



100 RUMOURS TO HEAR IN
A TOWN OR VILLAGE

AZUKAIL
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COMPATABILITY

This product is designed to be system agnostic and usable with any pen and paper role playing game system.

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INTRODUCTION

When asking around for information, whether this be from a passer-by on the street or the typical local in the tavern, players may also come across various different rumours, as well as the information that they are actually seeking. Here is a list of 100 different rumours that players could hear. The various rumours are more suited to villages and small towns than they are to cities.

These rumours can be used as a source of misdirection, providing information that sounds important but actually has no connection to whatever the players are inquiring about. Alternatively, they may actually be important, and can be used as a source of different adventure hooks.

USING THE LIST

To use the list, either roll d100 for a random result or select appropriate ones manually.

1. Adanis never has a poor crop, even when all his fellow farmers are struggling. How does he do it? Evil magic I bet.
2. All of Nindon's cows suddenly stopped producing milk. He thinks they've been cursed but why would they all huddle together in fear in the field if that was the case?
3. A man with a cruel face dressed in a rich purple robe passed through recently, accompanied by several half-orc servants. Teris claimed that the robed man is an evil wizard looking for a powerful artefact east of here.
4. An old hermit lives in the woods. He's said to be very wise and powerful but me, I think he looks just like a dirty and smelly old man.
5. An outlying farm was burned to the ground last week. No sign can be found of the farmer or the rest of his family, not even bones. People are worried that there might be other attacks, even if they don't

know who by.

6. An out of townner was found this morning with his fingers broken and nailed by his hands and feet to the gate. He's in a pretty poor state. Supposedly, that's how the local thieves deal with competition infringing on their patch.

7. A party of adventurers was buying supplies as they passed through. They said they were going to be back in a few days. That was over two weeks ago now, and they still haven't been seen.

8. Apparently there's a hidden entrance to the sewers from the cellar of the general store. I can't see it being used for any legal purpose.

9. A secretive group of dwarves and their wagons passed through late last night. Rumour is they've struck gold in the mountains but they're keeping the location secret to prevent anyone else getting it.

10. A strange burning object looked to fall from the sky last week. Not long afterwards, a party of what looked like wizards and their bodyguards passed through looking for it. They haven't been seen since.

11. A stranger has been sitting at the same table in the inn for the past week. I hear he's looking for the right adventurers to hire. For what, I have no idea. He does look kind of shady though.

12. A traveller from the south passed through yesterday. He said that several of the villages to the south have been struck by plague and many of the inhabitants are dead. We'd better make sure it doesn't spread to here.

13. A witch was burned alive in that ruined shack just outside the village. People claim it's haunted and the older kids dare each other to enter it. Some of them vow never to go back again, but they won't say what they saw.

14. A wizard has built himself a tower some leagues to the north. Banth claims that the tower was built overnight with demonic help, and that the wizard regularly summons demons to help him. Banth says he's seen this with his own eyes.

15. Besa's teenage daughter Kara has sup-

posedly gone missing, or that's what Besa says anyway. Kara has a reputation as a bit of a wild thing so most folk think she's just partying somewhere. She certainly won't have been taken as a virgin sacrifice by anyone!

16. Carasan is far too lucky at cards. It can't be natural; I bet he's cheating. He took 3 gold from me last week that I won't be seeing again. Wish I had some proof.

17. Did you hear? Several coastal villages have been raided by a black-painted pirate ship with black sails. All the children and able bodied adults were taken, probably to be sold as slaves. The elderly, sick and infirm were all put to the sword. I'm getting worried and we're going to move further inland.

18. Did you see that weird bloke who was in the inn? Tattoos, piercing and sharpened teeth! I can't see anyone who looks like that being up to something good.

19. Don't eat at The Crooked Billet. The food there is dreadful and may people have become ill from eating it. You can never tell what animal the meat has come from, and most of the items are just called meat. I don't trust anyone who won't tell you what animal the meat came from.

20. Don't go on the moors at night. There's always a dreadful howling coming from them at the time of the new moon, and more than one traveller has gone missing.

21. Edgund may only have one arm but I still wouldn't want to try him in a fight. They say he used to be a mighty fighter. He's still pretty handy, if you'll pardon the expression.

