

CURRENT CLACK: NEVERWINTER



A DUNGEON MASTER'S SOURCEBOOK



CURRENT CLACK: NEVERWINTER A DUNGEON MASTER'S SOURCEBOOK V1.8

A SMATTERING OF GOSSIP, NEWS, RUMORS, HALF-TRUTHS AND LIES TOLD THROUGHOUT
NEVERWINTER DURING ONE BUSY YEAR IN ITS LONG HISTORY, AND SO MUCH MORE

by

COMMONPLACE PUBLISHING
A good game starts with a good story.



My sincere thanks to Bill Whitmore for his insight on adventure design.

Want a sneak peek at the next update? Visit [Commonplace Publishing](#) on Facebook.

Designed using [The Homebrewery](#).

Many thanks to my beta readers: Caleb Paul Seewald, Duane Stuekerjuergen,
George Krashos, Gordon Van Deventer, Matthew Brown.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMINOLOGY

When this book references the Core Rulebooks, the abbreviations PHB, DMG and MM refer to the *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide* and *Monster Manual*, respectively.

When referencing WotC's official published adventures and sourcebooks, the following abbreviations are used:

- HoDQ: *Hoard of the Dragon Queen*
- MTofF: *Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes*
- OofA: *Out of the Abyss*
- PotA: *Princes of the Apocalypse*
- SCAG: *Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide*
- SKiT: *Storm King's Thunder*
- TRoT: *The Rise of Tiamat*
- VGMo: *Volo's Guide to Monsters*
- XGtE: *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*

This book assumes you own the Core Rulebooks, but does not require you to own any of the adventures or sourcebooks listed above. When referencing new or optional rules from official sources, those rules will be included in Appendix A.

VERSION 1.8 NOTES

New content for this update includes:

- New adventuring company: Darrambur's Devils.
- New NPC: Embrelle of the Cold.

On the cover: Runa, leader of the Company of the White Wolf, and her animal companion Yigr keep watch somewhere in Neverwinter Wood.



I: CURRENT CLACK: WHAT IS IT?

In the Realms, news spreads at the speed of merchant travel. Whether by wagon, boat or on foot, the continent of Faerûn is crisscrossed daily by merchants carrying wares for sale. But merchants trade in more than just physical goods; the information they carry about recent news and events from the places they've visited—collectively called "the Current Clack" or just "Clack"—can be as valuable as any object they sell. Such information is traded regularly between traveling vendors and local sellers of goods, and helps to grease the wheels of commerce in the Realms.

This is as true of Neverwinter as anywhere else, thanks to The High Road and the link it provides to Luskan in the north, and to Waterdeep and the lands beyond to the south. Ships sailing out of the ports of Luskan, Waterdeep and the other cities of the Sword Coast oft find a berth in Neverwinter, and disgorge goods, travelers and news. When the cold months burry trade routes in snow and turn the waters of the Sea of Swords into so much impassable ice, intrepid merchants (and not a few adventurers) find their way to Neverwinter by means magical or by carefully guarded routes through the Underdark, and with them comes the latest Clack.

Within Neverwinter's walls news travels even faster. Because the friction between competing interests in the city causes strife daily, word of the most recent events is welcome in nearly every establishment in the city. By the next morning traders will have passed beyond Neverwinter's walls, carrying with them news and rumors of events unfolding in the Jewel of the North.

HOW DOES IT HELP THE DM?

Current Clack helps to convey a sense of what's going on in Neverwinter and the surrounding lands. This both reminds the characters that they are part of a larger world and provides an immersive backdrop for their imaginations. Clack entries reflect the weight of the four seasons, which helps to give your players a sense of time passing in your campaign and shows how the seasons influence the decisions of merchants, rulers and adventurers.

If you own one or more published adventures, you can use Current Clack as a means of raising awareness among the characters that something ominous is on the horizon (such as the events that presage *The Rise of Tiamat* or *Storm King's Thunder*) as your campaign unfolds.

If you prefer to write your own adventures, or if you make use of the adventures found on the DMs Guild, you can use Clack to introduce adventure hooks disguised as the latest news about missing adventurers, rumors of found treasure, or whatever information you think the characters will be interested in pursuing further.

(See Chapter 6 of the DMG, p.125-131, for more advice on how to link adventures by means of an overarching story, and by planting adventure seeds and foreshadowing.)

The right mix of news piled on top of rumor can expedite the plans of characters preparing to embark on their next quest, just as it can help to point characters towards important NPCs in Neverwinter. As characters complete adventures and earn a heroic reputation, they may well become the subject of Clack in their own right.

As you gain experience in writing Current Clack and disseminating it to your players, you will learn how the judicious use of Clack can right a stalled campaign and guide the characters onto the best path towards adventure.

DISSEMINATING CLACK

Printed handouts are the easiest means by which to disseminate Current Clack to the characters. If everyone in your group has access to computers, laptops or smartphones, then you can produce and send digital copies of Clack to the characters as well.

At the start of a new campaign, providing a one-page handout with a few months' worth of Clack can help to orient 1st level characters to Neverwinter, and to jumpstart your campaign. For new characters joining an established campaign, Clack can help bring them up to speed and prompt questions about prior adventures that the other regular characters can answer.

The return of adventurers from forays beyond Neverwinter always generates curiosity and excitement among the populace. Friendly NPCs, the agents of rival or enemy NPCs, and everyday folk will be curious to know the triumph or failure of the character's last quest. Characters should expect NPCs to come calling (or come spying) soon after they return from an adventure, and you may use this roleplaying opportunity to convey to the characters the latest Clack relating to Neverwinter while they were away.

The success of the character's prior efforts during their last downtime spent in Neverwinter may be revealed as well: how successful the characters and their rivals were at sowing rumors; gaining renown; influencing people of power; and the results of efforts to corner or control the local or regional marketplace.

Such information can also be revealed in Broadsheets (single page documents) and Chapbooks (booklets no bigger than a human hand) that are regularly printed and circulated in Neverwinter.

ONE RULE ONLY

The degree to which any of the Clack you present to the characters is true depends entirely on events as they unfold at your gaming table, during play. Clack entries are not like entries in *The Grand History of the Realms* and should not be mistaken for a reliable timeline of events.

BEFORE I FORGET

Thanks are due to Zeromaru X of the [Candlekeep.com forums](https://www.candlekeep.com/forums) for his kind words. They provided the motivation to publish this work.

II: CLACK EXAMPLE: 1479 DR - YEAR OF THE AGELESS ONE

The publication of *The Neverwinter Campaign Setting* (Erik Scott de Bie, Ari Marmell and Matt Sernett, August 2011) marked a turning point for the city of Neverwinter.

The Jewel of the North had become cracked and tarnished in the century following the Spellplague. Neverwinter's once famous gardens now grow wild in ruins walled off from the rest of the city. Most of its artisans and crafters had perished, and those few that survived the volcano's fury departed Neverwinter, taking their skills and knowledge with them. Neverwinter's leadership had become fractured and ineffectual, while its people were forced to join factions and take sides against each other as legitimate heirs and pretenders alike gathered supporters and made their claim on Neverwinter's throne.

Drizzt, perhaps the North's best-known hero, had embarked on a new era of adventure for which Neverwinter served as a backdrop, while the efforts of Lord Neverember—then the Open Lord of Waterdeep—to take control of the Jewel of the North had yet to be tested against heroes and rivals alike.

No one, least of all Neverwinter's residents, understood just how many lurking threats would come to menace the city. Nor would they learn how many heroes lost their lives in the defense of Neverwinter. Worst of all, the great bulk of Mt. Hotenow loomed in the distance like an uncaring god, making no promises that it would not erupt again to finish the work of destroying Neverwinter once and for all.

Against this backdrop an endless number of opportunities for adventure revealed themselves, and heroes from all over the Realms flocked to Neverwinter to seek fame and glory.

AS YOU MIGHT HAVE GUESSED...

I have a soft spot for Neverwinter in the time period of 1479 DR. This is ten years before the start of 5th Edition (1489 - Year of the Warrior Princess), but for our purposes the time period doesn't matter.

What matters is that you are able to see how a Dungeon Master can lay out Clack by utilizing a healthy dose of imagination reinforced by whatever game resources are at hand (the *Neverwinter Campaign Guide*, in my case, along with a beat-up copy of the *Forgotten Realms Campaign Guide* [3E] and *Volo's Guide to the North* [2E]).

Current resources you may already own include *The Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide*, which provides an update on Neverwinter along with a color map of the city, and the adventure *Storm King's Thunder*, which doubles as a sourcebook of the North thanks to a 56-page chapter detailing encounters and locations in the region, and a gorgeous two-page full color map.

WORKING WITH CLACK

As you read the Clack entries that follow, consider how they can supplement your campaign, and how they might fit any published adventures you own.

Consider also how the maps of the North and the information on NPCs and adventure locations included in this book can be used to inspire Clack entries of your own devising.

Pick only the entries that interest you. You may use them as is, or rewrite the entries and change their order to best serve your campaign.

Consider the following Clack entry for Tarsakh (April) in the year 1479 DR:

- Five tall-masted caravels arrived in Neverwinter in the last tenday, loaded with exotic goods and food. Each ship represents one of the five cities that make up the Dusk Ports along the Dragon Sea in Returned Abeir.

This entry was designed to give a Dungeon Master the means to introduce characters native to Laerakond (aka Returned Abeir) to the mainland continent of Faerûn, as well as NPCs of Abeirian descent into the campaign.

Additional Clack entries detail the unusual fate of some of the Abeirian ships and suggest their captains and crews were up to more than just mercantile trading during their stay in Neverwinter. Whether or not such activities were at the behest of the mighty green dragon Orlarrakh, the "Green Duchess" who ruled over the Dusk Ports, was left to the DM.

For the year 1489 DR, this entry can be repurposed as follows:

- Five tall-masted caravels flying the flag of Mintarn have docked in Neverwinter in the last tenday. Each ship purports to represent the rightful ruler of Mintarn, and their crews have dispersed into the city to spread word of the death of Bloeth Embuirhan, former ruler of the island. Worse, the Red Rage has awakened, and Hoondarrh's demand for additional gold and treasure must be met, the crews say, or the isle of Mintarn may well be obliterated.

Here there is no doubt a dragon is fueling the actions of the ship crews. But the machinations of would-be rulers of Mintarn are also at play, and their goals are certain not to align with each other. As with the 1479 entry, the ship arrivals in Neverwinter allow characters and NPCs of Mintaran descent to arrive in Neverwinter.

Even characters with no ties to Mintarn may find adventure thanks to the arrival of the Mintaran ships, as the Mintaran representatives may possess treasure maps or have information as to where riches capable of appeasing the Red Rage may be found, and need capable adventurers to recover it all. Other plots may involve taking ownership of buildings in Neverwinter (by any means necessary), then collecting rents that will eventually find their way to the dragon's hoard.

HAMMER (JANUARY)

- The Council of Sparkling Stones in Mirabar has announced the diversion of ore shipments meant for Waterdeep to Neverwinter by way of Longsaddle. The Council claims that monstrous activity out of the Kryptgarden Forest has made the Long Road between Triboar and Waterdeep too perilous. Merchants traveling the Long Road report Mirabaran ore is stacking up on the outskirts of Longsaddle faster than warehouses can be erected to house it all. Uncertainty reigns over these events, as no overland road exists between Longsaddle and Neverwinter.
- The Company of Twelve Swords, comprised of veteran guards of The Wall, mercenaries from the Moonshae Isles and adventurers from Waterdeep, has formed in Neverwinter. The adventurers left for Castle Never to brave its dangers and retrieve the fortune assumed to lay hidden in the castle's heart. Rumor claims the leader of the Twelve owns regalia and other former possessions of Neverwintan nobility, and she plans to use these items to placate the many ghosts of the castle.
- The disappearance of several minor Waterdhavian noble families have sent rumors up and down the length of Sword Coast like tremors from an earthquake. Some claim a Deepwinter purge of nobility by the Masked Lords of Waterdeep is underway. Others say a magical plague has swept away the noble houses. Some whisper that grim war between nobles has returned to Waterdeep, with the lesser houses first to fall victim to internecine fighting. Few mercenary companies winter in Waterdeep, leaving merchants, nobles and guild houses to compete with each other over the hiring of adequate protection against the battles to come. Adventurers and mercenaries alike are hastening to the city.
- Packs of silver colored cats have been spotted just the other side of The Wall, wandering at night amongst the choked ruins of homes and gardens that surround the Chasm. The cats are said to walk through the remnants of stone walls and wooden doors like ghosts but climb trees and other natural obstacles as a normal cat would. When not moving about, the cats keep watch over the Chasm, their tails twitching back and forth.
- Dockside tavern talk has turned to the fate of the *Bold Gambit*, a caravel out of Tethyr that set sail from Neverwinter two season ago and has yet to return. Among the outlandish stories ascribed to the *Gambit* is the tale of the ship's mage, herself a rakish spellcaster with bad handwriting and a taste for wine that exceeds her interest in books, who mastered the means of making the *Gambit* and all souls aboard invisible but has yet to figure out the means of returning all back to normal.
- The mage Luthlund of Luskan has been banned from Neverwinter. Mayor Galt read the proclamation aloud as Luthlund was removed from the city. Rumor holds that Luthlund, disguised as a woman, nearly made off with Galt's cache of personal magic.

ALTURIAK (FEBRUARY)

- The mysterious, semi-secret organization known as the Sons of Alagondar was dealt a hard blow by the deaths of its senior leadership. Rumors claim infighting over who was in charge led to drawn swords and bloodletting. Others say hired mercenaries ambushed a meeting of the group. Lord Neverember hailed the news as a victory for law and order in the city and promised to pursue the remnants of the insurgency.
- In Waterdeep, calls for Lord Neverember's return to oversee the matter of the missing noble houses before open conflict erupts between nobles has forced his departure from Neverwinter. This has left Neverwinter short of guardians, as the presence of several mercenary companies in Waterdeep caused Lord Neverember to bring a sizeable number of Mintaran mercenaries with him.
- The much-reduced Company of Twelve Swords has emerged from Castle Never. Now six in number, the Swords claim treachery on the part of their leader cost the lives of half the Company and forced their early departure from the castle.
- The merchant Guthkort Arnhast was found injured and bleeding on the street in front of his mansion in the Protector's Enclave. Neighbors claim Guthkort threw himself out of an open second story window to escape his own house, and that strange, inhuman noises emanate from within. For his part, Guthkort claims his dwelling is cursed: The doors of his abode shut of their own accord, and whenever he opens them he runs the risk of being confronted with wild places far from Neverwinter. Sometimes horrible beasts lurk on the other side.
- Buckets are in short in supply throughout Neverwinter. Factors working for an unknown cabal have bought scores of buckets, as well as every sort of handkeg and smallkeg for sale in the city. These wares are burned in great bonfires in the Blacklake district once every tenday, but not before hire-wizards carefully scrutinize every last bucket.
- Harbold's Hellraisers were turned away at the gates to Neverwinter, on the orders of Mayor Galt. Tavern owners lament the loss of coins sure to flow from the Hellraiser's ample coin pouches, who always spend freely when not adventuring. Mayor Galt claimed the Hellraisers heap destruction on top of disorder when inside the city walls.
- A fierce night battle erupted in the rotting buildings of the Pirate's Skyhold. Someone or something set fire to many of the buildings, and humanoid figures wreathed in flame could be seen falling to their doom from the Skyhold earthmote. Servants in the Hall of Justice claim to have seen several sword-wielding men bathed in fire emerge from one chamber of the Hall that same night.

