



Death's Claw



After a gruesome murder goes unsolved, characters are hired to investigate. When the murders continue, characters must race against time to stop a serial killer before it's too late. A Two- to Four-Hour Adventure for Tier 2 Characters. Optimized for APL 8.

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Adventure Primer

This section provides the adventure's background, a list of prominent NPCs, an overview of the adventure in play, and hooks that you can use to introduce your players' characters to the action.

Background

SIR ARDEM ROHAN is a Senator of **HILLSFAR** with a long history of racism against non-humans. Though Hillsfar revoked the Great Law of Humanity, which barred non-humans from entering the city, years ago, and non-humans now inhabit the city walls, Sir Ardem continues to hold a grudge, blaming all non-humans for his problems.

Unbeknownst to Sir Ardem, his unadulterated rage against nonhumans has resulted in the creation of a **BONECLAW**, a violent undead that is controlled and directed by Sir Ardem's rage. Over the past tenday, this Boneclaw has committed a series of heinous murders against nonhumans that have angered Sir Ardem. Unrest has grown in the streets, as more and more non-humans have appeared violently eviscerated.

Most of these murders have gone unreported, as they occurred in the non-human refugee camps and slums of the city. However, the recent murder of **VALVER BRIGHTGEAR**, a gnomish merchant tinkerer, has caught the attention of the city guard.

Episodes

The adventure's story is spread over three **story episodes** that take approximately 2 hours to play. These episodes are introduced by a Call to Action Episode. The adventure also includes two 1-hour **bonus episodes** that can be played if time permits, that are introduced anywhere in the adventure.

If you're planning to play the entire adventure at once, you only need to introduce the **Call to Action** once. However, if you plan to play them over several sessions, you'll want to revisit the **Call to Action** each time you play.

- **Episode 1: Homicide in Hillsfar.** The characters are approached by Guard Captain Scott, who asks them to investigate the murder of Valver Brightgear. This is the **Call to Action**.
- **Episode 2: A Tinkering Catastrophe.** The characters investigate Valver Brightgear's tinkering workshop for clues and discover information that points to Sir Ardem. Their investigation is interrupted when Valver's tinkered toys attack. This is **Story Objective A**.
- **Episode 3: Boneclaw Showdown.** The characters confront Sir Ardem, who flies into a rage and, in doing so, summons his boneclaw. Characters must

defeat the Boneclaw in combat and decide what to do with Sir Ardem. This is **Story Objective B**.

Bonus Objectives

However, this adventure also includes two, 1-hour bonus objectives that the characters can pursue if they have additional time to do so—earning additional **advancement and treasure checkpoints** in the process. These bonus objectives are found in this adventure's appendices, as follows:

- **Bonus Objective A: Raucous Robbery.** Characters intercept a robbery at The Cat's Nip, a local pet shop owned by tabaxi merchant Salt Crusted Barnacle, where Sir Ardem is caught in the crossfire. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 3**.
- **Bonus Objective B: An Unfortunate Incident.** On the way to update Guard Captain Scott about the murder investigation, characters find Salt Crusted Barnacle being attacked by the Boneclaw. This bonus objective is found in **Appendix 4**.

Episode Sequence

Depending on your time constraints, play style and environment, this adventure takes approximately two-to-four hours to play.

How Will You Play?

The duration of your session depends on how much of this adventure you utilize. At the very least, your session will last approximately 2 **hours**. However, if you wish, you can provide a longer experience for your players by utilizing the **bonus objectives**.

Story Objectives Only. To complete the both of the adventure's story objectives, the characters play in Episodes 1 through 3 in order.

Bonus Objectives. You can extend this adventure by **one- or two- hours** by utilizing the bonus objectives provided in the appendices. These objectives branch off Episode 1 and 2 (see the Episode Flowchart for more information).

The Boneclaw

A Boneclaw is born from pure rage and acts impulsively, targeting creatures based on its creator's anger. Sir Ardem is not aware that the Boneclaw exists. A Boneclaw cannot be permanently killed as long as its master is alive: it regenerates within 1 mile of its master after 1d10 hours.

Boneclaws are uncommon monsters and it is unlikely the characters will know about them or their traits. To help characters discover the mystery, it is recommended that you have the boneclaw grow in strength over time and retain marks of damage from previous fights (i.e. if the boneclaw is killed with an ax attack to the skull, it may bear a similar slash mark the next time it is regenerated).

Episode Flowchart

This section provides a basic understanding of not only the flow of the adventure, but also the outline of the different paths that your players may take in reaching their stated objective.



Episode 1: Homicide in Hillsfar (Call to Action)

Estimated Duration: 15 minutes

Scene A. A Murder Most Foul

Characters arrive at M&T, a bakery in Hillsfar owned by local couple Mia and Tia Thorent, after being summoned by Guard Captain Scott. Captain Scott informs adventurers of the recent death of Valver Brightgear, asks the adventurers to investigate Valver's house for clues, and requests they report any findings back to him.