22. Ever since the last festival, the lord hasn't been seen outside the manor. Even within it, only a couple of his advisors have seen him and they aren't talking. Is he dying, dead, prisoner or something far worse?

23. Farmer Aran has had some of his livestock attacked and killed recently. Supposedly by wolves, but Aran says that the claws and bite marks are of no wolf he's ever seen - or would want to.

24. Filias claims he saw an invisible mon-

ster lurking on the rooftops last night. The man's deranged - how can you see something that's invisible?

25. Funny smells keep coming from Id-ris' home. Fancies himself an alchemist he does. I wouldn't want to live next to him; he's bound to blow himself up one of these days and maybe take his neighbours with him.

26. Geran has lots of books, all in funny languages. It's all very peculiar as it's not like he's a sage or a wizard or anything. What could he want all those books for? They must have cost him a lot of money to buy.

27. Hangar says he caught something weird whilst he was fishing the other day. Not that he has anything to prove this; he claims that whatever it was was so strong that it tore his rod from his hands.

28. Have you tried Erskap's beer? It's so good that the other brewers say that he must be using magic in the brewing process, something he vigorously denies.

29. Hildre claims she was walking past the well the other night when she heard the sound of drums coming from it, drums, from deep within the well. Silly women, the well is full of water, how could she hear drums?

30. How come you never see Marakath during the day, only at night? There's rumours going around that he's a vampire or something.

31. Huge clawed footprints have been seen in the vicinity of the woods. People are saying that there's a monster in the region, and it's going to attack.

32. I bet that braggart fighter who was boating about his marital prowess in the inn the other night will end up regretting his big mouth.

33. I hear that Tirg is planning to elope with Annis. Their families hate each other, and I can't see anything good coming from this. It's a bit of a scandal.

34. I heard howls coming from the woods last night. Reckon wolves have taken up residence again; we'll need someone to drive them out before they start attacking

the livestock.

35. I saw Burtle in an alleyway last night talking to a cloaked and hooded stranger. Burtle's not the most honest of people, so he's probably up to no good.

36. Iotag says he saw Priod sneaking home late last night, covered in blood. Well, the man is a butcher, so blood is hardly unexpected. Still, that's kind of late to be returning home. I wonder if there's more to it?

37. I think I saw a couple of horses from the regular guards patrol running through a field in the distance. Neither seemed to have a rider in its saddle. That's a worry, as perhaps the patrol ran into something dangerous. Whatever it was might be heading here next.

38. Junis claims that old maid Elspeth is a witch. I can believe it - have you seen how warty she is?

39. Madrial's teenage son Togan has disappeared. He left a note behind saying that he was going adventuring. She's quite worried; apparently he took his father's old sword with him. Not that he knows how to use it.

40. Murder! That's what it was! The entire family, murdered in their beds last night! Blood everywhere, or so I heard! We're all at risk until they find who did it!

41. My leg's aching again. That means there's a storm coming, mark my words, my leg is never wrong about that, so I wouldn't go out tonight lest you get caught in it.

42. No-one dares hunt in that odd wood down the road. I hear everyone who's killed an animal in it disappeared from out of their very bed.

43. Nordal's wife just up and left him one day for another man. Or so he claims anyway - no-one has seen hide nor hair of her since. Might be an idea to check his cellar.

44. Ogan claims he found part of a finger in one of Gherin's pies the other day! A finger! Gherin's calling him an idiot and that it was just a piece of pork that hadn't been properly minced.

45. Old man Hurn was drunk again last

night - when isn't he? This time he claimed he was attacked and pushed into a ditch by something unseen. He certainly smells like he was in the ditch; drunken old fool can't stand upright after a few, so he probably tripped and landed in it.

46. Once a week a dark wagon pulls up outside Gerint's. It's at night and well outside normal trading hours, so what can he be getting delivered. You never see the wagon's driver either; he's always completely muffled up, even on hot nights.

47. One of the children claimed they saw a large furry monster in the woods. Probably just a bear, but they can be dangerous enough.

48. Orodin the apothecary may look like a good man on the surface, but it's rumoured that medicine and herbs aren't all he sells. If you know the right phrase, I hear he will sell you poisons and other harmful items as well, of you have the coin.

49. Petras' young boy fell into a crevasse that suddenly opened in the field. Fortunately for him, he grabbed hold of a root and was rescued. No-one knows what the crevasse is or where it leads to; rumour is it's bottomless.