CHES (MARCH)

- Cities and lesser ports along the Sword Coast have begun clearing the winter ice from their harbors in preparation for a busy year of ocean trade. Such harbor work is a clarion call to land-based merchants, who've begun hiring readyblades, laborers and outriders to load their wagons and to guard the first caravans to travel overland.
- Among the lamp carriers whose services are oft utilized to light the way for night travelers in Neverwinter, a fantastical tale is being shared: Within the last tenday, a Neverwintan noble of some repute was attacked and struck senseless by two of their number. The first lamp carrier transformed into a gryphon, while the second became a large python that coiled around the noble and hoisted itself and its captive onto the gryphon, which took to the air and disappeared into the night sky. This story is freshest among the lamp carriers that found the bodies of their two comrades, their bones crushed from head to foot, in an alley adjacent to the Hall of Justice.
- Broadsheets announcing the availability of Brightboots and Blodcoins, adventurers for hire, are being distributed at ale houses and taverns throughout Neverwinter. The adventurers may be found two doors south of the Winged Wyvern.
- A trio of noble families of Waterdeep, including some thought recently to have gone missing or been destroyed, along with their retinue of servants, guards and assistants, have arrived in Neverwinter at the invitation of prominent Neverwintan nobles. How the Waterdhavians came to be in Neverwinter remains a mystery, as none were seen arriving by land or ship before their appearance. Lord Neverember, still in Waterdeep, is assumed to be greatly displeased with their presence in Neverwinter.
- Beleaguered merchants newly arrived in Neverwinter in the company of loyal knights pledged to the defense of The High Road claim a Beast Lord has arisen within the Kryptgarden Forest. The knights slew a pack of crazed owlbears and perytons that decimated a mounted patrol out of Waterdeep protecting the convoy of merchants. The creatures bore azure marks on their bodies and moved with frightening speed. A handful of wounded beasts fled into the dark depths of the Kryptgarden.
- Luskan has seen a spike in shipbuilding. An unknown agency has organized the construction of twenty-one new ships of various sizes. Seven ships have already been keeled, with seven more set to be laid down by Midsummer. Anxious word has spread in Neverwinter that Luskan plans to take control of the seas as far south as possible.
- A pair of Luckpriests of Tymora joined shipwrights on Neverwinter's docks in celebrating the successful repair of the *Barrel Boat*. The *Barrel Boat* limped into the docks the prior year on half a sail, after repelling pirates and with its cargo untouched. The *Barrel Boat's* captain and crew gave a resounding cheer, then joined the priests and shipwrights in song.

TARSAKH (APRIL)

- On orders from Mayor Galt, Mintaran mercenaries have been dispatched to arrest—and in some cases forcibly eject from Neverwinter—the recently arrived ex-nobles of Waterdeep. The Mayor has not publicly explained his motives, though many see the hand of Lord Neverember behind the arrests. Others say the nobles met secretly with agents of the Sons of Alagondar, who revealed to the nobles their strong blood ties to the Alagondar ruling family, forcing Neverember to act before the combined forces of nobles moved to take over the city in his absence.
- The Holy Host of Kelemvor, comprised of clerics, sellswords and devout followers of the god of the dead, has arrived in Neverwinter by boat from Baldur's Gate. Led by the Doomguide Tathanter Ebonhand, the Host claims negligence on the part of Lord Neverember has allowed the Neverdeath graveyard to become corrupted and fallen under the sway of foul influence, leaving the city awash in spirits seeking their final rest. Tathanter and his followers intend to scour Neverdeath of its corruption, with or without Lord Neverember's permission.
- The self-styled Elemental Master, long of Waterdeep, has arrived in Neverwinter by boat with her cadre of exotic male genasi mages from fabled Akanûl beyond the Sea of Fallen Stars. The Master has sent invitations to adventurers and mercenaries residing in Neverwinter to join her on an expedition into Mount Hotenow, and promises “riches to rival the personal fortunes of a King” to every man and woman brave enough to accompany her.
- A caravan led by dwarves has appeared in Neverwinter, carrying goods from the Underdark. The dwarves will not sell to just anyone, but instead take bids for the right to be the first to view and purchase from their offerings. Word has spread that amongst the Dwarf wares are War Stones (rocks that, when exposed to sunlight, instantly expand in width and volume to the size of small boulders), Tell Tale Stones (rocks that absorb sound energy and sing back whatever noises were in their vicinity) and Rock Gourds (hollow rocks that absorb water, and can be made to release it by shattering them).
- Broadcryers have fanned out into Neverwinter to announce the auction of noble titles belonging to the three expatriate Waterdhavians noble families now residing in Neverwinter. The titles will be placed on the auction block on the last tenday of Tarsakh. Interested bidders are reminded that such auctions are not illegal under the laws of Waterdeep and Neverwinter, are advised to arrive alone, and to be ready to submit to a thorough inspection by the numerous guards that will defend the auction.
- Five tall-masted caravels arrived in Neverwinter in the last tenday, loaded with exotic goods and food. Each ship represents one of the five cities that make up the Dusk Ports along the Dragon Sea in Returned Abeir.

MIRTUL (MAY)

- Day and night, the regulars of the Thousand Faces tavern debate the significance of a bizarre event that unfolded there a tenday ago. All agree that a stranger to the Tavern arrived unheralded and removed one of the many mirrors adorning the tavern walls and spoke a word of magic; that the stranger stretched the mirror as though it were made of dough, widening and elongating it; that reliable tavern regulars watched the traveler stand the much larger mirror in front of an old mannequin standing in one corner of the tavern and beckon it to come forward; that the mannequin, now animated by unseen magic, stepped into the mirror and vanished, only to be replaced by a tall, black-haired elf in battered armor; that the traveler bowed deeply before the elf and spoke these words, "*Majesty, we must return to Silverymoon before the next full moon or the Gentle Ghost will give the task of finding your kinsman to another,*" before pocketing the now shrunken mirror and hustling the bewildered elf out the door and into the night. None can say who the elf was or what land she ruled over.
- The Abeirian caravel *Glory of Orlarrakh* has departed Neverwinter, loaded with trade wares from Neverwinter and the surrounding lands. Word shared among Neverwinter's dockworkers claims the *Orlarrakh* has taken on passengers of some importance, including agents of various Faerûnian trade concerns and at least two adventuring parties, the remainder of the Company of Twelve Swords among them. The ship is bound for Lylorn in Returned Abeir.
- Drow surface raids have forced merchants on the roads north of Neverwinter to turn back for the city. The dark elves spare the lives of anyone who gives no resistance, and thoroughly search each caravan, taking any items of magic they find. The merchant Chelios Khor claims the drow, "flow out of the shadows and melt back into them after robbing us of everything of value!" Khor, having twice been robbed by the dark elves, has offered gold and treasure in payment to anyone bold enough to ride the northern trade routes and slay drow. Pairs of drow ears may be brought to Khor's merchant warehouse located along the Neverwinter Docks and presented to his factor for payment.
- Lady Ranya Durinbold, matriarch of the former noble house Durinbold of Waterdeep, has disappeared from the Hall of Justice in Neverwinter where she was being held under house arrest by Mayor Galt. Some say she was set free by the Sons of Alagondar and is loose somewhere in the city; others claim she was last seen boarding the Abeirian caravel *Steelsky*, recently departed for Lylorn in Returned Abeir. A considerable reward has been offered for her safe return. The mayor of Neverwinter has issued an open writ of authority for all loyal Neverwintan ship captains to chase down the *Steelsky* and search for the missing noblewoman.

KYTHORN (JUNE)

- Word has arrived in Neverwinter from Waterdeep that Never's Hold has been located somewhere in the Sword Mountains to the south of Neverwinter. The secret of the location is held by the Company of the Gold Dragon. Formed of the lesser sons and daughters of minor noble houses of Waterdeep, the Gold Dragons intend to learn the fate of Vers Never and discover the secrets of the royal line of Alagondar.
- The leaders of Neverwinter and Longsaddle have announced a trade alliance. The agreement is contingent on the successful maintenance of a not entirely safe path through the Upperdark established by dwarves that links the two cities. Goods have already been exchanged, but monster attacks are frequent. The dwarves of Barefoot's Deliveries (offices in Neverwinter) are hiring adventurers, no experience required, to accompany shipments of goods in exchange for gold and silver paid for every monster slain, and the rights to sell creature carcasses for twice their value to any interested mage of Longsaddle.
- Lord Neverember has returned from Waterdeep in the company of representatives of several Waterdhavian guild houses, the later intending to establish trade contacts and make investments in Neverwintan business and commerce.
- The burning hulk of the *Glory of Orlarrakh*, not a month out of Neverwinter, crashed into the docks overnight. No crew were visible on its decks. Mayor Galt has forbidden anyone to search the remains of the ship and ordered harbormaster Len-Jes to assemble a reliable force to board the wreck and investigate. Dock residents claim "ghosts bathed in blue" materialized out of the ship's hull and flew swiftly into Neverwinter.
- Ship captains have warned their peers to keep well away from the shoreline after departing Neverwinter. Choppy seas and unpredictable currents have always troubled the waters in the vicinity of the Screaming Keep, but now fog and unpredictable winds plague the area two days sail to the south.
- A new fashion has swept through the Merchant Lords and well-to-do in distant Sembia: spells of *Invisibility* are applied to disrobed partygoers, who then don their clothes and proceed to attend the evening's revels. As if this were not enough, the spells of *Invisibility* cloak everything but the bones of the spell recipient; these remain visible. Such spells are rumored to last until sunrise the next morning.
- The elf ranger Zazphrombelar of Almraiven witnessed a short-lived battle between the mighty dragon Balagos and the Wailing Dwarf. The 4,000-foot-tall monument to dwarfkind in the heart of the Troll Mountains overwhelmed the red dragon, hurling it a mile or more through the sky before it crashed into a mountain peak. The mountains quaked as the monument returned to its resting place over the ruins of a once-great dwarven city, its feet bathed in red as fires lit by the dragon consumed the last of the trolls and other monsters that lurked there.

FLAMERULE (JULY)

- At establishments that favor Neverwintan natives over outsiders, house bards have crafted satirical ballads mocking Lord Neverember. The ballads are sometimes accompanied by impromptu performances, such that Neverwintan nobles and commoners alike stand together on table or stage to act out any of several unbecoming follies ascribed to Lord Neverember. On two occasions the performances heralded the arrival of The Sons of Alagondar in numbers not seen since the start of the year. Calls for the ousting of Lord Neverember and his hirelings are shouted out after each performance.
- A richly dressed priestess of Waukeen has arrived by boat from Amn, with an entourage of lay servants and underpriests. The self-styled Priestess of Coins has taken up residence in a burnt out hold just off Blacklake. Servants of the priestess have spread word of her intention to scour the lake of ash and debris with her magic, both as a show of power and as a gift to the people of Neverwinter.
- Word of the failure of the Company of the Gold Dragon to reach Never's Hold has spurned the assembly of several expeditions in Neverwinter. The hiring of adventurers has quickened, as all hope to be first to find the legendary Hold. For their part, the Company of the Gold Dragon has returned to Waterdeep to gather a force of mercenaries to beat back the tribes of goblins and orcs that infest the hills where Never's Hold is believed to be located.
- A night fire engulfed the docks at Neverwinter, which quickly spread to the nearby Tarmalune Trade House. The fire was put out by agents from the House, but not before thieves made off with valuables belonging to the Tarmalune. Three ships were seen to leave the docks in the midst of the fire, each sailing north towards Luskan.
- Dwarves of odd size and proportion have been sighted in Neverwinter. Tavern talk holds that the new arrivals are called "thaelwi" by dwarf kind, and as such are considered to be crazed outcasts, malcontents and non-dwarves. For their part, the thaelwi claim to represent small communities of clanless surface-dwelling dwarves and mixed-race dwarf-blooded families living up and down the Sword Coast and further inland. The thaelwi have gathered in Neverwinter to discuss matters of trade, to form alliances and to announce the creation of new clans and proclaim their holdings. The tension between these new arrivals and the many tradition-minded dwarves who live and trade in Neverwinter has risen practically overnight. Most believe it is not a matter of if a bloody fight will break out, but when and for how long.
- Construction is underway in the fields a day's ride north of Leilon. Followers of Tempus have erected a sword-shaped scaffolding within a wide pit dug into the earth. Scrub and low trees have been felled nearby, where outbuildings are planned. No priest guides the Tempurans in their work.

ELEASIAS (AUGUST)

- Lord Neverember has publicly remarked that the Tarnsmoke Proclamation ought to be formally recognized by the leadership of Neverwinter, as it has already been adopted by "most civilized and forward-thinking cities the length of the Sword Coast." Not surprisingly, Mayor Galt has issued a proclamation stating, *"It is both right and lawful to hire professional bounty hunters for the purpose of confronting, capturing or slaying outlaws who wrong the upstanding citizens of Neverwinter, sully their persons, take their property and steal their belongings by force of arms or magic."*
- The Abeirian caravel *Fimbrul's Fury*, readying for a morning departure to Returned Abeir, unexpectedly lifted off from its moorings and floated straight up into the sky. The ship listed from side to side and began flying erratically before turning sideways and crashing into one of Castle Never's many spires. The crew have thrown ropes and secured the *Fury* to the castle for now, but the ship continues waver and move about.
- Merchants report raids by drow on the road north of Neverwinter have been curtailed by the efforts of silver-eyed elves sporting ornate chain armor and longswords. The elves wait for the drow to ambush travelers before they spring an ambush of their own, and destroy the dark elves in, "a dazzling display of sword and spellwork," according to one merchant. The elves search the bodies of the dark elves along with every wagon, bag, satchel and cart before allowing travelers to tend their wounded and depart. The elves do not say what they are searching for, do not pay for whatever they take, and do not answer questions.
- Merchants on the road between Neverwinter and Waterdeep report attacks by tribes of orcs and goblins. Adventurers newly returned to Neverwinter claim at least two full expeditions bent on finding Never's Hold in the Sword Mountains were decimated by humanoids boiling up out of the earth from tunnels and caves all along the southwest face of the range. None know what is driving the humanoids out of their warrens, but most assume the hoard is headed north.
- Thefts of ancient treasures in the Palace of the Purple Dragon in Suzail have left the ruler of that fabled kingdom in a state of distress, according to far-traveled merchants newly returned to the Sword Coast from their yearly sojourn to Cormyr. These same merchants warn that Cormyrean spies posing as caravan guards and outriders have joined numerous trade caravans bound for the Sword Coast.
- Significant quantities of Tethyrian trade goods have been shifted east. Rugs, pearls and cheeses that otherwise flow north to Amn and Waterdeep have instead arrived in Cormyr, there to be resold and shipped to ports on the Inner Sea. Prices have risen steadily on the Sword Coast, as speculators hoard these goods for resale at double or triple the normal rate.

ELEINT (SEPTEMBER)

- The murder of Doomguide Tathanter Ebonhand has left the Holy Host of Kelemvor leaderless and in shock. Rumor claims Tathanter met his end in his own bedchambers, after being skewered by several longsword-wielding suits of empty plate armor bathed in green fire. The floating suits of armor escaped through the shattered upper floor window by which they came. Members of the Host saw the armor make for the docks, where dockworkers swear the armor disappeared among the moored ships from the Dusk Ports of Returned Abeir. That same night, the paupers that dwell near Neverdeath graveyard claim a floating suit of armor made for the center of the graveyard and vanished.
- Panicked merchants claim a pair of great dragons are slowly circling each other high in the sky in the vicinity of Helm's Hold, southeast of Neverwinter. Rain and wind blanket Helm's Hold this time of year, but the presence of the dragons seems to have halted the inclement weather entirely. The few merchants that do business with the leaders of the Hold claim the rantings and ravings of its crazed occupants have ceased; all watch and wait to see what the dragons will do.
- Narvos the Bookkeeper has announced the rare sale of one item from his prized collection of books, letters and broadsheets. Narvos has long claimed to hold the personal letters and diaries of deceased members of several important Neverwintan families, and now promises the most embarrassing of secrets will be revealed to the highest bidder.
- Guards posted on Neverwinter's outer wall have reported sighting goblins and orcs massing south of the city. Overland merchant traffic has all but halted between Waterdeep and Neverwinter. Calls for Lord Neverember to crush the goblins and orcs with the combined forces of both cities ring loud and clear. Others hope the dragons over Helms hold will find a meal in the presence of the hoard.
- The Moonstone Thief has struck again, this time making off with valuables belonging to Lord Neverember himself! Who the Moonstone Thief is (some say she's a woman, others say he's a slender man or a half-elf) remains a mystery. The one fact accepted as truth is that the Thief wears a magical black half-mask lined with moonstones that grants the ability to walk about in utter darkness. It is rare for Neverwinter's competing factions to concur on anything, but all agree that if the Moonstone Thief is not captured or put down, then no building in Neverwinter can be considered safe from intrusion.
- The turn of the seasons always heralds increased sales in trinkets symbolizing deities associated with the autumn months. This year, small necklaces of black beads sporting a single triangle of black stone are top sellers in the City of Skilled Hands, as Neverwintans endeavor to show proper respect to Myrkul, The Lord of Bones, the better to survive the coming winter.

