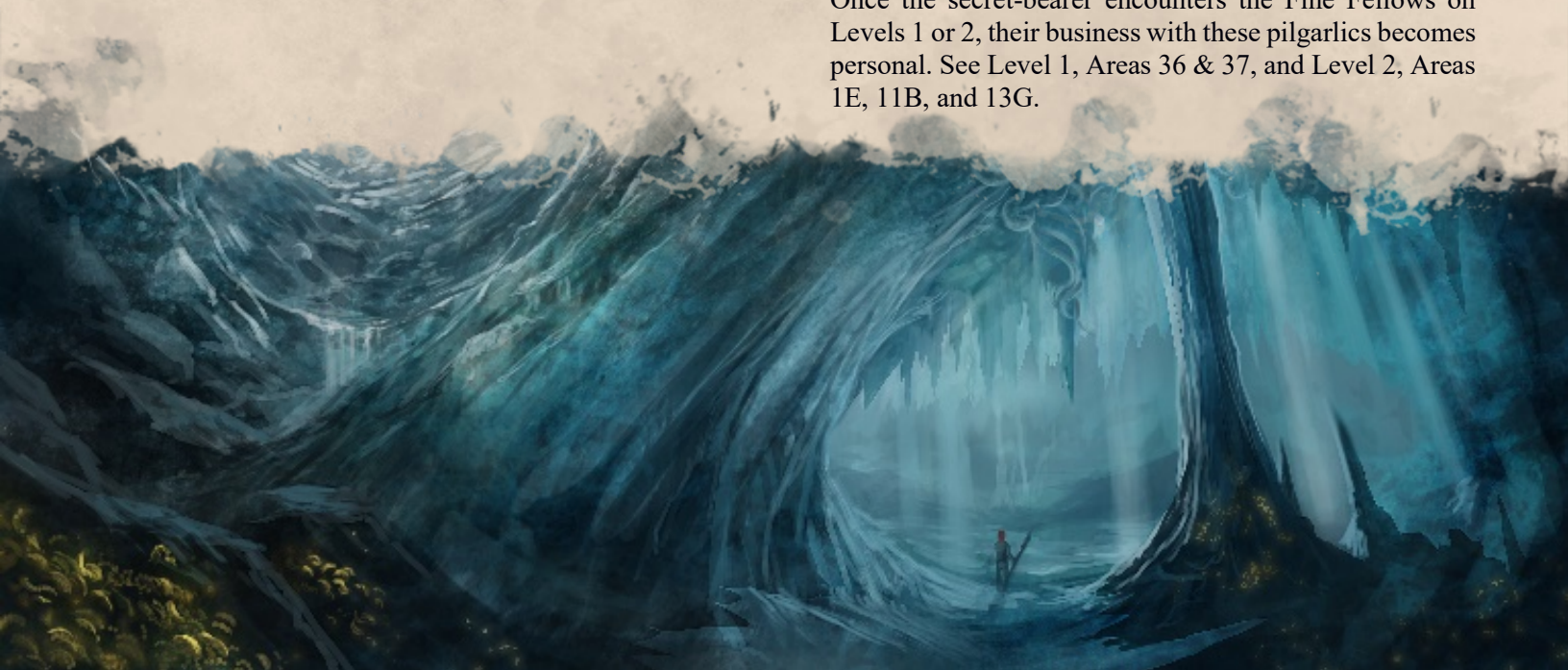
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The secret-bearer is familiar with each Fine Fellow of Daggerford and can recognize them on sight. They consist of the following bastards:

- The craven human thief, Kelim the Weasel
- The half-elf cleric of Waukeen, Halleth Garke
- The dwarf thief, Copper Stormforge
- The human priest of Shar, Midna Tauberth
- The human warrior, Rex the Hammerer

USING THIS SECRET

Once the secret-bearer encounters the Fine Fellows on Levels 1 or 2, their business with these pilgarlics becomes personal. See Level 1, Areas 36 & 37, and Level 2, Areas 1E, 11B, and 13G.



XANATHAR AGENT

I am a secret agent of the Xanathar Guild whose mission is to attach myself to adventuring parties determined to delve into Undermountain. If they grow too powerful or are inclined to oppose the guild's operations, my orders are to betray them at the most opportune moment. Failing that, I must report them to my superiors.

I know thieves' cant.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The secret-bearer has a tattoo of a circle with ten equidistant spokes radiating out from its circumference—the symbol of the Xanathar Guild.

The secret-bearer knows of three guild watch posts on the first floor of Undermountain plus two on the second level of the dungeon.

USING THIS SECRET

By brandishing their tattoo, the secret-bearer can secure safe passage through Areas 23, 28, and 39 on Level 1 and through Areas 9 and 20 on Level 2.

The Xanathar Guild inevitably orders the secret-bearer to murder the adventurers. If they refuse and defect, a goblin **assassin** is soon sent after them. The assassin has the following changes to her statistics:

- The goblin is Small, has a speed of 25 feet, and dark-vision out to a range of 60 feet.
- The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action.
- The goblin also reads, writes, and speaks Goblin.