Area Information

This area features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The main area of M&T is a spacious 30 x 30-foot room, with white tile floors and walls of purple wood. At the front of the store, an orange tabby cat (Cinnamon) sleeps lazily on the windowsill. Several tables with crisp tablecloths fill the space; a couple are occupied by patrons. At the back of the store is a large countertop and display case filled with a variety of pastries, with prices displayed on the back wall (**Error! Reference source not found.**). Behind the counter are Mia and Tia, eager to serve new customers. A door to leading to the kitchen is visible behind the counter.

Lighting. The interior is well lit, with stylish candles on each table and plentiful sunlight streaming in from floor-to-ceiling windows at the front of the shop.

Other Features. The room smells of warm, fresh baked bread, cinnamon, clove, and nutmeg waft out from the kitchen. The room is warmer than it is outside. There is a comfortable, calm atmosphere.

Creatures/NPCs

Mia and Tia Thorent.

Objectives/Goals. Mia and Tia are excited and eager to serve customers. While they don't intentionally add magic into their dishes, and can't tell characters how it happens, they may suggest characters try some of the more interesting desserts.

What Do They Know? Mia and Tia both know quite a bit of local gossip, but do not know anything about the ooze incursion.

Guard Captain Scott.

Objectives/Goals. Guard Captain Scott wants characters to investigate the recent death of Valver Brightgear.

What Does He Know? Captain Scott tells characters the following: Valver Brightgear, a gnomish tinkerer, was reported dead earlier this morning. The body was discovered by his downstairs neighbor, Ms. Daisy, who promptly called the guard. The body appeared to be badly eviscerated, with violence and gore beyond anything the Captain has encountered in his career. His officers were unwilling to investigate the scene further, so he contacted the brave-hearted adventurers. He provides the characters with the address and encourages them to go take a look for themselves. Valver's house and tinkering shop is located an hour away on the opposite side of the city.

Treasure & Rewards

Several pastries are available for purchase while characters are at M&T. Refer to **Error! Reference source not found.** for the full list. Certain pastries are infused with wild magic and have special properties. Unused pastries spoil after this adventure and lose their magical properties.

- **Granny's Apple Strudel.** Cost: 7 sp. Limit: 2 per adventure. Eating this strudel causes the user to *polymorph* into a squirrel for 10 minutes. Use the *cat* statistics from the MM.
- **Barovian Brownies.** Cost: 8 sp. Limit: 2 per adventure. The user experiences sounds of distant wolves howling and the flutter of bat wings for 5 minutes. No one else can hear these sounds.
- **Rainbow Cannoli.** Cost: 6 sp. Limit: 7 per adventure. Eating this cannoli causes the character's hair to become rainbow-colored. This effect lasts for 1d4 days.
- **Good Berry Muffin.** Cost: 9 sp. Limit: 4 per adventure. Eating this muffin takes an action and restores 2 hit points.
- **Lemon Lamington.** Cost: 8 sp. Limit: 1 per adventure. Eating this lamington causes the character's lips to turn bright yellow for 1d4 days.

Call to Action

- The objective of this adventure is to investigate the death of Valver Brightgear and uncover who, or what, murdered him.

Episode 2: Tinkering Catastrophe (Story Objective A)

Estimated Duration: 60-75 minutes

Setting Description

In this episode, the characters arrive at Valver Brightgear's workshop and investigate the scene of the crime. They encounter Brightgear's damaged sentry tinker toys in a brief combat and find clues implicating Sir Ardem.

Prerequisites

Episode 1 should be completed before beginning this Episode. If you are using Bonus Objectives, Bonus Objective A should also be completed.

Story Objective A

Investigating Valver Brightgear's workshop and discovering clues that implicate the Boneclaw and Sir Ardem is Story Objective A.

Area Information

This area features:

Dimensions & Terrain. Valver Brightgear's workshop fills a spacious 30 x 40 ft space. A curtain separates a small entrance area, filled with glass cases containing small clockwork art pieces, from the main apartment area and workshop.

The Workshop. The 30 x 30 ft workshop is a scene of carnage. An eviscerated gnomish body lays atop a blood-stained carpet at the center of the room. The walls are lined in work benches, display cabinets, and bookshelves filled with books on tinkering, mechanics, and gnomish technology. Covering the floor are broken pieces of metal and glass. A large clockwork statue, modelled after Valver Brightgear, is outlined against the opposite window. For more information on investigating the workshop, see Scene A.

Entrances. The 2nd story apartment is on a busy merchant's street, situated above an exotic flower shop. A set of rickety metal stairs zig zag up the rear of the building, up to the only entrance: a beaten metal door on a small metal patio. A small balcony with withered flowers overlooks the street, with a small door leading into the apartment.

Lighting. A pair of partially-curtained large windows sit beside each door, letting in dim light.

Scene A. Investigating the Workshop

Sentry Tinker Toys

When characters move within 10 feet of the body, Valver Brightgear's sentry tinker toys attack.