MARPENOTH (OCTOBER)

- Embittered fanatics of Kelemvor are scouring Neverwinter for the magical suits of armor that slew their leader, and to find whatever power controlled the armor. The Kelemvorites have twice been driven off the docks by the combined crews of the Abeirian ships moored there.
- The surviving members of the Brotherhood of the Bloody Axe have returned to Neverwinter from a years-long expedition into the wilds of the Savage North. Bards and eager listeners alike have shared the stories told by the adventurers, who claim the tower of Sharra of the Invisible Dragon, archmage and once friend to Neverwinter, can be found where the Far Forest meets the eastern edge of the Nether Mountains. The Brotherhood breached Sharra's tower and made off with treasures from its lowest levels before the ghosts of Sharra's apprentices and one angry dragon forced their retreat.
- A cabal of Neverwintan nobles called the Black Hunt seek adventurers to clear monsters, beasts and traps from Neverneath (the catacombs below Castle Never) in preparation for a grand contest pitting nobles of Waterdeep against nobles from Neverwinter.
- The death of Sard ("Old Leatherface" to those who knew him), a retired adventurer and last surviving member of the Band of Bold Reavers, has left the status of his many properties in limbo. At least three wills have been produced, and the bearer of each has declared him or herself the sole beneficiary and therefore master of all of Sard's holdings in and out of Neverwinter. Agents of the beneficiaries have already crossed swords while attempting to collect rents from tenants.
- Within the last tenday a battle erupted on the coastal shores south of Luskan. Ship builders and their mercenary guards repelled a force offloaded from a trio of warships of unknown origin. The attackers sought to put to the torch Luskan's newest fleet of rakers (low warships), for which construction is still underway. Two of the three warships escaped, but the third was boarded and captured.
- Neverwintan butchers have taken possession of pigs offloaded from the *Fourfoot Hauler*, an independent caravel. The *Fourfoot* deals exclusively in swine and a new variety of miniature oxen (called Thimdror) raised in the vast fields east of Waterdeep. Such creatures are transported on deck, while the ship sports high rails to keep its four-legged passengers from falling overboard.
- A strange tale has reached Neverwinter from distant Arabel, in Cormyr. Booksellers in that city have been ordered by the King's Lord of Arabel to inspect all of their wares for strange writings or additions of pages that do not belong, for fear that someone has applied magical curses to certain books that harm the reader and cause all manner of strange occurrences. At least one cursed tome is believed to have slain its reader outright, then conjured forth a huge naga that went rampaging through the city.

UKTAR (NOVEMBER)

- Neverwinter's River District has been isolated over fears of plague. No active guard prevents entry or exit to the district, but those few who've left it say a rotting disease that starts at the hands and feet and works its way up the body is spreading among the orc population.
- At the home of Narvos the Bookkeeper, an intruder was carried out of an open upper floor window by a pair of glowing blue hands the size of tower shields. These hands crushed the intruder in midair, then dropped the corpse to the hard cobblestones below. Narvos was seen to appear at the window and heard to bellow, "The true will of Old Leatherface will not be taken so easily!" before disappearing into his home.
- Goldwheel Wagons (offices in Waterdeep, Neverwinter and Baldur's Gate) has begun hiring off-season guardians for its warehouses and a handful of fortified waystops up and down the Sword Coast. Such "winter hires" are common among enterprises that suspend business when the snows fall and the roads between cities become impassable. The pay amounts to a few coppers a day, but room and board is provided on site, along with a bonus for every piece of property confirmed present after the turn of the year and the end of the cold months.
- The adventurer Runa, leader of the Company of the White Wolf, claims the fabled Sunset Crypts and the Six Temples of the Reaver are one and the same. She would not say where the supposed temple-crypts are located, but promised to return with treasures to prove her claim. Those who watch comings and goings in Neverwinter state the Company of the White Wolf has grown to a score of members, all traveling north on The High Road with mining tools, winter blankets and a month's worth of provisions loaded on two rothé-drawn wagons.
- Rumors of the existence of a *Nevershield* somewhere within Neverwinter's walls have caused Mayor Galt to dispatch his mercenary forces to search high and low for it. This search is complicated by the fact that *Nevershields* are said to be identical to a typical Neverwintan soldier's shield displaying the city's colors: a forest green field with an upper right diagonal slice of sparkling frost white, the whole of the shield bordered in metal of a sea-blue tint. A handful of *Nevershields* are believed to have been forged before Mt. Hotenow bathed the city in ash and fire, and all were presumed lost. The shields were rarely wielded by Neverwinter's defenders, and rumors abound as to the shields' magical powers.
- Early snows have blanketed most of the Sword Coast in white. Sea lanes up and down the coast remain open, with minimal boat traffic and no storms. Neverwinter's dockside residents have started buttoning up for the winter. Ships newly arrived are expected to spend the winter moored to the docks, their captains making extra coin by offering bunks to passengers unable to find better winter accommodations in the city.

NIGHTAL (DECEMBER)

- The presence of Wild Lords in Neverwinter is attributed to the efforts of the Black Hunt. The Hunt's messengers claim any Wild Lord exiled from Waterdeep can earn a pardon from Lord Neverember himself, provided they enter the Hunt's competition to explore Neverneath and are the first to find the legendary Black Bucket.
- Members of the Bloody Axe have held extravagant banquets each night for ten days going. Grand retellings of the Axe's adventures are the first order of business, followed by long toasts to the fallen members of the Axe, and then much feasting, drinking and debauchery. Gossip among would-be adventurers holds the Brotherhood funds its extravagant gatherings through the judicious sale of magic items and plunder.
- A great flight of winged beasts has exploded out of the Kryptgarden forest and made straight for Waterdeep. Perytons, arrowhawks, chimeras, harpies and worse have swarmed over the north wall of the city and rampaged through the North and Sea Wards. Waterdeep's aerial defenders were overwhelmed by the onslaught, yet they managed to drive the attackers out of Sea Ward. North Ward is awash in beasts and members of the City Watch and Guard have joined the residents of North Ward to rid the city of the creatures.
- Idle conversation rules Neverwinter's dockside taverns. Patrons cradle their cups while huddling close together, relying more on their drinks than the tepid heat from tavern fireplaces to keep warm. Oldbeards with tired hands and bright eyes count seven ships whose captains promised to return to Neverwinter before winter took hold, but never did. Among them:

Blundering Devastation: A sturdy caravel of Sembian make that literally appeared out of nowhere in Waterdeep's harbor three winters ago, bereft of crew and cargo. The ship was searched from mainmast to ballast, claimed by the city and eventually resold to the highest bidder.

Crasher: The beak of this three-masted fighting ship is one piece of dull grey metal running from keel to bow. As its names suggests, the *Crasher* does not employ subtlety in a fight. Its captain prefers to ram other ships, its crew expert in tying themselves down so as to not be hurled overboard during impact.

The Lady Said No: A swift-sailing caravel that moves cargo year-round. The *Lady's* captain favors guilds over enterprises backed by nobles. When the *Lady* arrives in the City of Skilled Hands it's assumed she's carrying guild factors and guild-backed spies from Amn, the later intending to quietly establish guilds in the city.

War Trumpet: Once a warship of Waterdeep, the *Trumpet* has been remodeled with every extravagance. This galleon sports tall masts, fresh paint and clean white sails, and functions as a floating inn sailing from ports in Tethyr north as far as Neverwinter, with frequent stops in Baldur's Gate and Waterdeep. The ship's clientele tends to the extravagantly rich, though anyone with coin may book a cabin.

III: WHO ARE THEY?

This chapter strives to do some of the heavy lifting for you in terms of creating NPCs, while leaving you room to flesh them out for your campaign by using the guidelines found in Chapter 4 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide: Creating Nonplayer Characters* (p.89-96).

The sample Clack entries in this sourcebook mention adventuring parties and various NPCs that either live in or pass through Neverwinter. What follows are descriptions for some of the individuals and groups so named, as well as entries for NPCs that were not mentioned in the Clack.

RIVALS, YOU SAY?

If you own a copy of *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*, then you are likely familiar with the concept of Rivals (p.123-125). If not, then you should know that XGtE introduces the concept of a specialized NPC that you can introduce into your campaign during downtime, called a *Rival*.

A single Rival can be used to add flavor to your campaign in the form of a foil for the characters. This individual opposes the character's plans or keeps to a personal agenda that is at odds with what the characters hope to accomplish during downtime.

Much like Current Clack, the doings of rivals take place while the characters are away adventuring. When the characters return to Neverwinter from an adventure and seek to learn what has gone on in their absence, they will quickly learn that someone was working against them.

If the downtime portions of your campaign are lively, then you may consider using up to two or three rivals at a time (but no more) to keep the characters on their toes.

Because rivals are most useful when they share a link with one or more characters, have a look at the character backgrounds the players have created to see where a link might exist. For characters that do little during downtime, an unexpected link to a rival NPC can capture their attention and encourage them to participate.

Rivals can further assist you by providing an out when you're not quite ready to start the next adventure in your campaign. A play session spent figuring out who hired a wizard to attempt to magically float all of the character's gear out of their inn window can give you extra time to put the finishing touches on your next adventure.

Anyone capable of hiring a wizard likely has gold to spend. Therefore, descriptions for rivals include a summary of their **assets**, which includes the manpower and wealth at their disposal, as well as favors owed to them and their level of influence among specific groups.

How a rival utilizes their assets depends on their long term **goals** and their short term **plans**. The **actions** they take have consequences much as the actions characters undertake during downtime do. These may find their way into Clack the characters end up hearing about. When a rival makes plans to move against one or more characters, they will always attempt to gain the maximum benefit to their long-term goals.

A RIVAL TO BE RECKONED WITH

Narvos Heg, aka "The Old Rat," is a perfect example of the sort of NPC that can run afoul of the character's downtime plans. The Old Rat and his minions search for compromising information on anyone with influence and power in the Gem of the North. Narvos uses this ill-gotten information to blackmail and coerce Neverwintans to do his bidding—and by extension the bidding of Lord Neverember.

Like any nefarious influence peddler, Narvos is careful to hide his activities behind one or more layers of agents and go-betweens, and to make certain anyone he is blackmailing knows full well the consequences of outing him.

Characters that gain renown and build a reputation in Neverwinter will find themselves the target of Narvos' unwelcome attention. At first he may behave as a patron, but over time he will attempt to control the characters and limit their influence in Neverwinter.

THE OLD RAT'S PLANS

Action	Consequence
Narvos employs the characters.	The Old Rat wishes to grow his collection of tomes of lore. He makes a deal with the characters: in exchange for a treasure map, the characters may keep any treasure they find, but must return any and all tomes, scrolls and writings to Narvos.
Characters disrupt Lord Neverember's plans	If the characters cause a setback in Lord Neverember's plans for Neverwinter, he directs Narvos to dig up dirt on the characters. Strangers will start asking questions of friends and acquaintances.
Characters disrupt Narvos's plans.	Payback is what matters to Narvos; he wields his influence to disrupt the next downtime activity undertaken by each character. Subtract 12% (Narvos' Rogue level) from any percentile roll a character makes to determine the results of a downtime activity.

Every time Narvos interferes in a character's downtime, there is a chance the character discovers someone tried to thwart their plans. This chance equals 5% plus the character's level, minus Narvos' Rogue level (12). This percentile roll is made by the DM.

If a character discovers someone is working against them, they can try to figure out who it is. The chance of discovering Narvos' identity equals 5% plus 5% for every work week the character spends searching. A minimum of one work week must be spent investigating. If a character enlists the help of other characters, add the level of each assisting character to the total. Then subtract Narvos' level.

For example: One 5th level character becomes the victim of Narvos. She decides to spend two work weeks searching for clues to the identity of her unknown adversary. Her fellow party members (three characters of 5th level) decide to help. Her chance to learn Narvos' identity equals 23% (base 5% + 10% for two work weeks + character levels totaling 20) - 12% (Narvos' Rogue level). This roll is made by the investigating character.



ALATHEA GRYPHONSAR

FIGHTER 1, ROGUE 2

Alatheia Gryphonsar is but a memory to her five surviving sisters; she disappeared from her native Waterdeep over six years ago.

Her adventuring sister Trarleene was away from the city when Alatheia vanished. Upon Trarleene's return, she spent the better part of a year searching the Wards of Waterdeep for any trace of her vanished sibling, to no avail. A gravestone in the City of the Dead was placed for Alatheia next to that of her father, Andremon.

Andremon Gryphonsar was well-regarded among the merchant class in Waterdeep. His reputation as a fair dealer lent to the expectation that his daughters would take over his business. Though Andremon doted on all of his daughters and sought to have them educated, he encouraged each to pursue her own interests. The history and architecture of Waterdeep's countless buildings had captured Alatheia's attention, so Andremon apprenticed his daughter to the knowledgeable, self-styled Sage of Waterdeep (one Meurold Navaraekur), regarded by many as an expert on Waterdeep's history and buildings from the early to mid 1400s.

Alatheia grew to love her teacher like a second father. Meurold was exacting and precise in all things, allowing no room for doubt when it came to the subject whose mastery he lived by. Meurold's death came within a day of the loss of his legacy: The deathbed theft of his entire collection of books, scrolls, notes and records of Waterdeep. These were to be Alatheia's, and their loss while Meurold lay dying hurt Alatheia almost as much as Meurold's passing.

She swore to find and recover both his work and hers, for much of Meurold's collection had been organized and recopied by Alatheia as part of her training.

For years she searched Waterdeep, utilizing her father's reputation to ask for help among the merchants he dealt with. Working alone, she braved the city's many hiding places, back allies and forgotten buildings-within-buildings, hoping to discover where the collection had been taken.

Alatheia's search waned in favor of writing down what had changed in Waterdeep. She had learned much during her search about the buildings of Waterdeep—facts that not even Meurold had known.

While helping a book dealer to assess the value of a deceased noblewoman's collection of city maps, Alatheia happened upon a weathered parchment page in her own handwriting. She confronted the noble's spouse, but he claimed no knowledge of the page's provenance, insisting that his wife's hobbies were hers and hers alone. Alatheia's suspicion would not waver and she vowed to break into the noble's house that same night. There she spied the noble and the book dealer loading Meurold's collection into a wagon, as well as several other recently stolen collections. Alatheia was discovered and apprehended before she could summon the Watch.

Alatheia was bundled out of the city and sold into slavery in Skullport, where she spent six of the darkest years of her life. She bought her freedom with a blade to the heart of her owner and tormentor, but not before she'd carved out of him as much knowledge as he possessed of the current doings of those who'd sold her to him.

The nobleman, now remarried, proved easy prey. Alatheia woke him with a dagger to the heart, her scared face the last thing he ever saw. The book dealer, however, had moved north. Alatheia sailed north for Neverwinter with one name on her mind: Narvos Heg.

ALDORNAR BLACKFALL "LONGSCAR"

FIGHTER 4 (BATTLE MASTER)

Aldornar Blackfall is a native of Mintarn. All but one year of his adult life has been spent keeping the peace in Neverwinter. The role of peacekeeper has sharpened Aldornar's wits and swordplay skills to a keen edge. Unruly adventurers, members of the Sons of Alagondar and Neverwintans spoiling for a fight know to avoid the dark-haired Mintaran with a scar riding the side of his face.

To people such as these, Aldornar is known as "Longscar."^[1]

Neverwinter's winding streets, the buildings in all their variety and its kind people have worked their spell on Aldornar. Over the last decade, Aldornar has watched the city heal and grow, even as it turned away one murderous threat after another. He considers Neverwinter to be home.

Aldornar is respected enough that some Neverwintans assume he will stay on as a law keeper now that Lord Neverember has begun disbanding the corps of mercenaries that have long patrolled the city. The more nefarious of Neverwintan citizenry hope Aldornar will leave for good.