50. Pets have been going missing all over town. No bodies are ever found - they just disappear. Ange's daughter was very upset when her kitten disappeared.

51. Quarg the smith is a really big man. People say he's got ogre blood in him - not to his face, though, or they'll be carrying their teeth home in their hat. Got a bit of a temper on him he has.

52. Recruiters from a mercenary band have been in town recently, looking to hire combat-ready fighters and spellusers. They say that it's a purely defensive measure on the part of their employer, but old Brill says that there's a war coming.

53. Rokag says he saw a ghostly white figure walk into the alleyway behind the inn last night. When he followed - Rokag's never been known for his smarts - he says the figure had completely disappeared. Even though there's no other exit from the place.

54. Rumour is that a group of bandits is operating to the north. It's said they have a source in town that lets them know which groups are worth attacking.

55. Sad, it is. Ryna lost her baby son when he was just a few weeks old and her husband was killed not long afterwards. Now she wanders around thinking any boy-child she sees is her son. She don't mean no harm, but she has taken a few kids home claiming that they are hers.

56. Saran is trying to marry his daughter off, but he's not having much luck. She's pushing thirty now and as ugly as sin - Saran is going to have to give a hefty dowry if he ever wants to see her married.

57. Several people by the river claimed they saw a dead horse and other wreckage floating down it yesterday.

58. Silash has got one field where nothing ever grows properly. It's got good drainage and light and the soil seems fine, but whatever he plants there tends to wither and die. It's said that ages ago a battle was fought there. Perhaps it's tainted the soil in some way.

59. Some crazy man passing through claimed that an entire village was swallowed by the trees overnight.

60. Some folk have been acting really oddly recently. Why, I bumped into Darsam the other day and he didn't seem to recognise me! He's not the only one.

61. Some of the graves in the cemetery have been emptied. Grave robbers supposedly, looking for burial goods, but what if it's something worse?

62. Someone stole Marinda's jewels the other night. Broke into the house through an upstairs window and just took them. Marinda is really upset as they were given to her by her dead mother.

63. Strange lights have been seen on the hill where those old ruins are every night for the past week. Kinda went up there overnight on a dare and the next morning he was babbling incoherently about what he saw. Not a word of sense has been gotten out of him since.

64. Tarongian apparently wasn't always

a human. I hear he was once some sort of monster who was polymorphed into a human by a wizard. Heaven help us if the spell ever wears off and he becomes a monster again.

65. Taxes are being raised again but what do we ever see for them? All that happens is the lord buys himself some new luxuries whilst we're left to starve. Something needs to be done.

66. Thataras is a great herbalist. His concoctions taste so vile you can practically feel them doing you good!

67. That black-cloaked figure who was staying in the inn. Supposedly he's an assassin. I wonder who he's going to kill. Perhaps that greedy moneylender; I heard he forced three families out of their homes last month.

68. That dwarf who came through the other day had a gem as big as your head! Mind you, this was according to Ispeth, and he has been known to exaggerate things. Still, I bet the dwarf did have a gem and I wonder where he found it?

69. That party of adventurers who passed through last week came back in a tearing hurry. All of them looked worse for wear, and some were dead by the looks of it. They wouldn't answer any questions; I sure hope they didn't waken something that they shouldn't.

70. That strange old druid who lives in the wood claims he saw a terrible monster the other night. He's a bit too fond of his special mushrooms, that one, so I wouldn't take his claim too seriously.

71. That travelling fair is back in the area. I don't trust those fair people; I hear they kidnap children. For what purpose, I shudder to think.

72. That wandering minstrel supposedly despoiled the lord's daughter on his way through. She's apparently pregnant, although no-one has seen her in a while, and her father wants the minstrel's head on a stick. Or perhaps some other bodily part!

73. The Castons' business burned down the other week. They are claiming it was arson done by a competitor. The Castons are go-

ing to be out of business for some time.

74. The fish that are being caught in the river are all deformed. They're a right sight. You couldn't pay me enough to make me eat them. Nothing that looks that twisted can be good to eat.

75. The inn is rumoured to be haunted and it's claimed a number of people have died in one of the upstairs rooms. I bet it's just the innkeeper, trying to boost his trade.