ZHENT DRUGRUNNER

I have been sent into Undermountain to rendezvous with a Luiren spring cheese dealer in Skullport. This addictive drug puts halflings into a deep stupor; it is priceless and incredibly illegal. The Zhentarim is quite interested in smuggling it into Waterdeep.

I have been given 1,650 gp by my betters to pay for the cheese and I can expect a 750 gp reward for risking my neck to retrieve it.

I know thieves' cant.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The secret-bearer's contact is Gharz Stonedark, manager of The Worm's Gullet (Area 35).

USING THIS SECRET

As a Xanathar agent, Gharz is particularly paranoid, for he shall surely be killed if Xanathar learns that he has been holding onto such illicit contraband—and that he intends to sell it to the Zhentarim, the Guild's hated foes. If he suspects the secret-bearer to be a snitch or spy, he feigns ignorance over the deal. If he is confronted, he calls upon four **duergar** thugs to back him up—distant kin whom he trusts more than other Xanathar agents.



APPENDIX A: CHARACTER SECRET CARDS

You can print off the following simple cards for your players:

A REAL BOY

I was nothing more than a wooden puppet fashioned by some foolish ventriloquist before the Mad Mage found and granted me life through a wish spell. The wizard did not, however, deign to grant me flesh, only an illusion to hide my true nature. I count as a construct rather than a humanoid, except for the purposes of a spell of 1st-level or higher that restores hit points.

CONDEMNED CRIMINAL

I was convicted in the city of Waterdeep for crimes, but rather than languish in a prison cell or dangle at the end of a noose, I was condemned to Undermountain. Should I return to the city above, I will be put to death. A new and free life awaits me if I can find a passage to a land outside Waterdeep's jurisdiction.

CULPABLE ANIMATOR

Prerequisite: You must be an artificer or wizard. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret card.

I animated a suit of armor to act as my servant, but, in an attempt to grant it critical thinking, imbued too much self-will in the construct. After developing a taste for murder, it was chased into Undermountain by the Waterdeep City Watch. My hands are stained with the blood this construct has shed, and it is my duty to find and destroy it once and for all.

CURSED SPELUNKER

I was struck with a strange malady when I last ventured into Undermountain: I can gain sustenance only by eating minerals, precious metals, and gemstones. It is for this reason others do not tolerate my presence in their party for long: sooner or later, I've devoured the loot. A spell of greater restoration can rid me of this malady.

To better secure my sustenance, I have a mining pick. A pound of rations is equal to one gemstone worth 10 gp or more, 50 cp, 25 sp, 5 gp, or a pound of raw minerals.

DISEASED ADVENTURER

I am cursed with an insidious disease that conventional healing and magic has failed to cure. With little of my life left, I have delved into Undermountain, seeking riches to leave behind for my family.

DISHONORED LEGIONNAIRE

Prerequisite: You must be a bugbear, goblin, or hobgoblin. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret card.

I am a faithful officer of the Legion of Azrok that has been exiled in disgrace. A disastrous defeat against the drow was pinned on me by a rival after I discovered a growing conspiracy within the legion. I must save my lord and people from this shadow cabal, but to step back into the legion's territory is to guarantee my execution.

DRACONIC DESCENDANT

Prerequisite: You must be a bronze dragonborn or a draconic sorcerer with bronze dragon ancestry. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret card.

My draconic lineage can be traced to Glyster, a bronze dragon that befriended Lord Vanrak of House Moonstar. As the rumors go, the two descended into Undermountain, never to be seen again.

DWEOMERCORE DROPOUT

Prerequisite: You must be an artificer, wizard, or sorcerer. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret card.

I once attended Dweomercore, the fabled wizard academy buried beneath Waterdeep and presided over by the Mad Mage himself. I was not up to task, and warned never to return, but if I just show the headmaster how much I have grown since my expulsion, surely he will reaccept me!

My time at Dweomercore has taught me two extra spells above the number of spells I know for my class level. The extra spells I choose must be of a level that I can cast.

EX-CULTIST

I am a former member of a cult operating in the shadows of Undermountain. The cult's icon is tattooed somewhere on my body.

FAILED SAVIOR

When a gaggle of Waterdhavian miners fell into Undermountain years ago, I was one of the spelunkers assigned to rescue them. We met our bloody end in that dungeon. Faced with monsters, I was forced to choose between saving the stranded or my own sorry ass. Much to my shame, I chose the latter.

FINE FELLOW OF DAGGERFORD

I was once a card-carrying member of the murderous Fine Fellows of Daggerford, a cutthroat adventuring party that menaced the Sword Coast. The crimes we committed for the sake of gold, glory, and power are far too numerous and horrible for me to describe.

FUGITIVE

I am a fugitive who escaped a Waterdhavian cell. With enough gold, my crimes can be forgiven, or at least forgotten, by the authorities. With a 5,000 gp bounty on my head, I must perpetually be wary for bounty hunters.