Though his memories of Mintarn are bright and mostly happy, Aldornar has no plans to return to the isle in the shadow of the dragon. A decade's worth of wages and gambling winnings are stowed in a coffer Aldornar keeps hidden beneath the floorboards of his rented room. Aldornar has invested in the construction of new buildings near the recently filled in chasm in southeast Neverwinter, from which he expects a steady stream of rental coin to flow. To keep himself occupied, he plans to leverage his knowledge of every street, alleyway, shortcut and hidden entrance in Neverwinter by opening a message and delivery service.

In battle Aldornar expects to fight while outnumbered. When he policed the streets of Neverwinter, Aldornar always chose to incapacitate a foe by knocking them out as opposed to killing them. He attacks to trip up foes and so creates obstacles to keep from being overwhelmed. As his foes stumble forward, Aldornar attempts to goad them into making blundering attacks that are less likely to injure or kill. Finally, he looks for the most capable of his foes and attacks to disarm them. He wears a mix of leather and steel plates, and wields a scimitar stamped through its crest with the *anondiwer*.^[2]

FOOTNOTES

[1] According to Seevalar Konth, a wandering barbarian and former member of Neverwinter's militia, "*Longscar won't kill you, but he'll make gods-certain you hurt.*" How Aldornar received the scar on his face is a topic of idle conversation among Neverwintans and outlanders sharing space in the stockade. Some say he mishandled his sword in battle. Others claim he stopped a wicked fall with his face. The adventurer Harbold knows the truth behind Aldornar's scar, for he gave it to the young fighter several winters ago. Every time Harbold overhears a story of Longscar overcoming bad odds to arrest miscreants in lieu of slaying them, he recalls the night he pressed the razor sharp edge of his axe into the Mintaran's face and promised to carve it off and hang it from his shield if he ever again learned the mercenary was brutalizing the people of Neverwinter instead of keeping the peace.

[2] *Anondiwer* is the name of a four-petaled wildflower that grows all over Mintarn. (Similar in size to the real world [celandine](#).) The flower's color shifts from bright yellow to a vibrant gold as the seasons turn. Children pluck the round flower petals and gather them in baskets on the day the Red Rage receives its tribute from the people of Mintarn. After the offering is made and the Tyrancy (i.e., Mintarn's ruler) declares the dragon satisfied, the "gold pieces" are burned in hearthfires across the island. This act heralds a celebration that lasts until sunrise. The shape of the *anondiwer* is carved or stamped into objects of great personal value to the people of Mintarn. Such a mark indicates the object is pledged to the Red Rage by its owner; it will be added to the first tribute to take place after its owner dies. It is considered an honorable act to return any *rastrix* ("dragon's treasure") to the isle of Mintarn. Upon turning over *rastrix*, one may expect free room and board for the night, and passage on the next ship to depart Mintarn.



COMPANY OF THE CRIMSON MANTICORE

This eclectic mix of adventurers ranges far across the continent of Faerûn. The Manticores are expert riders and veteran travelers. They utilize trained mounts raised from birth to never flinch at danger. (These mounts are equal to their masters in terms resolve, and quite possibly intelligence.) Between them the Manticores speak over a dozen languages. They all share a love of the open road. Wanderlust is a common trait in their ranks, as is a deep hatred for any who block the way.

The Company of the Crimson Manticore began as a specialized escort service based in Waterdeep—one that catered to elves seeking armed and mounted protection while traveling along the human-infested roads of Faerûn. Despite the many and varied rumors of magic and secret portals used by elves to travel from one end of the continent to another, most elves are required to do what other creatures do to get anywhere: put one foot in front of the other.

This reality necessitated the very best of the escorts. It was not long before the elf ranger Elnithor was tapped to aid his brethren in their travels. In turn Elnithor called upon friends and allies earned over three centuries of adventure, with an eye towards recruiting whomever was best suited to task and terrain, elf or not, and a preference for individuals native to the destination his customers had in mind.

Elnithor spent another half century guiding elves across the continent. In time he passed the reigns of control to his daughters, freeing him to take to the road with his most trusted lieutenants to settle scores tallied up in previous roadside skirmishes.

For three decades running the Manticores have exterminated brigands, highwaymen, and any creature who dares block the road. They hunt those who harm and attack elves and half-elves, and have made numerous enemies in Amn. In Tethyr, the Manticores readily share their wrath with hunters of halflings and anyone known to clear-cut woodlands and attack the supernatural denizens of the forests.

The Manticores are known for not seeking fame so much as trouble, which has led them into frequent conflict with local authorities. Nevertheless, the adventurers are welcomed in woodland settlements where elves and half-elves live. Trade caravans readily partner with the Manticores for as long as they share the same road.

Time has not blunted Elnithor's zeal. As his holdings have grown in Waterdeep (along with his grandchildren) he has recruited and replenished the ranks of the Manticores from within his own family and that of his retired lieutenants. When encountered, a "ride" of Manticores includes at least one lieutenant, and two riders for every elf under escort.

It is unheard of for Elnithor to winter anywhere other than Waterdeep. In the cold months the other Manticores can be found Faerûn-over.

The enemies of the Manticores are many and varied, and spread across the face of the continent.



Jalassa Weepingtree.

ELNITHOR AND HIS LIEUTENANTS:

- Elnithor of Farmeadows, Ranger 8, Sorcerer 5, elf
- Zazphrombelar of Almraiven, Ranger 12, elf
- Jalassa Weepingtree, Rogue 7, Fighter 3, human
- Murlantra "Many Spells" Martolk, Wizard 10, half elf
- Stornalad of Tangled Trees, Fighter 10, human
- Sasbrenor the Stormbringer, Cleric 10 (Talos), half-elf
- Horskald, Barbarian 10, human
- Thut-hakh, Monk 9 (Ilmater), half-ogre

COMPANY OF THE DRACOHAR

The members of this adventuring band all wear helms, stylized hoods or cowls resembling dragon maws, this look meant to ape the appearance of the legendary Dracohar (humanoids with dragon heads) that live somewhere in the Western Heartlands. The Company of the Dracohar are comprised mainly of veteran caravan guards and mercenaries. A pair of rogues from Berdusk, a priestess of Sune from Iriaebor and a former House mage from Suzail round out their numbers. The Dracohar are currently exploring the southernmost portion of the Sword Mountains in the vicinity of Amphail, where they resupply and rest between adventures.

DARRAMBUR'S DEVILS

Unlike other adventuring companies named after their leader, the elder Lord Darrambur Sultlue of Waterdeep does not ride with the band of adventuring darkhearts that obey his commands. Darrambur communicates with the Devils by means of magic from within his family home in the City of Splendors, where he gives instructions and hears reports of his Devils' activities on a near-daily basis. They enact Darrambur's will up and down the Sword Coast and among the many islands on the Sea of Swords.

Darrambur's business is the slave trade, his style is one of depravity and lawlessness, and he never hesitates to pay good coin to his Devils when they return from a particularly difficult task, such as the kidnapping of a noble heir or the theft of a potent magic item. Lord Sultlue has personally murdered rivals kidnapped in this manner, then had them replaced with slaves magically transformed to look like his latest victim. His Devils have delivered such disguised slaves back to family eager to receive their lost kin, collected any reward offered, then rode off before the slave exploded in an angry blast of magic.

For all his wickedness, Lord Darrambur considers himself not nearly as debauched as his younger sister, Lady Jaszmaeril Sultlue, who had preferred until late to experiment with slaves obtained exclusively from Waterdeep. She could always count on Lord Neverember to look the other way, but that reliance became a liability when Neverember was deposed and he relocated to Neverwinter.

In exchange for Lord Neverember not revealing the slaving activities of House Sultlue to Waterdeep's new Open Lord, Darrambur has agreed to his sister's urgent request to dispatch his Devils to Neverwinter for a season or two of busy work.

Claimants to Neverwinter's throne are once again gathering in the City of Skilled Hands, and his lordship Dagult Neverember expects each one to quietly disappear before they can publicly reveal their heritage and lay claim to the throne he covets for himself. For their part, Darrambur and Jaszmaeril are curious to know what would-be Kings and Queens of Neverwinter taste like.

The Devils are a mix of thieves, bounty hunters, mercenary fighters and a pair of former members of the Watchful Order of Magists and Protectors (of Waterdeep). A Paladin-turned-Oathbreaker is the public face of the Devils. She answers to Darrambur and no one else.



Embrelle's home in wintertime.

EMBRELLE OF THE COLD "THE BAREFOOT PRIESTESS"

CLERIC 5

When Neverwinter is buried under snow, the priestess Embrelle walks barefoot to Bluelake, in the heart of the Neverwintan district of the same name. As the sun sets in the west, she kneels down to gather ice from the water's edge. Holding a fist-sized chunk in her bare hands, Embrelle beseeches Auril, the Frostmaiden, to spare Neverwinter the worst of her fury. As Embrelle's hands begin to freeze, she holds the ice against her breast, then her neck and her forehead, always keeping it in cold contact with her body as she calls out to the goddess, until the ice has melted.

Embrelle does not perform the Cold Cleansing prayer when she is hunts beyond Neverwinter's walls. The Frostmaiden demands a creature be slain by her faithful priests once a year, either by the gift of Auril's magic or by forcing the creature to freeze to death. Embrelle carries her kill back to Neverwinter and butchers it in her home. Hungry supplicants gather at the stone plinth that front's Embrelle's house, their mouths watering at the smell of cooked meat. Coin offerings are placed on the squat shrine to Auril, then the priestess gifts each supplicant with meat from one hand and a blessing from the other. The coins are divided between Embrelle's purse and a hidden coffer, the later meant to fund the construction of a temple to Auril in Neverwinter.

By day, Embrelle wanders the snow-covered lanes in Neverwinter's poorer districts, scattering copper coins in her wake. The destitute collect these coins from the snow to buy food and firewood. The poor are loath to attack Auril's barefoot servant—the last hand raised against Embrelle turned black from frostbite the instant it touched her.

Lord Neverember's spies have observed other Embracers (a term for Aurilian clergy) escort wayward travelers rescued from the cold beyond Neverwinter's walls to Embrelle. The Embracers and their rescues stay for a tenday at most, then depart Neverwinter together. Lord Neverember suspects the clergy of Auril are extracting payment from the rescued in the form of labor—specifically the construction and maintenance of winter trails and roads leading to waystops and inns.

Because he sees the value to Neverwinter in such work, Lord Neverember has no plans to put a halt to the Embracers' activities.

HARBOLD'S HELLRAISERS

A mixed band of outcast dwarves and humans, Harbold's Hellraisers are a notorious band of adventurers that make all of Faerûn north of Waterdeep and west of the Anauroch their stomping grounds.

The ranks of the Hellraisers have swelled to ten humans, while the number of dwarves has shrunk to five. Once twelve dwarves walked the trails of the Savage North under Harbold's banner, but three died in battle with giants, two retired, one was disintegrated and another disappeared. [1]

The humans are all barbarians from the various tribes that roam the North. Some are like the dwarves—outcasts no longer welcome in the places they called home—while the rest are afflicted with a mix of wanderlust and a burning desire to fight.

And fighting is what Harbold's Hellraisers do best. The long reach of the barbarians compliments the close-in fighting style of the dwarves; together they make a frighteningly effective combat team. However, when the ranks of the enemy outnumber the Hellraisers, the dwarves and humans give in to battle lust and each seeks his foes in whatever numbers the gods grant.

Second only to battle is the Hellraiser's taste for good living. For the dwarves this means an endless supply of drink, a warm fire and sturdy hardwood tables and chairs capable of carrying the weight of one or more drunken dwarves, who prefer to reenact their favorite battle stories as much as tell them.

For the humans this means strong drink too, but more so food and plenty of it, as well as companionship. There are an equal number of male and female barbarians among the Hellraisers, and often as not what the dwarves require by way of ground floor furniture the barbarians require of their sleeping accommodations.

The Hellraisers reputation is such that they are required to place sizable deposits before they are allowed into most establishments in Waterdeep and Silverymoon. That they are allowed in at all has to do with the fact that the Hellraisers always pay for damages. Word has spread that they do not haggle over cost; the Hellraisers pay what is asked and then depart. This has allowed more than one innkeeper and feshall owner to rebuild and upgrade their establishments.

The dwarves get along well enough, but they count their coins greedily with one eye while watching with the other for what they regard as the thieving hands of their fellow dwarves. The barbarians have learned to never leave coins untended on any surface, and to complete all their transactions by handing coins over whenever one of their dwarf fellows is within arm's reach.

It's not unheard of for the dwarves to start bickering over imagined thefts and unfair divisions of the spoils of adventuring, and for these arguments to turn into full-fledged brawls right in the middle of the most dangerous dungeons, Underdark caverns and forgotten woodlands of the North. [2]

Harbold is a century older than any dwarf left in the ranks of the Hellraisers and has felt his age for the last fifty years. He is the only dwarf who never talks of home, and of all the dwarves he speaks the least. Yet his leadership remains unquestioned; every member of the Hellraisers is unswervingly loyal to him.

The relationship between Harbold and the many barbarian tribes of the North goes back more than two hundred years. The story of the bond Harbold forged with the tribes would last twice as long as any tale told by his fellows.

FOOTNOTES

[1] This last dwarf vanished while grappling a drow mage who'd just disintegrated her battle companion. Both dwarf and drow disappeared when she plunged a dagger into the drow's back, activating a contingency magic that whisked them off to an unknown location. The other two dwarves were made to leave against their will. Harbold kicked them out, claiming old age made them ineffective, but in truth he'd grown tired of seeing old friends fall, and believed that of the surviving dwarves these two were the most capable of starting families and living happy lives.

[2] Some of these arguments go back a hundred years or more. The barbarians find these disputes entertaining, as the arguments are prefaced by the dwarves telling hours-long stories of adventures from times past, and sometimes the noise is enough to lure horrible beasts in need of slaying.



NARVOS "THE OLD RAT" HEG

ROGUE 12

Narvos Heg is a round, bald, red-faced man with large hands and wide, flat feet. On his tiptoes Narvos is hardly taller than a dwarf; he wears boots made with thick soles to add to his height. Narvos's crooked nose protrudes from his face like a pair of curled up fingers. His big ears wing out from the sides of his head, their tops covered in a shag of horizontal salt and pepper hair that bookends his skull like a pair of miniature storm clouds.

Narvos attests his lack of height and his too-big-for-his-body features to a line of noble dwarf blood on his father's side. None know who Narvos's father is, so the truth of the matter rests on Narvos's word alone.

Books, scrolls, parchments, chapbooks, letters, runes and scraps of writing are Narvos's specialty. He prizes personal writings—letters to loved ones and journals most of all. He prefers the everyday written orders of kings and merchant princes to fanciful stories not rooted in the business of everyday life. Narvos is forever on the lookout for such material, pays handsomely for anything not in his collection, and does not express concern over an item's provenance.

Narvos occasionally circulates rumors that he's selling his prized collection, just to see who will bid the most for it. As well who will attempt to steal it or prevent others from doing so.

Narvos keeps an arsenal of magical traps in the upper floor of his residence, where many of his books, his writing desk and a plush chair for reading are kept. This level of Narvos's home is one large, open space. A grand stained-glass window fronted by thick, iron-bound shutters that close and lock from the inside fills one wall. The glass is enchanted to become translucent on command, allowing sunlight to filter into the reading room and provide a magnificent view of Castle Never to the north.

Rare books, spellbooks and fragile written items are kept in a basement level below the cellars of Narvos's home. This level is identical in size and height to the upper story reading room. Narvos is as yet unaware that his basement was built by dwarves. Nor that it connects to several other chambers leading to nearby homes, by means of a pair of secret doors on opposite walls in the basement. At least one tunnel running between the basements includes an offshoot that winds its way down into the Underdark.

The Old Rat cannot cast spells, but prefers to keep spellbooks because he believes this is what men of power do. However, Narvos is accomplished at operating magic items owing to a career in illicit dealings and thievery, his skills learned in cities far to the south of Neverwinter some two decades ago. Narvos' time as a rogue taught him that information was power. Wielded correctly, it allowed one to exercise control without facing immediate danger.