76. The local tax collector is as crooked as a corkscrew. He's taking more tax than is owed and pocketing the difference. The lord doesn't seem interested though as long as he receives his share. It's just the regular folk who suffer.

77. The manor house was robbed last week and several valuable items were taken. The lord is looking for people to recover what is stolen, and he's not bothered about asking tricky questions about how his property is returned, just that it is.

78. The mayor is definitely fixing the elections. He's so unpopular there's no way he's being elected honestly. Probably bleeding the treasury dry whilst he can.

79. The old keep has been abandoned for years but I could swear I saw lights coming from inside some of the windows the other night. Right unnerving it was.

80. The sheriff is looking for capable fighters to join him in a posse to clear out the bandits who are raiding the road to the east. They're becoming a right nuisance.

81. The regular merchant caravan is several days overdue and the general store is running out of goods. People are getting worried and are asking for someone to go and look for it.

82. There's a new bard performing at the inn. He's pretty decent but it's his looks that have all the women swooning. I hear he's already made use of them a few times, and with women he really shouldn't have. He's going to get himself lynched if he's not careful, and rightly so.

83. There's a new merchant in town selling all sorts of things; clothes, adventuring equipment, tools and other stuff. The other shops are complaining because he's under-

cutting them all and wondering where he gets his stock so cheaply. Norag says he recognised an item of clothing as belonging to a traveller who recently passed through, and said it had been mended in odd places.

84. There's been a spate of thefts in town recently. Some blame that dodgy looking group who passed through a few days ago. Personally, I think one of those thieves' guilds has decided to set up shop here.

85. There's one odd oak in the nearby woods. Something just doesn't look right about it but you can't tell what. Standing under its shadow makes a shiver run down your spine though.

86. The village well? Yes, it looks a bit strange, all polished brass and moving parts, but the water is always fresh. No-one seems to know who created it though. Dwarves, I reckon. Or perhaps gnomes, they're fond of odd mechanical things.

87. The serving wenches at the tavern are open to a bit of afterhours serving, if you have the coin. If you know what I mean.

88. Tonas claims he saw a group of orcs in the woods to the east. I hope they aren't planning a raid.

89. Two nobles' spoilt brats got into a fight over a woman in the pub the other night. They've challenged each other to a duel, even though neither can fight worth talking about and duelling is illegal. They should be locked up, but it's always a different rule for those in charge,

90. Ulea was killed last night in her bed, along with a strange man that wasn't her husband. Her husband has gone missing; looks like he murdered his wife and lover when he caught them in bed together.

91. Vornias is missing his right hand. That's how they punish thieves they catch in the eastern realms, so watch your coin purse when he's around. No-one has ever caught him stealing anything, but that could just mean he's not been caught, not that he's honest.

92. Yaran says that Opiar is worshipping an evil god. He claims he was peering into her house and saw her performing a ritual sacrifice. I'd say, what was Yaran doing

spying on Opiar through her window, but she's a good looking women, so the answer is pretty obvious. Yaran may simply be spreading trouble because I hear Opiar rejected his advances yet again.

93. Weird chanting can be heard coming from the inn late at night. Some claim it's actually the centre for an evil cult, and not every patron who stays leaves again.

94. Werian isn't half unlucky. He can't seem to do anything without it going wrong. That's why he's almost constantly injured. You'd almost think he was cursed, not simply clumsy.

95. We've been having a regular plague of rats recently. I hear the mayor is going to start putting a bounty on them. Just bring the tails in and you'll get paid for 'em.

96. Widow Borgass supposedly has a fortune in gold in her house somewhere, even though you wouldn't think she had two coppers to rub together to look at her.

97. You know, I could swear that copse near the river was in a different place last night than it is today. Must be seeing things.

98. You know that low oddly circular hill to the east? If you walk around it widdershins three times on the night of the full moon, Randal says that a hole opens in the hill that leads to a fey realm. Not that I'd want to try it!

99. You see that big, strangely-coloured stone in the wall that doesn't match any of the others? It's apparently the cornerstone from an ancient citadel and the place will be protected from evil forces as long as it's there. Of course, no-one ever asks why the citadel isn't still standing, if the stone is so powerful.

100. Zork was once a great gladiator it's said, in a distant land. He can certainly wield two swords so quickly he looks like a storm of flying steel!