Sentry Tinker Toys

These tinker toys were built and programmed by Valver Brightgear to protect the shop from intruders. When the Boneclaw appeared and attacked Valver, the toys animated and attack the Boneclaw. Many of them were damaged in the fight, and several were destroyed in the combat, but they also managed to destroy the Boneclaw in the process. When the characters arrive, the remaining tinker toys begin combat with 75% of their hitpoint maximum. It is obvious to characters with a Passive Insight of 12 or higher that these toys are damaged before combat begins.

The clockwork and crystal minotaur statue (**minotaur living crystal statue**) animates, as well as two clockwork cobras (**iron cobras**) and 6 clockwork toys (**quadrones**). They attack until destroyed. The minotaur living crystal statue and iron cobras were damaged during the Boneclaw attack and begin the combat with half health.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak:** Remove the minotaur living crystal statue
- **Weak:** Remove 1 iron cobra and 3 quadrones
- **Strong:** Add 1 iron cobra and 3 quadrones
- **Very Strong:** Add 1 minotaur living crystal statue and 2 iron cobras.

Note: You may choose to describe any marks the Boneclaw takes from damage during combat (i.e. the iron cobra's fangs; the minotaur statue's embedded bits of crystal; the tinker toys ankle stabs). If players ask, these details can be used to help players tie these attacks together.

After this encounter, characters may choose to take a Short Rest, without affecting the timeline of the rest of the adventure. However, a long rest is not possible.

Investigating the Room

Characters may discover the following clues while investigating the room:

- A **DC 12 Wisdom (Perception)** check reveals a large pile of white powder near the body, surrounded by a dense pile of broken tinker toys.

- A **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation)** check made by a character looking at the tinker toys reveals the same white powder embedded in their attack implements (tiny swords, pincers, etc.)
- A **DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine)** check or **DC 10 Intelligence (Sickle Proficiency)** check reveals that Valver Brightgear's body was repeatedly cut to ribbons with a large, sickle-like blade. A **DC 15** check of the same type reveals it was done with a pair of large scythes.
- A **DC 14 Survival Check** reveals a pair of gouges (made by the Boneclaw's long scythe-like arms dragging along the ground as it walked) leading from the door to the body. These tracks do not lead out the door (the Boneclaw came into being inside the apartment, and then died in combat with the tinker toys).
- A **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation)** check made by a character investigating the workbenches reveals an Eviction Notice addressed to Valver Brightgear from Sir Ardem (See **Appendix 6: Player Handout 2**).
- A **DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation)** check made by a character investigating the clockwork statue of Valver reveals a small door in the statue's back. When opened, it reveals a space which could fit a small creature, with a series of handles and foot pedals that can be used to control the mechanical suit.
- The workshop contains a variety of tinkered art pieces and toys, which the characters may keep as trinkets. For more information, see the sidebar **Tinkered Treats**.
- While investigating the room, the characters discover a Weapon of Warning (Net), which is draped across the statue's back like a cape, with a small gear-shaped pin fastening it in place (See **Treasure & Rewards**)

Tinkered Treats

These pieces may not be used in combat and have no gp value, but may be used for roleplay purposes.

- A tiny clockwork beholder with a key in its back. When wound up, a tiny fan whirs loudly and it hovers ~6 inches above the nearest surface.
- A small clockwork dragonturtle coated in waterproof resin. When wound up, its flippers move back and forth, propelling the dragonturtle slowly through the water.
- A series of 6 tiny toy soldiers, which march forward when wound up. Each toy soldier is a different race in traditional garb: a female Underdark drow warrior, a swamp-dwelling lizardfolk, a fluffy tabaxi with an eyepatch and pirate

captain's hat, a tiny kobold with a lance riding a mastiff, a quaggoth with dark brown braided fur, and a larger fire giant with a flickering fiery shield.

- A small potted golden rose with interlocking metal pieces that appears to grow out of its pot when wound up. The pot is emblazoned with the image of a rising sun.

Treasure & Rewards

Weapon of Warning (Net) This iron chain net is of fine, gnomish make. When attuned to this item, the user experiences a fascination with tinkered contraptions. This item is found on **Magic Item Table F** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

This item can be found in **Appendix 7**.

Scene B. Ms. Daisy

If characters wish to speak to Valver's downstairs neighbor, they are greeted by a friendly human woman (Ms. Daisy). Ms. Daisy is a friendly human woman in her mid-fifties with a pale lilac apron. She is covered in several layers of dirt from tending her plants and setting up flower arrangements for her shop, Ms. Daisy's Dandy Pansies. Discerning characters may notice a small clockwork daisy (of the same design as Valver's) displayed prominently behind the countertop. She can tell characters the following information:

- Valver Brightgear has always been a friendly neighbor, if a bit odd. He moved in upstairs shortly after non-humans were let back into the city and has seen a small but steady stream of business.
- Sir Ardem recently purchased the entire building. He's always been pleasant to Ms. Daisy, but she overheard Sir Ardem arguing with Valver the previous night.
- If pressed, Ms. Daisy will say that Valver mentioned he had received an eviction notice, but was planning to contest it. She'd heard rumors that other non-humans in the building had received similar notices, but were planning to move out. Ms. Daisy did not receive a notice and neither did the other humans in the building.
- Ms. Daisy heard thumping noises in the apartment above around midnight, but thought nothing of it—Valver was known to keep odd hours. One of his customers discovered his body this morning.