Narvos traveled north to the City of Splendors on the assumption that the weakening power of Waterdeep's nobles presented an opportunity to purchase a noble title. Though he never gained such a title, Narvos managed to acquire much in the way of journals and books sold at cut-rate prices by the nobles to finance their debts.

Frustrated over his lack of success in Waterdeep, Narvos travelled north again, this time armed with the personal journals of two former dancers who'd worked at the Moonstone Mask (a popular festhall in Neverwinter) that detailed much overheard gossip about the wealthy Neverwintans who frequented the place. He found that blackmailing the rich and moneyed of Neverwinter was all too easy a task. His success was further buttressed by the discovery of hidden riches alluded to in his collection of journals.

It should be said that Lord Neverember's triumph in gaining power in Neverwinter owes at least as much to Narvos' willingness to share information (for a stiff price) about the secret doings of Neverwinter's more powerful citizenry as it does Lord Neverember's tenaciousness and drive.

The fee to view Narvos' collection varies depending on how much coin Narvos thinks he can squeeze out of a prospective customer (anywhere from 50gp to 500gp per hour, paid up front). He even charges a fee (5gp) before he will confirm or deny that he has a given book. That Narvos owns a book an interested party wishes to read is no guarantee he will let it be viewed.

The Old Rat never allows anyone into his home until he knows for certain who they are and what information they hope to find. If Narvos decides to let someone view material stored in his basement collection, he brings that material to the top floor reading room before the customer arrives. He has no desire to betray the existence of his basement level storage. Narvos never allows copies to be made of any writings he owns, for fear this will devalue his collection.

From time to time Narvos will invite one or two respected members of Neverwintan citizenry to view a new addition to his collection, and to talk about politics and rumors while sipping firewine or zzar. Though some consider this an honor, others view it as a necessary evil in order to deal with "the fat old rat nobody has yet been able to rid from its nest." Narvos delights in showing off a long-lost diary, collection of letters or a surprise second set of account ledgers that, in the wrong hands, would bring embarrassment or ruin to his guest's families or their businesses.

Narvos does not appear to entertain underlings or hirelings at his home, yet he is rumored to employ factors in several cities up and down the Sword Coast, including a pair of agents that hunt seekers desiring to trade their offerings of books to Candlekeep for permission to view its collection, and separating these individuals from their written possessions before they reach the keep.

Narvos considers himself a silent partner in Lord Neverember's work. He believes himself equal to Neverwinter's Lord Mayor, and one day expects to be named mayor of Neverwinter.

The Old Rat is convinced that in his fortress home nobody can harm him or his prized collection.

PHARLJACK HALLOWDRAKE "TYMORA'S FAVORITE"

ROGUE 7

Pharljack Hallowdrake is not formally recognized by the Church of Tymora as having any significance to the faith. Even so, Pharljack is certain the goddess favors him because he's not dead yet.

A well-spoken and likeable fellow who dresses in a manner indicating wealth without being ostentatious, the man who refers to himself as "Tymora's favorite" is not a priest. Nor for that matter is he a wayward noble, as some Neverwintans have assumed, or well to do merchant. Rather, Pharljack is a rogue that spends his days and nights wandering amongst the upper crust of Neverwintan society, befriending every last noble, merchant, wizard, city official, and jack and lass he encounters.

Pharljack encourages these new friends to "be bold in the name of the Goddess," then produces gemstones and large coins by sleight of hand while claiming such are the gifts Tymora grants the brave, before making his baubles disappear.

In the warm months Pharljack lives in Waterdeep, where he keeps a low profile and spends his days figuring out the most daring theft he can undertake. As Waterdeep's population shrinks with the onset of winter, Pharljack performs his yearly act of larceny and then departs for Neverwinter, where he ingratiates himself with the rich and well to do.

Once he's found lodging with his new friends, Pharljack eagerly helps with any activity—the more dangerous and difficult the better—be it sword training, writing love letters, deciphering magical script, delivering bad news to testy clients or relatives, burying the dead, finding lost possessions or determining the seating arrangements for dinner parties. Pharljack is happy to taste food that's suspected of being poisoned or poorly cooked, and in the latter case will assist the cook in preparing it correctly.

That Pharljack steps on the toes of the many servants and staff he encounters is a given, but these individuals are often recipients of his generosity: coins, gems and other valuable objects that he's taken from far away Waterdeep find their way into the recipient's clothes, mattresses, or boots, along with a note of thanks or encouragement, and a reminder to be bold in the name of the goddess. (He considers these to be offerings to Tymora by way of a third party.)

Goals: Pharljack has secreted away valuables all over Neverwinter. He plans to spend one grand larcenous day collecting it all ere he retires from thieving permanently.

Assets: The idea of spending his hidden treasure is anathema to Pharljack. He will go to great lengths to leverage his friendships before he spends a single goldpiece trying to solve a problem, and will prevail upon whichever of his numerous Neverwintan acquaintances are most likely be able to help him in a difficult situation.

Plans: Pharljack expects to continue his exploits in Waterdeep for a few more years and then make Neverwinter his permanent home.

PHARLJACK IN PLAY

If the characters are employed to investigate Pharljack's doings, he will become their rival and attempt to plant evidence and sow rumors implicating the characters in thefts. He has no desire to see the characters imprisoned, but he will do his level best to protect his treasures and keep his thievery a secret.

Otherwise, the characters are most likely to encounter Pharljack at any gathering or social event the characters might frequent, such as their favorite inn or at the home of an NPC patron. If the characters prove trustworthy, Pharljack will attempt to make friends of them, then involve the characters in his scheme to guard his most precious (stolen) valuables. If asked about his possessions, Pharljack will not hesitate to claim Tymora saw fit to reserve the valuables for him, but only brave and bold allies can keep the valuables from falling into the hands of Tyche's followers (Pharljack's term for "the original owners.")

PHARLJACK'S PLANS

Action	Consequence
Pharljack arrives in Neverwinter.	Within a month or two, word arrives from Waterdeep of a significant theft of valuables made in the city just before the onset of winter. An unguilded investigator from Waterdeep passes through Neverwinter's gates.
Pharljack hides his loot	A handful of buildings in Neverwinter come to house Pharljack's stolen items. He gives lesser treasure as gifts to NPCs (and possibly the characters) as a sign of friendship and of Tymora's favor.
Accidental Discovery	One of Pharljack's secreted away treasures is found by accident. News quickly spreads of the item's provenance. The Waterdhavian investigator hastens to claim the item.
Safekeeping	Fearing discovery and the loss of more loot, Pharljack seeks out reputable adventurers wintering in Neverwinter to act as his "bold guardians," and so guard his loot for the remainder of the winter season.
Stolen, recovered, and stolen again.	The guilded investigator is the victim of a daring theft. The valuables recovered by the investigator are stolen, along with most of the investigator's personal effects.

UNGUILDED INVESTIGATOR?

Pharljack's latest victim has no desire for anyone in greater Waterdeep to learn a theft occurred at their residence. Because guild members are obliged to share client information with each other, a typical guild investigator would be less than ideal help for Pharljack's victim.

Fortunately, Waterdeep is host to a dozen or so investigators that hold no allegiance to a guild. Because these investigators provide a service that is also provided by a guild, they are known as unguilded investigators.

THE SCIONS OF THE TALKING DOOR

At the Inn of the Dripping Dagger, Trades Ward, Waterdeep, daytime customers linger alongside the regular guests of the Inn and its staff. All await the moment when the front door to the Inn utters the latest in a string of cryptic phrases. Hushed whispers and the patter of coins on tables ride over the silence, the later paying for drinks that allow "day drinkers" to keep from being ushered through a back exit so others waiting in line can take their place.

Jacks and lasses sit either side of the door day and night. They strain to hear every word when the Talking Door speaks, and then report what was heard to Systarra Lohthuntle, master of the Inn. Regular customers know these servants to be loyal to Systarra; they cannot be bribed. Waterdeep's Watchful Order of Magists and Protectors know this to be only so true, for one of the door minders was placed at the Inn by the Order, to whom he reports once a tenday.

On the night that the Door spoke, *"Five in a room shall find great wealth in the shadow of a flaming mountain."* nine souls were to be found in the main room: four servants, and five customers who'd rented rooms for the night (the Inn is closed to non-renters after sunset).

None of the five were acquainted with each other, but they'd become fast friends well before the sun tried in vain to warm Waterdeep's cold streets the next morning. Confident that the Door was describing them, and equally confident that it spoke of Mount Hotenow to the north, the five settled their accounts and departed the Inn of the Dripping Dagger for Neverwinter.

Waterdeep had barely receded over the horizon when the five travelers were set upon by cutthroats dispatched to slay them after acquiring whatever knowledge the travelers possessed of the Talking Door's utterances. By the time the quintet arrived in Neverwinter, they'd repelled three more attacks—each time surviving with little more than their lives.

The Scions wear the looks of the constantly hunted, always wary warrior who sees death lurking in every dark corner. They have no clue where their riches are to be found and have succeeded only in coming up with a name for their would-be adventuring band. The Scions hope the attacks will stop now that they have rejoined civilization.

And they are wrong.

Because the Scions have shown themselves capable of fending off the minions of adversaries too impatient to wait and see what destiny has in store, more patient enemies lurking in the shadows have chosen to afford the Scions a measure of their wise attention.

Should the adventurers find their riches, they won't keep it for long.

THE SCIONS ARE:

- Kleansur Hortothul, Just Hand of Torm, Cleric 7
- Jessalythe Sparrantar, independent adventurer-mage Wizard 7
- Blacksunder the Rogue, murderer for hire back in Waterdeep, Fighter 3, Rogue 3
- Awntus "The Black Glove" Malaver, former unguilded investigator, Fighter 1, Rogue 5
- Trarleene Gryphonsar, Sorcerer 4, Rogue 2



**The entrance to the Inn of the Dripping Dagger,
aka the Talking Door.**

SEEVALAR KONTH

BARBARIAN 5

Seevalar Konth is a wandering barbarian who has traveled the length and breadth of the Savage North.

Orc raids in the North leave destruction and death in their wake, and the barbarians who found Seevalar and raised him as their own could tell him nothing of his past, save that his village was a peaceful place before it was pillaged and burned to the ground.

Seevalar remembers his given name, but little else from his youth beyond a handful of songs he learned to play on a bowed lyre.

Hair is absent from Seevalar's head. Instead, fire scars cover his scalp, neck and back. He sports a long beard worn in twin braids that run to his trollhide belt. He wears a mix of animal hides and furs year-round and covers his feet with steel-shod boots that need repair at least once a year.

In battle Seevalar wields an old two-headed battle axe. Like his adoptive kin, Seevalar utilizes his tools for war as tools for survival beyond the battlefield. When splitting wood for fires, Seevalar envisions the head of a live orc resting on a tree stump each time he delivers a vicious two-handed chop to a defenseless cord of wood.

Seevalar wanders inland in the warm months, dividing his time between hunting to feed himself and hunting to please himself. In the latter case he tracks the movements of orcs and orc tribes. When an opportunity presents itself, he ambushes stragglers and lone orcs. The turn of the season finds Seevalar in coastal ports such as Neverwinter or Luskan. He'd planned to join with the mercenaries employed by Lord Neverember to police Neverwinter, but was surprised to learn they'd been disbanded.

He knows the names and locations of orc tribes in the vicinity of Neverwinter. In exchange for an equal share of treasure, Seevalar will join any adventuring party whose travels will take them through orc territory (provided no orcs or half-orcs are among the adventurers). He will taunt, spit on and challenge any orc or half-orc he encounters and is always spoiling for a fight.



Seevalar's axe.

TALESSA HELDARGAR

SAGE

Talessa Heldargar is a short, buxom woman who dresses in soft, many-pocketed woolens, worn leather boots and gloves, and a wimple to keep the sun off her head and neck. Her wimple conceals a set of Neverwinter Knives (such bejeweled knives are small and made to be concealed), one pair in the braids of her hair, and a third on a necklace crafted to break apart when tugged sharply. Talessa is known to be friendly, industrious and tireless, and is a shrewd haggler. She's equally likely to be found at work somewhere in Neverwinter as her home in the River District.

Talessa is a sage specializing in knowledge of plants, herbs and vegetables. She is also an accomplished apothecary and master gardener.[1]

The interior of Talessa's sprawling residence is awash in the competing scents of dried herbs, cooked vegetables, boiling liquids, cheese and wood smoke. The exterior hosts a wide variety of plants, trees, bushes and vines, and a garden that is the envy of any in the city. A small staff of live-in apprentices tend the cook fires and keep the place from being overrun by wandering vines. The most senior apprentices assist Talessa with her forays into Neverwinter, and complete errands on their own within the city.

The later task sometimes involves greeting new customers at their residences and then escorting them to a pair of tall trees that front a path of square stones leading to Talessa's front door. Customers are instructed to keep well away from the creeping vines that snap at anyone approaching too close to Talessa's garden home, and to wait under the trees (whose branches are woven together to form an arch that is proof against rain) until summoned inside. Talessa sells unguents, remedies and non-magical potions derived from plant oils not native to the northern Sword Coast

Talessa's expertise in cultivating guardian plants—thorny, poison-on-contact plants; pollen and spore producers of the toxic and sleep-inducing varieties; plants that produce a glue-like sap when their branches are broken; an aggressive, vine-tentacled flesh eater—has done much to fill her coffers of late. For a coin fee paid upfront she installs guardian plants within the gardens of her customers along with a minor fee to tend the plants to maturity.[2]

These coins are spent on new plants, fungi, seeds, and anything else she hasn't seen before. Likewise, for historical accounts of Neverwinter's gardens, and lorebooks detailing the work of tending plants and gardens as it is practiced in other parts of Faerûn.

Neverwinter's old nickname—the City of Skilled Hands—is a sobriquet Talessa wants to see returned to use in Neverwinter. She is convinced it was the hard work of hundreds of talented gardeners that made the city so beautiful, earning for it a reputation that once stretched as far south as Tethyr, and inland to Cormyr.

Talessa has been frustrated of late by the refusal of Narvos Heg to sell her an illustrated book of arbors found in Neverwinter, that she suspects is among his collection. Narvos' last words on the subject were, *"Why, that book is nigh worthless and falling apart! What would it do to my reputation to sell you such an ugly tome? I may just use it for kindling and spare you the expense."*

FOOTNOTES

[1] Fees for sage advice are on a per question or per hour basis: 1sp per question or 20gp per hour. All fees are paid in advance

[2] Such fees are charged on a per plant basis, ranging from 50gp for poisonous plants to 5,000gp for the flesh eater, and 1/100th that amount per week to tend each plant. Talessa owns a handful of unique *Pots of Awakening* (XGtE, p.138), and has begun selling **awakened shrubs** to her customers (MM, p.317). The awakened shrubs take 45 days to mature, and obey both Talessa and one other individual she designates immediately after the creature breaks free from its magical confinement. Price per shrub is left to the DM to determine.



At Talessa's table.

VELAHOONDELAR'S WAGONTAMERS

Velahoondelar hails from distant Turmish. He spends as much time cleaning his ornate breastplate as he spends on necessities like tending his horse, eating, mending and washing his clothes and taking baths. Every morning he carefully applies two horizontal marks on his forehead with chalk, in keeping with the traditions of his homeland.

To his adventuring companions Velahoondelar is a beacon of trouble; his armor is too bright—it can be seen for a mile or more over flat ground—and he cares not for bad weather. Indeed, Velahoondelar welcomes the thundering storms of the North for the chance it affords him to stand naked under the sky and bathe, no matter how cold the wind or freezing the rain. Worse, he will bury small amounts of found treasure once a tenday. Velahoondelar states such burials are offerings to Chauntea, and that doing so will sow the seeds for greater wealth and prosperity in the future. He claims it was this habit that brought wealth to himself and his adventuring companions, in the days when he was a proper wagon tamer in service to merchants plying their wares along The Trade Way and The High Road.