GEAS VICTIM

The Mad Mage placed a *geas* spell on me when I last ventured into Undermountain. His instructions were to "Deliver adventurers into my domain and betray them at their weakest moment. Speak nothing of your curse lest you incur my wrath. You have but one month to deliver or else!"

HEIR OF MELAIR

Prerequisite: You must be a dwarf. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret card.

I am one of the many descendants of Melair, king of the Melairkyn dwarves, who settled Undermountain long before Waterdeep was even established. The legacy of my sires—of my people—lie buried below and it is up to me to bring its relics, art, and philosophies to the surface.

HEIR TO MADNESS

Prerequisite: You must be a human, half-elf, or half-orc. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret card.

I am the secret child of Halaster Blackcloak. My distant guardian, Taselgryn Velldarn, spirited me away to an orphanage in Waterdeep shortly after my birth. Tas made infrequent visits over the years, but she left me with one warning: never enter Undermountain.

Because the blood of such a mighty wizard flows in my veins, I know one sorcerer cantrip of my choice. Charisma is my spellcasting ability for this spell.

ILLITHID THRALL

I am a mind-controlled thrall of a mind flayer colony that lurks in the depths of Undermountain. My mission is to deliver impressive heroes into my masters' clutches so that they too may serve the colony.

My repeated exposure to the illithids' psionic energy has granted me the ability to cast *detect thoughts* once per long rest and *mage hand* at will; whenever I cast *mage hand* in this way, the hand is invisible. Intelligence is my spellcasting ability for these spells.

MADDGOTH'S REVENANT

Prerequisite: You must be a wizard. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different card.

I was hunted by the wizard Maddgoth, a serial killer that targets other wizards for sport. The bastard defeated me in single combat, and, presuming I was dead, left with my spellbook and wand. Were it not for a passing healer, I would have succumbed to my wounds.

OFFWORLDER

I am not from this world; I was brought here by a magical vessel known as *Scavenger* that prowled the void between worlds... but I was not a crewmate. Instead, I was kept as cattle for its mind flayer captain whose fondness for fresh brains necessitated the keeping of live prisoners.

The ship crashed in the depths of Undermountain; a sudden portal delivered me to Waterdeep.

OOZE CLERIC OF GHAUNADAUR

I am a secret hierophant of Ghaunadaur, the deity of oozes and pariahs. My lord has bid me to visit Its shrine in the depths of Undermountain, where I will become one with the ooze, *fhinala-pehta-een-een-pa-pha! Paaa-pha!*

As I am the chosen of Ghaunadaur, I can cast the *acid splash* cantrip (Wisdom is my spellcasting ability for this spell), and I have resistance to acid damage. I can also periodically call upon Ghaunadaur to supply me with an ooze in battle.

POTENTIAL CONSORT

Prerequisite: You must be a druid, ranger, or Nature cleric. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret card.

I have been invited to the surreal court of the archdruidess Wyllow, an elven maiden who has grown lonely in her domain in Undermountain. She seeks company among Nature's champions and has offered her hand in marriage.

Wyllow's favor, even as a potential consort, has imbued me with a *charm of animal speaking*. I can cast *speak with animals* thrice, after which the charm disappears.

PUBLIC FAILURE

What a fool I was to boast of my prowess to all who would listen. I bid the patrons of the Yawning Portal goodbye, insisting I would return a rich and powerful adventurer. Instead, I surfaced stained with vomit, shame, and the blood of my fallen comrades. My name has since become synonymous with "fool" and "failure." My arrogance cost the lives of four good adventurers.

RUINED PARAMOUR

It started as a tryst and ended with an attempt on my life. My affair with a Waterdhavian noble has driven me into the depths of Undermountain until a time comes when I can afford a ship to a new land. My assets have been taken and my belongings destroyed. With nothing but the gear I have now, I must secure a fortune in the dungeon below.

SHADOWDUSK INHERITOR

Prerequisite: You must be a human, half-elf, or half-orc. If you do not meet this prerequisite, draw a different secret card.

I am a distant family member of House Shadowdusk, a noble house whose family manor in Waterdeep burned down years ago. A recent letter has informed me that they have sought refuge in Undermountain and that I am to inherit a portion of whatever wealth our ancestors were able to save.

SKULLPORT PEN PAL

I have maintained monthly correspondence with a citizen of Skullport for years. Their most recent letters described a brutal takeover by the Xanathar Guild. Desperate, they have bid me to the Port of Shadows and rid its down-trodden people of their cruel tyrants.

TREACHEROUS ADVENTURER

This is not my first foray into Undermountain. Long ago, my comrades and I delved into this accursed place only to be whittled down by disease, famine, and monsters. The monsters were already there when we made it back to the Yawning Portal's entry well... and to save my own skin, I pushed my comrade towards the beasts and fled up the rope, leaving them all behind to die.

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