Episode 3: Boneclaw Showdown (Story Objective B)

Estimated Duration: 45-60 minutes

Scene A. Boneclaw Beatdown

In this episode, the characters return to update Guard Captain Scott with their findings, and encounter Sir Ardem in a heated argument with Guard Captain Scott over the status of the eviction notices. Characters must intervene when the Boneclaw suddenly appears and attacks Guard Captain Scott.

Prerequisites

Characters must have completed Story Objective A before beginning this Episode. If using Bonus Objectives, characters should have completed Bonus Objective A and B.

Story Objective B

Defeating the Boneclaw in combat and evaluating the attacks with Guard Captain Scott is Story Objective B.

Area Information

This area features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The main area of M&T is a spacious 30 x 30-foot room, with white tile floors and walls of purple wood. At the front of the store, an orange tabby cat (Cinnamon) sleeps lazily on the windowsill. Several tables with crisp tablecloths fill the space; a couple are occupied by patrons. At the back of the store is a large countertop and display case filled with a variety of pastries, with prices displayed on the back wall (**Error! Reference source not found.**). Behind the counter are Mia and Tia, eager to serve new customers. A door to leading to the kitchen is visible behind the counter.

Lighting. The interior is well lit, with stylish candles on each table and plentiful sunlight streaming in from floor-to-ceiling windows at the front of the shop.

Other Features. The room smells of warm, fresh baked bread, cinnamon, clove, and nutmeg waft out from the kitchen. The room is warmer than it is outside. There is a comfortable, calm atmosphere.

When characters arrive at M&T Bakery, Sir Ardem is in a heated argument with Guard Captain Scott. Sir Ardem is trying to pressure Guard Captain Scott into

executing the eviction notices for his new building more quickly, while Guard Captain Scott is arguing that Hillsfar Law requires 30 days of notice before evicting tenants. As the argument reaches a boiling point, Sir Ardem screams out in rage and a **Boneclaw** appears, racing forward to attack Guard Captain Scott.

A half dozen civilians (**commoners**), including a mother and her two children, an elderly couple, and a woman with her two pet mastiffs, are inside the bakery, stunned by the appearance of the Boneclaw, and potentially caught in the crossfire.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak** Guard Captain Scott (champion) aids the characters in combat while the commoners evacuate. The Boneclaw can only make one attack on its turn and starts combat with 90 hp.
- **Weak:** Guard Captain Scott (champion) evacuates the commoners in 1-2 rounds and then aids the characters in combat. The Boneclaw can only make one attack on its turn and starts combat with 110 hp.
- **Strong:** The Boneclaw has 170 hp and Guard Captain Scott does not aid the characters.
- **Very Strong:** The Boneclaw has maximum hp (204) and Guard Captain Scott does not aid the characters.

Characters with a Passive Insight of 12 realize in combat that the Boneclaw's mannerisms mimic those of Sir Ardem. However, when the Boneclaw attacks, Sir Ardem does not appear to recognize it.

Note: You may choose to describe any marks the Boneclaw takes from damage during combat (i.e. the iron cobra's fangs; the minotaur statue's embedded bits of crystal; the tinker toys ankle stabs). If players ask, these details can be used to help players tie these attacks together.

Wrap-Up: Concluding the Adventure

After the battle, Guard Captain Scott asks the adventurers to tell him what information they discovered at the Valver Brightgear's workshop. He also asks for more information on the Boneclaw and listens to characters' information.

If characters implicate Sir Ardem in the murder and Boneclaw attack, Sir Ardem protests any involvement (and is telling the truth). However, the evidence is overwhelming and Guard Captain Scott will take Sir Ardem into custody based on the recommendation of the adventurers. Characters who accuse Sir Ardem gain the story award Ardem's Abhorrence (See **Appendix 8: Story Awards**).

If players are confused about the Boneclaw's lore, Guard Captain Scott may have this information and convey it to the characters.

Adventure Rewards

At the end of the session, the characters each receive rewards based upon their accomplishments. These rewards include advancement and treasure, and may include player rewards—magic item unlocks, story awards, or new downtime activities, as follows:

Advancement and Treasure Checkpoints

The characters receive **1** advancement checkpoint(s) and **1** treasure checkpoint(s) for each **story objective** **that** they complete, as follows:

- **Story Objective A:** Investigating Valver Brightgear's workshop and discovering clues that implicate the Boneclaw and Sir Ardem is Story Objective A.
- **Story Objective B:** Defeating the Boneclaw in combat and evaluating the attacks with Guard Captain Scott is Story Objective B.