On the Sword Coast, the term “wagon tamer” is understood to mean an outrider that serves a traveling merchant by keeping watch for oncoming threats, and by riding at a moment's notice to catch and bring under control a wagon whose draft animals have become spooked. Merchants all over Faerûn fear the loss of goods, animals and helpers when their wagons go barreling off the road into places dangerous. Thus, Wagon Tamers are expert riders, have the ability to calm panicked animals, and the strength at the reigns to guide draft animals running wild through difficult terrain until the beasts calm and eventually stop.

Velahoondelar could not keep a pair of frightened horses pulling a wagon from falling nose first into a sinkhole, but fate kept him alive as the cart stuck in the hole and Velahoondelar tumbled between the horses to land flat on his armored back. By the dim light shining past the cart, Velahoondelar spied a hungry Umber Hulk making for the horses dangling by their harness. The horrified shout Velahoondelar gave as he drew his sword and charged the Hulk sounded like a muffled battle cry to the outriders who'd given chase, and these same outriders gave shouts of surprise after they'd attached ropes to the back of the wagon and hauled both it and the horses out of the hole.

The scene below revealed Velahoondelar on his back once more, the bulk of the beast atop him, and a hand's-length of steel protruding from the Umber Hulk's squat head. None but Velahoondelar know the Umber Hulk stumbled over goods fallen from the wagon in its haste to eat him, his instinct to squat low and extend his sword in a final act of defiance resulting in the beast impaling itself on his blade. From that day until now, whenever an unexpected success occurs or is observed by Velahoondelar, he can be heard to say, “*The gods grant victory how they will*”

Velahoondelar convinced his fellows to follow him back into the sinkhole by telling them the horses were likely spooked by the Umber Hulk tunneling near the road, and surely more beasts will follow to harass other travelers. Velahoondelar and his companions did not return to the surface until the next morning, but they carried their fresh wounds and newly-won treasure with pride. As well their stories of battle with the creatures of the Underdark and the discovery of lairs filled with the half-eaten corpses of dead travelers.

The caravan arrived in Neverwinter without further incident, but did not move on to Luskan until new outriders could be hired. Velahoondelar and his companions left the City of Skilled Hands a tenday after arriving—this time equipped with torches and gear common to adventurers and rode straight for the Umber Hulk tunnels.

The Wagontamers number ten men and six women. All are human save for a pair of half-elves from Highmoon beyond the fabled land of Cormyr. Of the humans, all except Velahoondelar are natives of the Sword Coast. They are forever on the move in search of adventure. In the cold months they travel south as far as Baldur's Gate, while the warm months see them further north on The High Road as far as Neverwinter. (Never onward to Luskan. Velahoondelar sees Luskan as a place of illiterate thieves, selfish wizards and boatmen lacking in tradition and honor, and unworthy of the Wagontamers.)

V: ADVENTURE LOCATIONS

Intrepid adventurers based in Neverwinter soon learn what merchants plying their wares on the High Road know all too well: the Sword Coast is huge. A relatively short trip along the coast, such as the journey from Leilon north to Neverwinter, covers 140 miles as the dragon flies. Were that same dragon to fly onward to Luskan, another 170 miles of terrain would pass beneath its wings.

Let's suppose our hypothetical dragon—emboldened by the pace of its flight—decides to turn eastward from Luskan and make for the Long Road, then follow it south as far as Westbridge before banking hard to the west and chasing the sunset all the way back to Leilon, thereby completing its journey.

The beast will have flown inland another 200 miles, traveled 310 miles south, then covered another 200 miles to return to its starting point. A 310 mile x 200 mile rectangle encompasses **62,000** square miles of terrain.

It's no exaggeration to say the environs within a tenday's ride of Neverwinter can provide a lifetime of adventuring opportunities.

The adventure sites included in this chapter are all located in the general vicinity of Neverwinter, with the distant locations generally being more lethal than the sites found closer to the city.



Neverwinter and Surrounding Lands
One Hex = 24 miles

THE EXPOSED CRYPT

AN ADVENTURE FOR FOUR CHARACTERS OF 1ST LEVEL.

The lands north of Waterdeep are no stranger to extraplanar incursions. Demons, Devils and worse have rampaged across the Sword Coast and the North, leaving destruction and death in their wake. Great heroes oft rise up to stem the tide, whether by leading armies or by standing with a small group of like-minded individuals against the forces of darkness, and most such heroes give their lives to see the threat vanquished.

Such threats are not limited to the lands under the sun, however, for the Underdark hosts its share of extraplanar terrors. Beneath the lands of the Sword Coast North, mighty priestesses and cunning archmages call on the Hells and the Abyss for power and for assistance. The horrible results of their castings sometimes find their way to the surface, there to wreak havoc anew.

In the modern-day Realms, the lands north of Waterdeep host extraplanar threats great and small, each terror eager to test itself against the best heroes the Realms has to offer.

BACKGROUND

Yeenoghu, demon lord of senseless destruction and slaughter, can sense the echoes of butchery and ruination throughout the multiverse. Where destruction has occurred on a grand scale in the Realms, thralls to Yeenoghu soon follow. As his followers grow in strength, so does the demon lord's power. With that power comes the means to sense places dedicated to destruction and the tools with which to unleash it.

Thusly, Yeenoghu desires its followers to plunder ancient crypts filled with magic. The demon lord cares not for wands, potions or spell scrolls. No, it requires magical weapons and armor to be found. To this end, Yeenoghu has granted visions to its most ardent worshippers gathered in Neverwinter Wood, all but commanding them by means of omens and dreams to gather their packs and seek out forgotten places filled with treasure.

Between Neverwinter and Port Llast, packs of gnolls search for portents from their demon god. Wherever blood trails lead, they follow. When an arrow or spear is found, the gnolls look to see which way it points. When the coastal winds sound like howling calls to slaughter, the gnolls dig.

DM'S INFORMATION

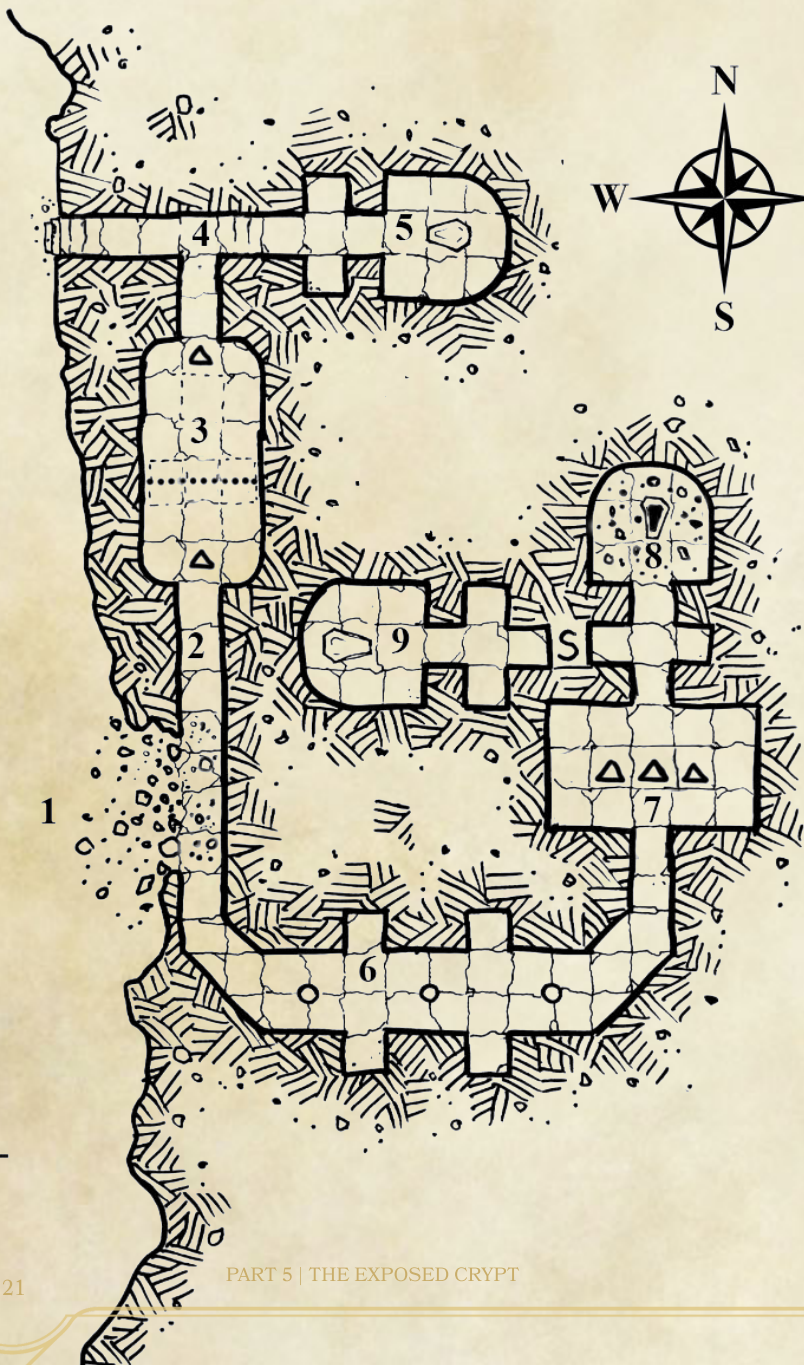
A pack of gnolls uncovered the entrance to a warlord's crypt a quarter mile inland from the coast. The crypt is one of several to be found in region. These are the fabled Sunset Crypts.

The stone door fronting the entrance proved impossible to pry open. Thanks to considerable erosion along the face of the rocky hill the crypt is built into, the gnolls were able to excavate their way through a partially collapsed wall and into a hallway within the crypt. The gnolls rushed in, eager to plunder in Yeenoghu's name. The pack lord became trapped behind a portcullis, while his lieutenants were impaled on spikes at the bottom of a pit trap. Lesser gnolls recovered magical armor and weapons from one tomb. Little else was found. The pack lord could not find another way out, nor could the portcullis be lifted.

A new pack lord was chosen that night. The gnolls still loyal to their trapped leader were slaughtered and eaten by the rest of the pack, their bones picked clean and heaped into a pile for a ritual ceremony. By the next morning four gnoll witherings stood tall. The newly risen undead were left to guard the crypt for all of eternity. Armed with magic and emboldened by their success, the remaining gnolls have set out to find more treasure. Surely more tombs are to be found.

ABANDONED GNOLL CAMPSITE (NOT PICTURED)

By the time the characters arrive at the adventure location, the cannibalistic gore stench lurking in the air will have been overcome by the vomitous smell of gnoll and hyena dung. The remnants of the pack's campsite are scattered near the hole in the rock wall. A smaller excavation site is visible 60 feet to the north, where the gnolls discovered the main entrance to the crypt. The remnants of the withering ritual—a circle formed of rocks stained in dried blood—is visible to all. A palpable sense of unrestrained bloodlust lingers over the ritual site where the four hundred and twenty second layer of the Abyss kissed the ground ever so briefly.



There is nothing of value remaining at the campsite. If the characters inspect the ritual circle, a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check is necessary to determine that a summoning took place here. A roll of 20 or higher indicates that undead were created in the circle with energy from another plane of reality.

DUNGEON DRESSING

- One square equals 5 feet
- Ceilings are 10 feet tall.
- There are no active light sources in the crypt.
- The floors in the Exposed Crypt are covered in flagstones 5 feet on a side.
- The walls and ceiling are finished in flat, smooth stone.
- The floor and all objects in the crypt are covered in a 1/2 inch layer of dust accumulated over an eighteen hundred year period.

AREA 1: EXCAVATED ENTRANCE

Approximately 20 feet of wall has collapsed under the weight of time and a savage beating delivered by the gnoll pack. The broken rocks count as difficult terrain for any creature moving into or out of the excavated entrance.

2 **Gnoll Witherlings** (VGtM p.155) guard the excavated entrance. Bits of flesh cling to the exposed bones of the two undead creatures. They attack any creature that comes within 30 feet of the entrance. Each witherling is equipped with a 3 foot long iron bar topped with an iron basket meant to hold fuel for a torch (wielded as a club). Each iron torch is covered in thick, powdery dust down to where the witherlings grip them.

DIFFICULT TERRAIN

Double movement cost 1 extra foot for every foot of movement.

AREA 2: HALLWAY

Sunlight filters into this narrow hallway, illuminating the excavated entrance and little else. The hallway is 5 feet wide and runs 45 feet from north to south. An odor that is equal parts old stone, stale, unrecycled air, and dust emanates from the crypt. The middle 20 feet of the hallway is covered in broken stones (see the adventure map). These spaces count as difficult terrain. South of the excavated entrance, the hallway is free of debris and turns southeast, where it disappears into darkness. The northern part of the hallway is debris free as well. It runs 15 feet past the entrance, then is consumed in black silence. A thick layer of dust covers the hallway floor, save for where several sets of humanoid tracks run in both directions. The tracks show movement into the tomb, as well as back out. A DC 10 Wisdom (Survival) check allows a character to discern at least 10 different sets of tracks leading into the crypt, but only 7 set going back out. If a character achieves a 15 or higher on their roll, they determine the type of tracks: gnoll.

GNOLL WITHERLING

*Medium undead, chaotic evil,
Volo's Guide to Monsters p 155*

Armor Class 12 (natural armor)
Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)
Speed 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	8 (1)	12 (+1)	5 (3)	5 (3)	5 (3)

Damage Immunities poison
Condition Immunities - exhaustion, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft, passive Perception 7
Languages - understands Gnoll but can't speak
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Rampage. When the witherling reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, it can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack.

Actions

Multiattack. The witherling makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its club, or two with its club.

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

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

Reactions

Vengeful Strike. In response to a gnoll being reduced to 0 hit points within 30 feet of the witherling, the witherling makes a melee attack

AREA 3: CHAMBER OF THE PORTCULLIS

This 30 foot by 15 foot chamber is divided in half by a portcullis. The bars of the portcullis are 10 feet tall, 1 foot in diameter and spaced 6 inches apart.

A character approaching from the area 2 hallway automatically sees that the middle flagstone in the southernmost row of flagstones rests a few inches below ground level. The middle flagstone at the north end of the room is in the same state. An opening in the north wall leads to area 4. Multiple sets of tracks are visible in the dust in the southern half of the chamber, but only one set of tracks is visible on the northern half.

WORK TOGETHER

A successful DC 30 Strength (Athletics) check is required to lift the portcullis. If two or more characters try, the stronger character makes a Strength check with advantage (PHB p.175).

PORTCULLIS TRAP

Mechanical trap

Stepping on either pressure plate in area 3 causes it to sink a few inches into the floor. Whenever both pressure plates have sunk in this way, a portcullis slams down into the floor from the ceiling. The triangle markers on the crypt map show where each pressure plate is located. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check allows a character to spot a pressure plate that hasn't already been stepped on.

If a character is standing in a space beneath the portcullis when the trap activates, they must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw to leap out of the way (character chooses which side to leap towards). On a failed save, the character takes 2d10 piercing damage (the DM determines randomly what side the character ends up on).

AREA 4: CRYPT ENTRANCE

The north end of the hallway leading from area 3 ends at a T-shaped intersection. To the east, the hallway extends for 15 feet to a pair of shallow alcoves, then continues for an additional 5 feet to area 5. An unlit iron torch is mounted on the wall of each alcove. These torches can be removed from their holding brackets with little effort.

To the west, the hallway runs for 15 feet to a door made of solid stone. If the characters search the door, they quickly realize the door has fused with the hallway (the crypt builders had designed the stone door to slowly merge with the stone of hallway floor, walls and ceiling over time).

AREA 5: TRIBUTE TOMB

The Tribute Tomb is devoid of decorations. The stone sarcophagus resting in the middle of the room is covered in carvings of faces. These are the likenesses of the best soldiers to have been led by the warlord for whom the crypt was built.

The **Gnoll Pack Lord** (MM p.163) has collapsed in area 5. It is suffering from 3 levels of Exhaustion (PHB p.291). The effects of its exhaustion are noted in the monster's description on this page. If the characters manage to open the portcullis, the pack lord will take up a position behind the sarcophagus, granting it half cover. It fires arrows at anyone who enters area 5. It is too exhausted to surprise anyone. Once combat is joined, the pack lord fights to the death.

Aside from its weapons, the gnoll carries a pouch of coins totaling 50 gp in value.

A DEFENSIVE POSITION

The gnoll pack lord will try to keep the sarcophagus between itself and as many characters as possible, and use its glaive (10 ft reach) to attack over the sarcophagus.

Its targets will have half cover +2 to AC and +2 to Dexterity saving throws (PHB p.176).

If the gnoll pack lord drops a character to 0 hit points, it will use its Rampage ability to move and attack another character. Exhaustion limits the pack lord to 5' of bonus movement.

GNOLL PACK LORD

Medium humanoid (gnoll), chaotic evil

Armor Class 15 (natural armor), 17 with half cover

Hit Points 49 (9d8 + 9)

Speed 15 ft. due to exhaustion

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)
• Senses	darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10				
• Languages	- Gnoll				
• Challenge	1 5 (350 XP)				

Exhaustion Level 3 - moves at half speed; has disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls and saving throws.

Rampage. When the gnoll reduces a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack on its turn, it can take a bonus action to move up to half its speed and make a bite attack

Actions

Make the pack lord's attacks as normal, adding the bonuses listed below. Then subtract 2 from each roll to account for disadvantage due to exhaustion

Multiattack. The gnoll makes two attacks, either with its glaive or its longbow.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

Glaive. Melee Weapon Attack: +5 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target *Hit* 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage

Longbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

The lid of the sarcophagus has four holes along its edge, two per side. If the characters inspect the sarcophagus, any character with a Passive Perception score of 10 or higher notices the holes. If at least four characters insert iron torches and/or crowbars into the holes, the lid can be lifted and removed safely. It weights 1,000 pounds.

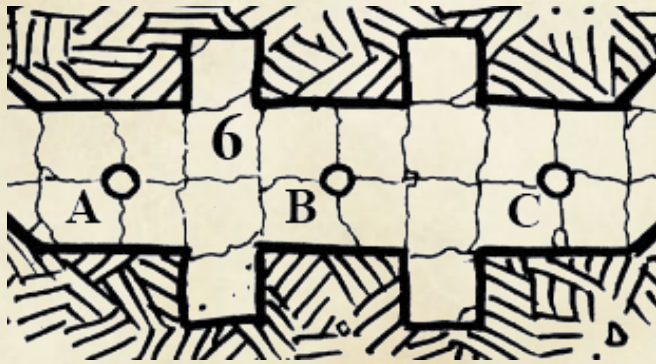
MOVE THAT LOAD!

A characters can Push, Drag or Lift 30 times their Strength score (PHB p 196)

Inside the sarcophagus is a trove of preserved simple and martial melee weapons. If the characters search through the trove, they discover one weapon coated in adamantite (XGtE p.78; type of weapon is DM's choice). This weapon scores a critical hit whenever it hits an **object** (not a creature).

AREA 6: HALL OF THREE PILLARS

The hallway from Area 2 leads to a room 40 feet long and 10 feet wide. As the characters move further into the room, they see the first of three pillars that dominate the center of the room. Each pillar is 10 feet tall and 2 feet in diameter, and features a carving of a **mighty warrior**, with landscapes, clouds and mountains around it. Beyond the first pillar, two pairs of empty alcoves are carved into the north and south walls. Multiple creature tracks run to either side of the pillars and onward into the darkness beyond this room.



Location of pillars A, B and C in area 6

The warrior carved into **pillar A** faces west. Five of the warrior's six arms hold a different weapon. The warrior's sixth arm is extended towards the ground. If the characters inspect the pillar, they can see small, hand-high figures carved into the bottom of the pillar, underneath the warrior's open hand. Each figure is depicted wearing armor and lifting a tiny weapon up high in tribute. Characters may attempt a DC 10 Intelligence (History or Religion) check to identify the six-armed warrior: Targus, the ancient Netherese god of unchecked war and slaughter. Characters that achieve a 15 or better on their check realize that the small alcoves in this room are meant for supplicants to pray and to reflect on past battles. A ring of dust 2 inches tall surrounds this pillar.

The warrior depicted **pillar B** faces west. He is depicted wearing archaic half plate armor but no warhelm. He wears a diamond-shaped shield on his left arm. On his right arm, an ornate pattern runs from his elbow to the fingers of his hand, which grips a wand. A dagger is sheathed in his belt. A ring of dust 2 inches tall surrounds this pillar.

Unlike the warriors shown on Pillars A and B, the warrior carved into **pillar C** faces east. The features of the warrior are covered in a layer of dust. The warrior is depicted as wearing ornate chain armor. Her gauntleted hands grip the pommel of a greatsword. An enormous horned warhelm rests over her head, from which her long hair flows down over her armor.

Any character with a passive Perception score of 12 or higher that stands within 5 feet of a pillar notices a set of 1 inch diameter holes on that pillar. The holes are set 5 feet up, one hole on the pillar's north side, the other hole on the south side. Each hole runs about 6 inches deep into the pillar. If iron torches or crowbars are inserted into both holes of the pillar, and at least two characters push or pull the rods, that pillar can be rotated.

The alcoves between pillar A and B are empty.

The alcoves between pillar B and pillar C each hold one unlit iron torch. These can easily be removed from their holding brackets.

PILLAR FACING CHART

Pillar	Links To	Warrior Facing East	Warrior Facing West
A	Area 3	Trap Reset	Trap Triggered
B	Area 7	Trap Reset	Trap Triggered
C	Area 9	Secret Door Shut	Secret Door Open

When a trap is triggered in the crypt, its corresponding pillar rotates 180 degrees. This causes the warrior carved in the pillar to face west. Because the gnoll pack lord triggered the area 3 trap, Pillar A faces west. Ditto for the unfortunate gnolls impaled on spikes in area 7, who caused Pillar B to face west.

If a pillar is rotated to face east, then its corresponding trap is reset. The trap can then be triggered again per its description.

The only means for the characters to enter Area 9 is by rotating Pillar C to face west.

TRAP GOES BOOM!

Triggering either trap in the crypt is not a subtle event. The booming echo of the portcullis landing in area 2 or the hinged floor plates slamming into the pit walls in area 6 can be heard everywhere in the crypt.

AREA 7: SPIKED PIT TRAP ROOM

Unless the characters have reset the trap in this room, the spiked pit trap is open. The bodies of two gnolls impaled on spikes are visible within the pit, their blood congealed into an oily black stain on the pit floor. The stench of rotting flesh permeates the room.

If the characters reset the pit trap before entering this room, then the corpse stench remains, and all the dust that had collected atop the trap's cover has fallen into the pit.

In either case, tracks are visible in the thick dust, running in both directions to either side of the pit trap cover. Two sets of tracks end at the south edge of the trap cover.

HIDDEN SPIKED PIT TRAP

Mechanical trap, DMG p.122-123

The triangles on the crypt map in area 7 indicate the location of this trap.

The pit is 10' deep. Creatures falling into the pit suffer 6 (1d10) piercing damage from the spikes and 4 (1d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall.

If the pit trap has been reset, no Wisdom (Perception) check is required to notice the dust is missing from the cover of the trap. However, if the character's don't already know there is a trap in area 7, a DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check is required to confirm the presence of a cover/false floor.

AREA 8: TOMB OF THE BANNER LEADER

The hallway leading north from area 7 runs for 15 feet, then opens into area 8.

A pair of alcoves are visible on both sides of the hallway. There are torch brackets in either alcove, but no iron torches are mounted in them. Any character that searches the left-hand alcove may attempt a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) roll to discover the western wall of the alcove is really a secret door. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check allows a character to determine that no mechanism is present in the alcove to open the secret door. The secret door can only be opened by rotating pillar C to face west. If the characters have already done this, then the alcove runs for an additional 20 feet to area 8.

Area 8 measures 15 feet on a side. The north wall of area 8 is rounded off. The lid of the sarcophagus in the center of this room was lifted off by the gnolls and toppled over, shattering into pieces. Dried blood is visible on the broken stone and the sarcophagus where the gnolls pried and tore at the lid, breaking fingers, bending weapons and tearing off claws in their haste. Gnoll tracks are everywhere.

Inside the sarcophagus, a permanent illusion rests over the corpse of the banner leader. The illusion is identical to the warrior depicted on pillar B, but every detail is rendered in full color. Thanks to the plundering gnolls, the banner leader's remains are no longer concealed beneath the illusion; his skull rests half in and out of his illusionary face, his other remains scattered throughout the tomb, the whole business a macabre juxtaposition of what was and what is.

2 Gnoll Witherlings stand silently in the southeast and southwest corners of area 8. They attack any creature that enters the tomb.

A MATTER OF SURPRISE

The witherlings have a chance of surprising characters that enter area 8 (PHB p.189).

Compare the witherlings' Dexterity (Stealth) score of 9 against the passive Wisdom (Perception) score of the first character to enter the tomb. If the character's score is 8 or less, they are surprised and cannot move or take an action on the first round of combat.

- If the characters search the sarcophagus, a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a metal wand underneath one of the banner leader's decaying boots. It is a *War Wand* of Netherese make.
- If the characters search the floor of the tomb, they recover an ornate sleeve of lace entwined with the finger bones of the corpse on a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check. This is a *Sunrise Sleeve* of Netherese make.
- If the character's look for the half plate armor, diamond-shaped shield or dagger depicted on pillar B (and visible in the illusion inside the sarcophagus), allow them to roll a Perception check. Regardless of the roll's result, these items cannot be found—they were all plundered by the gnoll pack.

AREA 9: TOMB OF THE WARLORD

Beyond the secret door, a hallway runs 25 feet to the west. Two alcoves in the middle of the hallway hold unlit iron torches. The dust covering the is smooth and flat; the gnoll pack never found this hallway, nor the tomb that lay beyond it.

The tomb is identical in size and shape to the tombs in area 5 and 8. A single unopened sarcophagus stands in the center of the room.

If the characters clear off the dust on the sarcophagus lid, they see a simple inscription in a strange language carved into its surface. A successful DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana or History) check identifies the language as Netherese. If a character is capable of reading Netherese, or if *Comprehend Languages* is cast, the inscription reads as follows: *Onward towards the sunset.*

The lid of this sarcophagus can be lifted off with crowbars and/or iron torches. (See area 5 description.) Inside, the corpse of the warlord is hidden beneath an illusion depicting a tall, flame-haired warrior wearing a shining war helm, its horns curling out over her shoulders. Equally bright are the gauntlets covering her forearms and hands, the later gripping her greatsword.

The warlord's chain mail and greatsword are made of adamantine. Her warhelm is a *Battlefield Helm* and her gauntlets are *Close Quarters Gauntlets*. Both are of Netherese make.



An illusion in her sarcophagus depicts the warlord's greatsword and gauntlets.

XP AWARDS AND TREASURE

This adventure awards a maximum of 550 XP for defeating monsters.

- Witherlings: 50 XP each. 200 XP total
- Gnoll Pack Lord (exhausted): 350 XP.

WHY 350 XP FOR THE GNOLL PACK LORD?

A gnoll pack lord is a CR 2 encounter worth 450 XP. But the pack lord is suffering 3 levels of exhaustion, so it is closer to a CR 1 encounter worth 200 XP.

Because the pack lord starts the encounter with half cover, the encounter difficulty is increased slightly--about halfway between CR 1 and CR 2.

The difference between a CR 1 and CR 2 XP award is 150 XP (450-200). 150 XP divided in half is 75 XP.

The final award totals 350 XP (200+75).

NOTE: You may adjust the award up or down, depending on how difficult or easy the encounter proved to be.

TREASURE SUMMARY

The following summary lists the items of treasure found in this adventure, as well as their value.

Mundane items and their gold piece values (i.e., the iron torches in the alcoves and the nonmagical weapons in area 5) are not included.

Consult Appendix A of this book for descriptions of magic items not found in the Dungeon Master's Guide.

AREA 5

- Coins totaling 50 gp.
- Adamantine mace worth 505 gp.

An adamantine weapon scores a critical hit whenever it hits an **object** (not a creature).

AREA 8

- *War Wand*.
- *Sunrise Sleeve*.

AREA 9

- Adamantine greatsword worth 550 gp.
- Adamantine chain mail worth 575 gp.

Adamantine armor converts all critical hits scored against the wearer to normal hits.

MODIFYING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure is designed to introduce Dungeon Masters and players to the basic rules of Dungeons & Dragons.

If your group is already familiar with the game and the rules, you may wish to add more variety and challenge to the adventure. In this case, consider adding a pair of gnolls (MM p.163) for the characters to encounter as they're exploring area 6 or area 7.

These gnolls can be scouts for a rival pack searching for treasure in the area who discovered the crypt entrance after the PCs are already inside. These gnolls will attempt to sneak up on the characters and attack them from behind.

Whether or not the rest of the pack shows up before the characters depart the crypt is, of course, up to you.

ADVENTURE AFTERMATH

The presence of the gnolls will have a destabilizing effect on foot traffic and overland trade between Neverwinter and Luskan. If the gnolls recover magical weapons and armor, these will be brought into the Neverwinter Wood. There, a small but growing army of gnolls have gathered to plot the spread of their race in this part of the Realms. They follow the orders of a mighty Flind (VGtM p.153).

Besides the gnolls, the choices the characters make once the adventure is completed may have consequences that affect Neverwinter, other NPCs, and the characters themselves. Once their choices have been made, it's up to you to decide if any of the following events occur:

- If the characters complete the adventure and then decide to look for gnoll tracks, they may encounter the remnants of the gnoll pack that dug their way into the Exposed Crypt and plundered it. They may also encounter individual gnoll scouts belonging to other packs. If the characters follow a gnoll scout back to its pack, they may discover the location to another crypt.
- Because the gnolls in the region will attack all other non-gnoll humanoids (both for food and to make more gnolls), at some point word of the gnoll presence will start to spread from the survivors of such attacks. When this happens, or if the characters return to Neverwinter and inform the authorities that gnolls are wandering along the coast, Lord Neverember will dispatch mounted patrols to find and exterminate gnolls wherever they can be found. A coin bounty on gnoll heads will be announced. Glory seekers, mercenaries and rival adventurers will head north to hunt. Some will return with gnoll heads to trade for bounty coins. Others will die. Lord Neverember may call upon the characters to help guide Neverwinter's soldiers to the area where they encountered gnolls, and/or to assist the soldiers in the battles to come, both for the greater good of Neverwinter and the safety of its people.
- If the characters talk about their adventure experience with NPCs in Neverwinter, an NPC may recognize the adventure location as one of the legendary Sunset Crypts. Likewise, if the characters show off any adamantine weapons, armor or magic items they found, as all are of Netherese make. (Most sages assume the Sunset Crypts are of Netherese origin.) The daily Clack in Neverwinter, and later the Sword Coast, will claim the legendary crypts have been found. Adventurers from Neverwinter will set out to explore the coastal region between Neverwinter and Luskan. Over the next few months, adventurers from up and down the Sword Coast, as well as from further inland, will arrive in Neverwinter, then set out to find the Crypts.

LAIR OF THE SUMMONER

AN ADVENTURE FOR FOUR CHARACTERS OF 5TH LEVEL.

The wizard Anzarra was a master of conjuration. Hers were the spells that tamed elementals and bound fey spirits. She valued privacy and loyalty, and always kept her word.

Anzarra was strict with her two apprentices. Discipline formed the core of every lesson she taught, for to be undisciplined when summoning creatures was to risk death. Such lessons were reinforced by her trusted friend and steward, Dralthus, who took charge of Anzarra's lair when she was away on business in Neverwinter or Waterdeep.

The forested hills west of Mount Hotenow concealed Anzarra's lair from prying eyes and interlopers. Within the lair, she crafted magic items, researched spells, taught her two apprentices, and whisked herself away by means of *Teleport* spells when the time came to sell her magical creations or to purchase supplies for the lair.

Anzarra sometimes took an apprentice along with her, but never her steward. Dralthus always remained behind to see to his duties within the lair, and to ensure the remaining apprentice stayed hard at work.

The life Anzarra had crafted for herself was shattered soon after she encountered a *Crown of Demon Summoning*. The magic item was loaned to her with a request by its owner to discern its properties and, if possible, to discover where it came from.