The characters receive **1** advancement checkpoint(s) and **1** treasure checkpoint(s) for each **bonus objective** that they complete, as follows:

- **Bonus Objective A:** Stopping the robbery at the Cat's Nip is Bonus Objective A.
- **Bonus Objective B:** Defeating the Boneclaw is Bonus Objective B.

Player Rewards

The characters earn the following player rewards for **completing the adventure**:

Magic Item Unlock

Characters completing the adventure unlock:

Weapon of Warning (Net) This iron chain net is of fine, gnomish make. When attuned to this item, the user experiences a fascination with tinkered contraptions. This item is found on **Magic Item Table F** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. This item can be found in **Appendix 7**.

Story Awards

Characters playing the adventure may earn:

Sir Ardem's Abhorrence. Characters who participate in this adventure and accuse Sir Ardem of misbehavior get on his bad side. Ardem's memory is long, especially against those who sleight him, and he is not likely to forget their accusations. More information can be found in **Appendix 8**.

Dungeon Master Rewards

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn **advancement and treasure checkpoints** and downtime as though you played the adventure, but none of the adventure's **player rewards**.

However, this adventure may qualify for rewards earned by completing DM Quests. See the ALDMG (*Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide*) for more information about DM Quests.

Appendix 1: Locations & NPCs

The following NPCs and locations feature **prominently** in this adventure.

- **Salt Crusted Barnacle.** (CG Male Tabaxi) Salt Crusted Barnacle has long white fur which is braided in intricate patterns around his face. He has a sunny demeanor, but is quick to arms when threatened. He was once a sailor in the Moonsea, but retired to open a pet shop: The Cat's Nip.
Personality: Friendly, Wholesome, Caring
Ideal: "All animals should be protected and cared for."
Bond: "My adventuring companion, Squiggles (A Giant Octopus) deserves the best life"
Flaw: Can be overindulgent when caring for himself and his friends.
- **Sir Ardem Rohan (ser-ARR-dem ROH-han).** (LE Male Human) Sir Ardem is a Senator of Hillsfar, who expresses unabashed racism against nonhumans. This unadulterated rage has attracted a Boneclaw, which, unknown to Sir Ardem, has begun killing nonhumans.
Personality: Aristocratic, combative, humorless
Ideal: "Non-humans should be kicked out of town."
Bond: "My father served the glorious humans only regime."
Flaw: "Everybody persecutes me. I should prove them right!"
- **Tia Thorent (mee-UH THOR-int).** Mia and Tia Thorent are human females in their early twenties. They are partners and live together in a loft over their newly opened bakery. Tia is a master chef and Mia is a master decorator, and combined they make some of the most delicious, and unusual, treats in the region, infusing each dish with a little bit of love, and possibly wild magic, though unaware of their magical gifts.
Personality: Happy, free-spirited, and optimistic, Mia
Ideal: Creativity. Using any inspiration to make artistic and unique dessert decorations, icing, filling, and toppers. She is inspired by everything.
Bond: Mia Thorent. Has a soft spot for small animals.
Flaw: Overly optimistic and giving, she often expects the best in others and fails to see their flaws.
- **Mia Thorent (tee-UH THOR-int).** Mia and Tia Thorent are human females in their early

twenties. They are partners and live together in a loft over their newly opened bakery. Tia is a master chef and Mia is a master decorator, and combined they make some of the most delicious, and unusual, treats in the region, infusing each dish with a little bit of love, and possibly wild magic, though unaware of their magical gifts.

Personality: Hardworking, reliable, emotionally strong, grounded.

Ideal: Perfection. i.e. Baking the perfect bread, buying Mia the perfect gift, having the perfect bakery.

Bond: Tia Thorent. Has a soft spot for feeding the hungry.

Flaw: Can be stubborn and slow to consider other people's opinions, if she believes she is right. Blunt.

- **Cinnamon the Cat (SIN-na-mon).** Mia and Tia's cat Cinnamon is a large orange tabby, who enjoy napping on the sunlit windowsill, getting pets, and nibbling on leftover pastries. He is very friendly, and will rub on characters' legs and beg for treats (pieces of pastry).
Personality: Open and friendly, will manipulate characters to get the treats and pets he wants.
Ideal: Getting more treats and naps.
Bond: Loves Mia and Tia.
Flaw: Can be impatient when he doesn't get pastries or attention.

• M&T Bakery

Dimensions & Terrain. The main area of M&T is a spacious 30 x 30 foot room, with white tile floors and walls of purple wood. At the front of the store, an orange tabby cat (Cinnamon) sleeps lazily on the windowsill. Several tables with crisp tablecloths fill the space; a couple are occupied by patrons. At the back of the store is a large countertop and display case filled with a variety of pastries, with prices displayed on the back wall (Player Handout 1). Behind the counter are Mia and Tia, eager to serve new customers. A door to leading to the kitchen is visible behind the counter.

Half of the kitchen is well-organized, with a large oven, several vats for proofing dough, racks for cooling baked goods, and carefully arranged crates of baking supplies. The half of the kitchen looks like a glitter rainbow exploded on it. Pots of dyes are strewn around, with buckets of icing and fondant clustered around the base of a work bench. Drawings and paintings are affixed to the

wall, creating a sort of collage. A small stairwell leads from the kitchen to Mia and Tia's second-story apartment.

Lighting. The front room's interior is well lit, with stylish candles on each table and plentiful sunlight streaming in from floor-to-ceiling windows at the front of the shop, and skylights in the kitchen, which are partially open to let heat vent.

Other Features. The room smells of warm, fresh baked bread, cinnamon, clove, and nutmeg waft out from the kitchen. The room is warmer than it is outside. There is a comfortable, calm atmosphere.

Appendix 2: Creature Statistics

Assassin

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 15 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Saving Throws: Dex +6, Int +4

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

Senses: passive Perception 13

Languages: Thieves' cant plus any two languages

Damage Res.: poison

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

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

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

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The assassin makes two shortsword attacks.

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

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

Boneclaw

Large undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 127 (17d10+34)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Con +6, Wis +6

Skills Perception +6, Stealth +7

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common

Damage Resistances cold, necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, poisoned

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP)

Rejuvenation. While its master lives, a destroyed boneclaw gains a new body in 1d10 hours, with all its hit points. The new body appears within 1 mile of the boneclaw's master.

Shadow Stealth. While in dim light or darkness, the boneclaw can take the Hide action as a bonus action.

Actions

Multiattack. The boneclaw makes two claw attacks.

Piercing Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. Hit: 20 (3d10 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, the boneclaw can pull the target up to 10 feet toward itself, and the target is grappled (escape DC 14). The boneclaw has two claws. While a claw grapples a target, the claw can attack only that target.

Shadow Jump. If the boneclaw is in dim light or darkness, each creature of the boneclaw's choice within 5 feet of it must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or take 34 (5d12 + 2) necrotic damage.

The boneclaw then magically teleports up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space it can see. It can bring one creature it's grappling, teleporting that creature to an unoccupied space it can see within 5 feet of its destination. The destination spaces of this teleportation must be in dim light or darkness.

Reactions

Deadly Reach. In response to a visible enemy moving into its reach, the boneclaw makes one claw attack against that enemy. If the attack hits, the boneclaw can make a second claw attack against the target.

Champion

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 18 (plate armor)

Hit Points 143 (22d8 + 44)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +9, Con +6

Skills Athletics +9, Intimidation +5, Perception +6

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

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

Second Wind (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

As a bonus action, the champion can regain 20 hit points.

Actions

Multiattack. The champion makes three attacks with its greatsword or its shortbow.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d6 + 5) slashing damage, plus 7 (2d6) slashing damage if the champion has more than half of its total hit points remaining.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage, plus 7 (2d6) piercing damage if the champion has more than half of its total hit points remaining.

Commoner

Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil

Armor Class 10

Hit Points 4 (1d8)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Passive Perception 10

Languages Common

Challenge 0 (10 XP)

Actions

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* (1d4) bludgeoning damage.

Guard

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

Iron Cobra

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 13

Hit Points 45 (7d8+14)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)

Skills Stealth +7

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands one language of its creator but can't speak

Damage Immunities poison; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks that aren't adamantine

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

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

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.* Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or suffer one random poison effect:

1. Poison Damage: The target takes 13 (3d8) poison damage.
2. Confusion: On its next turn, the target must use its action to make one weapon attack against a random creature it can see within 30 feet of it, using whatever weapon it has in hand and moving beforehand if necessary to get in range. If it's holding no weapon, it makes an unarmed strike. If no creature is visible within 30 feet, it takes the Dash action, moving toward the nearest creature.
3. Paralysis: The target is paralyzed until the end of its next turn.

Tinker Toy (Quadrone)

Medium construct, lawful neutral

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 22 (4d8 + 4)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft.

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

Skills truesight 120 ft., Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Modron

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Axiomatic Mind. The quadrone can't be compelled to act in a manner contrary to its nature or its instructions.

Disintegration. If the quadrone dies, its body disintegrates into dust, leaving behind its weapons and anything else it was carrying.

Actions

Multiattack. The quadrone makes two fist attacks or four shortbow attacks.

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

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target.* Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Minotaur Living Crystal Statue

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points 136 (16d10+48)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	9 (-1)	16 (+3)	6 (-2)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Skills darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages: understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Damage Vulnerabilities force

Damage Immunities lightning, poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Immutable Form. The statue is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Actions

Multiattack. The statue makes two attacks: one with its greataxe and one gore attack.

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.* Hit: 17 (2d12 + 4) slashing damage.

Gore. *Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.* Hit: 8 (1d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Reactions

Flying Shards. In response to a creature hitting the statue with a melee weapon attack, the statue deals 11 (2d10) piercing damage to the attacker.

Appendix 3: Raucous Robbery (Bonus Objective A.)

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

Scene A. A Robbery Interrupted

In this episode, the characters encounter an ongoing robbery at the Cat's Nip, a local petstore owned by Salt Crusted Barnacle, while they are on the way to Valver's workshop. Afterwards, they hear Sir Ardem make negative comments about the owner.

Prerequisites

The characters must have completed the Call to Action before beginning this episode.

Bonus Objective A

Stopping the robbery at the Cat's Nip is Bonus Objective A.

Area Information

This area features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The Cat's Nip is a 25 x 40 ft pet store in a newly renovated district, roughly 2 blocks from Valver's workshop. It is kept immaculately clean, with animals of all types filling cages and play pens throughout the room. Tiny swings and ladders hang from the ceiling, with exotic birds flitting freely between the perches. A service desk sits at the center of the room, manned by a white-furred tabaxi. Behind the desk is an enormous pool of salt water, with a giant octopus happily playing in the water.

Lighting. Bright light is provided by lamps lining the walls.

Creatures/NPCs

Sir Ardem Rohan.

Objectives/Goals. Sir Ardem came to the store to pick up a special order of Chultan fish flakes for his home aquarium. He is frustrated with Salt Crusted Barnacle, as his order was expected to arrive a week ago but is not in stock yet, supposedly delayed by a pirate encounter near the Chultan harbor. He threatens Salt Crusted Barnacle to get what he wants and is enraged when he doesn't receive it.

Salt Crusted Barnacle.

Objectives/Goals. Salt Crusted Barnacle cares primarily for the well-being of his animals, especially his awakened **giant octopus** companion, Mr. Squiggles. Mr. Squiggles is the silent partner of the

business: he is intelligent, but very shy, and only talks to Salt Encrusted Barnacle.

What Do They Know? Sir Ardem has always been a high-maintenance customer, and is well known among the non-humans for his blatant racism. Salt Crusted Barnacle puts up with his verbal abuse because he needs the business, but he has come to fear Sir Ardem.

The Robbery

When the characters arrive, a pair of robbers (an **assassin** and a **champion**) are holding up Sir Ardem and Salt Crusted Barnacle at swordpoint. Salt Crusted Barnacle is handing over the store's gold, begging the robbers not to harm the animals, while Sir Ardem and berating the robbers and refusing to cooperate.

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak** The assassin and champion each make 1 attack and start with 3/4 hp.
- **Weak:** The assassin makes 1 attack. The assassin and champion start with 3/4 hp.
- **Strong:** Add 1 additional assassin.
- **Very Strong:** Add 2 additional assassins.

The robbers run away if half of them are incapacitated or killed. At the beginning of the 5th round of combat, 5 city guards appear to help arrest the robbers.

After combat, Salt Encrusted Barnacle thanks the adventurers profusely. Sir Ardem acts disgusted and blames Salt Encrusted Barnacle for everything, says that he should be put out of business "for good", and then storms out.

Appendix 4: An Unfortunate Incident (Bonus Objective B.)

Estimated Duration: 60 minutes

Scene A. A Very Bad Day

In this episode, the characters encounter Salt Encrusted Barnacle at the Cat's Nip, who is being attacked by Sir Ardem's Boneclaw.

Prerequisites

The characters must have completed Bonus Objective A and Story Objective A before beginning this objective.

Bonus Objective B

Defeating the Boneclaw is Bonus Objective B.

Area Information

This area features:

Dimensions & Terrain. The Cat's Nip is a 25 x 40 ft pet store in a newly renovated district, roughly 2 blocks from Valver's workshop. It is kept immaculately clean, with animals of all types filling cages and play pens throughout the room. Tiny swings and ladders hang from the ceiling, with exotic birds flitting freely between the perches. A service desk sits at the center of the room, manned by a white-furred tabaxi. Behind the desk is an enormous pool of salt water, with a giant octopus happily playing in the water.

Lighting. Bright light is provided by lamps lining the walls.

Boneclaw Attack

While characters are walking back to M&T Bakery to update Guard Captain Scott, they encounter another ruckus at the Cat's Paw: this time, Salt Encrusted Barnacle is being attacked by Sir Ardem's **Boneclaw**, manifesting from Sir Ardem's rage earlier that day. In combat, the Boneclaw focuses all of its attacks on

Salt Encrusted Barnacle, only attacking characters if they get in its way or it otherwise cannot attack Salt Encrusted Barnacle. If any characters angered Sir Ardem in **Bonus Objective A**, the boneclaw will prioritize attacking them. Mr. Squiggles (**giant octopus**) will enter combat to protect Salt Encrusted Barnacle, if necessary. When the boneclaw dies, it disintegrates into a pile of white dust (bone powder).

Adjusting the Scene

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this scene:

- **Very Weak** The Boneclaw has 90 hp and only makes 1 claw attack.
- **Weak:** The Boneclaw has 90 hp.
- **Strong:** The Boneclaw has 170 hp.
- **Very Strong:** The Boneclaw has maximum hp (204).

Note: You may choose to describe any marks the Boneclaw takes from damage during combat (i.e. the iron cobra's fangs; the minotaur statue's embedded bits of crystal; the tinker toys ankle stabs). If players ask, these details can be used to help players tie these attacks together.

After characters defeat the Boneclaw, it disintegrates into a pile of white powder, identical to the powder the characters saw in Valver's apartment in Episode 2.

Salt Encrusted Barnacle profusely thanks the characters for their help. He offers to let them come back to the pet store whenever they like, to relax and play with the animals. Creatures of note include Zelfie the exotic parrot, Visssper the flying snake, Snoofle and Floofle the almiraj twins, Bumper the tressym, and Goober the owlbear cub.

Appendix 5: M&T Bakery Menu (Player Handout 1)

<i>Mia & Tia's Pastries</i>	
<i>Granny's Apple Strudel</i>	<i>7 sp</i>
<i>Cinnamon Squares (4 pc)</i>	<i>2 sp</i>
<i>Barovian Brownies</i>	<i>8 sp</i>
<i>Rainbow Cannoli</i>	<i>6 sp</i>
<i>Mini Chocolate Puffs (2 pc)</i>	<i>4 sp</i>
<i>Empire Tart</i>	<i>5 sp</i>
<i>Fried Sugar Cake</i>	<i>4 sp</i>
<i>Good Berry Muffin</i>	<i>6 sp</i>
<i>Lemon Lamington</i>	<i>8 sp</i>
<i>Orange Biscuits (4 pc)</i>	<i>5 sp</i>

A decorative flourish consisting of two symmetrical, flowing purple lines that curve upwards and outwards from a central point, resembling stylized wings or a flourish.

Appendix 6: Eviction Notice (Player Handout 2)

To: Valver Brightgear

The premises herein referred to is located in the City of Hillsfar designated by the number and street as 73 Silverleaf Street, Apt 112B.

This address and attached building is now owned by Sir Ardem Rohan, as of Alturiak 12 of this year.

In accordance with your lease agreement and the laws of Hillsfar after service on you of this notice, you are hereby required within 10 days of today's date (Alturiak 15) to vacate your residence.

Any prepaid rent will not be returned to you. This notice cannot be contested in a court of law, as in accordance to Hillsfar Law 17.2.00.13: Change of Owner: Eviction Policy.

If you have not exited the premises by Alturiak 25, you will be forcibly removed in accordance with Hillsfar's Housing Policy.

Regards,

Emma Jones

Emma Jones
Hillsfar Notary
Alturiak 14

Appendix 7: Magic Item

Characters completing this adventure's objective unlock this magic item.

Weapon of Warning (Net) (Table F)

This iron chain net is of fine, gnomish make. When attuned to this item, the user experiences a fascination with tinkered contraptions. This item is found on **Magic Item Table F** in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Appendix 8: Story Awards

During this adventure, the characters may earn the following story award:

Sir Ardem's Abhorrence. Characters who participate in this adventure and accuse Sir Ardem of misbehavior get on his bad side. Ardem's memory is long, especially against those who sleight him, and he is not likely to forget their accusations.

Appendix 9: Dungeon Master Tips

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st-4th level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 3**. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

New to D&D Adventurers League?

<http://dnd.wizards.com/playevents/organized-play>

New to the Annual Storyline?

<http://dnd.wizards.com/story/waterdeep>

<http://dndadventurersleague.org/storyline-seasons/waterdeep-adventures/>

To DM an adventure, you **must** have 3 to 7 players—each with their own character whose level is within the adventure’s level range. Characters playing in a **hardcover** adventure may continue to play to but if they play a different hardcover adventure, they **can’t return** to the first one if they’re outside its level range.

Preparing the Adventure

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you’d like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you’d like to portray an NPC or a tactic you’d like to use in a combat. Familiar yourself with the adventure’s appendices and handouts.
- Gather any resources you’d like to use to aid you in running this adventure—such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Players can play an adventure they previously played as a Player or Dungeon Master, but may only play it once with a given character. Ensure each player has their character’s adventure logsheet (if not, get one from the organizer). The players fill out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for advancement and treasure checkpoints, downtime days, and renown. These values are updated at the conclusion of the session.

Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet. If you have time, you can do a quick scan of a player’s character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask players to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array.

Point players to the D&D Adventurers League Players Guide for reference. If players wish to spend downtime days and it’s the beginning of an adventure or episode, they can declare their activity and spend the days now, or they can do so at the end of the adventure or episode. Players should select their characters’ spells and other daily options prior to the start of the adventure, unless the adventure specifies otherwise. Feel free to reread the adventure description to help give players hints about what they might face.

Adjusting This Adventure

When combat is a possibility, the adventure will provide a sidebar that helps you to determine the best mix/number of opponents to provide them with to create an appropriate challenge. While you’re not bound to these adjustments; they’re here for your convenience and consideration.

To determine whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the result by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group’s average party level (APL). To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the table below.

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition	Party Strength
3-4 characters, APL less than	Very weak
3-4 characters, APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than	Average
5 characters, APL less than	Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent	Average
5 characters, APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than	Average
6-7 characters, APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than	Very strong