Anzarra knew that confidence is no substitute for discipline. But the crown had its ways; it urged her to summon a fiend, for was she not a master of the art summoning? Had the crown not distracted her, she would have realized the Shadow Demon she'd summoned with the crown's power had not departed back to the Abyss the moment she'd stopped concentrating on controlling it.

She never saw the fiend lingering in the shadows; did not see it follow her into her private chambers; could not defend herself against its black talons thrusting into her heart, killing her. She died not knowing that a fiend summoned by the crown that goes on to slay a creature may remain.

Dralthus joined his master in death that night. He surprised the fiend while it was feasting on Anzarra's corpse, and it slew him before he could summon help.

After attuning to the crown, the Shadow Demon summoned a Balgura. It killed and ate the first apprentice to come and see what was causing a tumult in the laboratory. At the command of the Shadow Demon, the Balgura found the other apprentice and broke her legs. The Shadow Demon fed the Balgura Dralthus' body as a reward for good behavior.

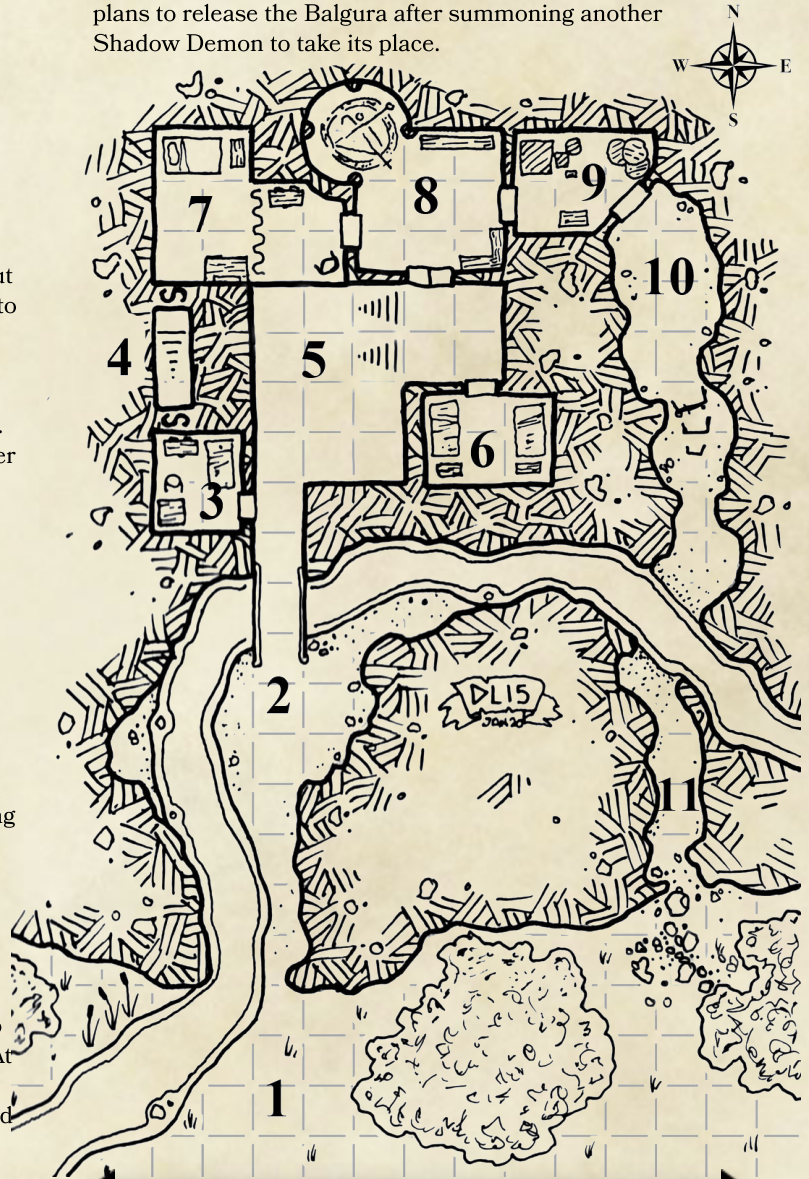
The following morning, the hobbled apprentice was devoured by a pack of summoned Dretches. The Balgura would have eaten a Dretch or two, but for the fact that the Shadow Demon led the fiends on a hunt. The unwary prospectors overwhelmed by the fiends made for good eating.

The demon pack returned with full bellies the next morning, and another captive. A second pack of Dretches was summoned. Now all the Dretches guard the lair entrance.

The infestation had begun.

FIENDISH INSTINCT

Among the assembled fiends there exists a shared instinct to cause a demonic infestation in an area centered on Anzarra's former lair. This primal urge, coupled with the leadership of the Shadow Demon, is the only force keeping the demons from going their separate ways. The Shadow Demon will attempt to capture prey, summon more demons via the crown, and keep the demons fed for as long as possible. Because it knows it doesn't have the power to control more than a handful of fiends, the Shadow Demon plans to release the Balgura after summoning another Shadow Demon to take its place.



DUNGEON DRESSING

- One square equals 5 feet.
- Ceilings are 10' unless otherwise specified.
- Floor, walls, ceiling are worked earth and stone.
- There are no active light sources.
- Doors are made of wood, with iron bar door handles. Each door is mounted on two hinges set into the earthen walls.
- Doors are not locked.
- The stream is 5' deep. Current moves at 3 mph.

AREA 1: ENTRANCE BY THE STREAM

A swift-moving stream flows out of a gash in the hillside, the water burbling and rippling as it meanders to the east, destined to join the Neverwinter River. To the north, the great bulk of Mt. Hotenow looms over the hillside, its volcanic maw hidden among the clouds. To the east, a single massive oak tree stands at the base of the hill, its thick branches rising up 30', while its lowest branches reach to within a few feet of the ground. To one side of the stream, there is an opening in the base of the hill just wide enough for medium creatures to pass through one at a time, and then onward into darkness.

The idyllic scene is broken by a fetid stench hanging in the air.

16 Dretches (MM p.57) lurk within the crown of the oak tree. This pack of fiends has been tasked with capturing intruders. The dretches swarm any creature that approaches within 15' of the oak tree. The dretches exit in three waves; 4 dretches, then 4 more, then 8, one wave per round until the tree is emptied.

The first wave uses Fetid Cloud to slow attackers. The second and third use Fetid Cloud on any characters that move outside of the first cloud. Each member of the dretch pack will knock out an intruder instead of dealing a killing blow (see Knocking a Creature Out; PHB p.198). If the pack is reduced to 8 or less members, they will either attack to kill or they will flee into the woods (50% chance of either).

QUICKEN THE PACE

In order to keep this encounter from bogging down, be prepared to roll each dretch's attack dice simultaneously. Designate one d20 for the bite attack, one d20 for the claw attack, then roll both dice at the same time. Use the average damage (3 and 5, respectively) instead of rolling damage dice. If multiple dretches attack a character, roll all their attacks at the same time if you have enough d20s. (Don't ask to use a player's d20. Bad form, that.)

AREA 2: INTO THE HILLSIDE

Any unconscious characters will be dragged into this area by the dretches from area 1.

The narrow opening in the face of the hillside fronts a tunnel that extends 20' north to a hollowed out space within the hill. This space is roughly 10' square. A wedge-shaped path in the northeast corner extends 10' to the east, to where the stream flows out of an opening in the hill. The stream passes under a sturdy bridge, then flows onward to the south and out of the hill.

The far end of the bridge leads to a hallway carved out of the hillside. This hallway is the main entrance to Anszarra's lair. It extends 10' to the north. The walls, floor and ceiling of the hallway are worked earth and stone, the various layers of sediment and other minerals comprising the hill visible to the naked eye.

At the end of the hallway, a door is visible in the western wall. It is made of vertical wooden slats nailed to two horizontal wooden boards.

AREA 3: CHAMBER OF THE STEWARD

The entrance to Dralthus' living quarters is not locked. Pulling the iron door handle up or down lifts an iron wedge out of a channel carved into the space holding the door. It opens inward on greased hinges. Inside, the 10' square chamber holds a low bed on which a lumpy mattress rests. A single desk and chair sit in the southwest corner, opposite the door. Parchment, two quills, an ink bottle and oil lamp rest atop the desk. (The lamp oil has been used up).

A waist high bookshelf stands in the northwest corner. A row of books fills the bottom shelf. The wood of the second shelf sags under the weight of more books, chapbooks, faded broadsheets and a handful of unused parchment pages. The books on the first shelf consist of ledgers in Dralthus's handwriting. The ledgers record expenses and transactions made by Anszarra over the years. Other ledgers hold inventory records and records of supplies, as well as the details of verbal transactions made between Anszarra and her customers. A successful DC 15 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals three *Elemental Gems* and four *Pots of Awakening* await delivery, and gives the name of each customer. One book lists a history of experiments and summonings made by the conjuror.

A secret door is set into the wall behind the bookshelf. It is moderately difficult to find: Wisdom (Perception) DC 15. Its outer surface is painted to match the mixed earth and mineral tones of the walls in the lair.

AREA 4: SECRET HALLWAY

This narrow hallway runs 15' to the north and rises up 5' over its length. A second secret door stands at the end of the hallway. It opens into the Conjuror's Quarters. Dralthus and Anszarra used this passage to speak in private and to share a moment's embrace out of the view of the apprentices.

AREA 5: SPELLCASTING CHAMBER

A short but steep stairway rises up 5' in the northeastern corner of this 15' wide, 20' long room. The ceiling is 15' Beyond the stairs, the room continues eastward for an additional 10'. Here the ceiling is 10' overhead. A pair of doors are visible in the center of the north wall in this part of the chamber. A second door stands opposite the double doors, in the southern wall. The remains of Dralthus and an apprentice are scattered along the east wall.

The **Balgura** (MM p.56) has claimed the chamber for itself. It hates the low ceilings and being forced to squeeze through the narrow (5') hallways. Only the instinct to see an infection of demons spread has kept it from abandoning the lair. The balgura will not attempt to engage intruders in areas 1 or 2. Instead, it will cast *Invisibility* on itself and wait in the easternmost part of area 4, then leap to the attack. After its first attack, the Balgura will try to *Entangle* characters, then use its 10' reach to focus its attacks on one entangled character at a time while speaking telepathically in its foul Demonic language, promising to slay them all.

Any unconscious creatures deposited by the dretches in area 2 will be brought here by the Balgura. It selects one captive to bring to the shadow demon in area 8. It keeps one captive to eat and feeds the rest to the Dretches.

AREA 6: APPRENTICES CHAMBER

This 10' long by 15' wide room is tidy and clean. It holds two lumpy beds. A chest rests at the foot of each bed. The apprentices used this room for sleeping and studying. There are no desks or bookshelves here.

Both chests are protected by *Arcane Lock*. The Dexterity check DC to pick the locks is 20. A *Knock* spell reduces the DC to 10. Each chest contains a spare set of clothes, knee-high boots, a travel robe, paycoins (a mix of coins totaling 75 gp) and a spellbook.

If the bed near the east wall is searched, a small pouch of gemstones (250 gp value) stolen by one of the apprentices may be found sewn into the mattress: Wisdom (Perception) DC 20.

If the bed near the west wall is searched, a *Wand of Secrets* may be found attached to the underside of the bedframe: Wisdom (Perception) DC 15. By means of this wand, an apprentice discovered the secret door in the Steward's room.

AREA 7: CONJUROR'S QUARTERS

A floor to ceiling curtain divides this chamber in half. The eastern portion is 10' on a side and holds a workbench along the north wall and a much-used chair in the southeast corner. A door in the eastern wall leads to area 7.

Motes of sapphire, ruby and emerald dust glitter within ink stains atop the surface of the workbench. Other tools for mixing spell inks and preparing material components are strewn across its surface.

The western half of the room is 15' long and 10' wide. A sturdy wooden secretary (i.e., a combination desk and bookcase) stands against the south wall, but there is no matching chair. The secret door in the southern wall is open. Opposite the secret door, a blood soaked bed holding a half-eaten corpse takes up most of the north wall. A rectangular chest banded in iron sits at the foot of the bed. The floor in this part of the chamber is covered in dried blood.

There is nothing of value hidden in or under the bed. If Anszarra's remains are searched, a key to the chest at the foot of the bed will be found.

The chest is closed, locked, and protected by *Arcane Lock*. A character using lock picks may attempt a DC 25 Dexterity check to unlock the chest. This DC can be reduced by 10 if *Knock* is used. Inside the chest are a pair of ankle-high leather boots, a heavy travel robe, 2 pair of breeches, woolen shirts and clouts, and two sacks holding 300gp each. A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a false bottom in the chest. Underneath it may be found two *Elemental Gems* (Yellow Diamond - Earth Elemental; Blue Sapphire - Air Elemental; DMG p.167-168), and Anszarra's spellbook.

The secretary stands 7' tall and holds over 120 tomes. Each book weighs approximately 4 pounds. A few are filled with Anszarra's writings, the remainder by other authors. If the characters search within the tomes, they may find written down the sigil sequences to three teleportation circles: one to Neverwinter, one to Waterdeep, the other to a location of the DM's choice (suggested: Luskan or Silvermoon). Another tome holds the arcane formula for the creation of *Pots of Awakening*: Intelligence (Arcana) DC 10 to recognize.

If the characters search the secretary, they will discover a blank spellbook and a Box of Spell Calligraphy, both of which are strapped to the underside of the desk.

AREA 8: LABORATORY

This 15' square chamber holds a 10' long worktable along the north wall and a pair of floor to ceiling shelves butted together in the southeast corner. The northwest corner of the room opens into a 10' square space that holds a permanent teleportation circle. Three sets of doors lead out of this room: one door in the east wall, double doors in the south wall, and one door in the west wall.

The worktable has seen constant use. Currently, it holds a mix of paraphernalia used in the creation of *Elemental Gems*, including a closed book with a blue silk cloth covered in runes made of powdered silver on top of it. A DC 20 Intelligence (Arcana) check deciphers the runes: they tell the story of water elementals giving birth to the oceans of Toril. If the characters open the workbook and read its contents, a successful DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check reveals they are looking at the formula for the creation of *Elemental Gems*. If the silk cloth is opened, a sparkling emerald worth 1,000 gp is revealed. The silk cloth is worth 100 gp as an art object.

The two shelving units hold a variety of paraphernalia, tools and other objects that were used by the conjuror and her two apprentices. (See the artwork on page 215 for ideas.) If the shelves are thoroughly searched, the characters may recover valuable spell components totaling 1,000 gp in value.

What remains of the hobbled apprentice and the last survivor of the mining expedition are strewn across center of the room.

The **Shadow Demon** (MM p.64) is on guard duty in this room. It wears the *Crown of Demon Summoning*. The shadow demon does not know if Anszarra gave the sigil sequence for her teleportation circle to another creature. Because it has no desire to surrender its new lair to anyone arriving unexpectedly, the shadow demon will use every dirty trick it has learned in the Abyss to capture unwelcome visitors and feed them to newly summoned fiends.

Unless the characters catch it by surprise, the shadow demon will wait until the characters have been softened up by the dretches and the balgura before summoning a second shadow demon. Both demons will attack if the characters attempt to rest in the lair. Otherwise, they will attack from the shadows and then flee through the lair walls to wait and attack again, in order to wear the characters down.

AREA 9: SUPPLY ROOM

This room's north wall is 15' wide, its south wall is 10' wide. The room is 10' long. The eastern wall runs at an angle and holds a door leading to area 10. Supplies include a jug of grease, two jugs of lamp oil, two brooms and mops, and four buckets. A free standing rack with pegs holds clean clouts (underwear), robes, breeches, woolen shirts and wash cloths. Crates of provisions (mostly vegetables, bread, cheese and wine) are stacked in the northwest corner. One crate holds trawls, small shovels and two picks for digging. A crate near the southern wall holds empty clay pots. Three barrels filled with carefully tended soil stand in the northeast corner.

AREA 10: UNFINISHED CAVE

Only the floor of this 20' long by 10' wide space has been worked into a mostly smooth surface. The walls and ceiling bear the marks of tunneling and have yet to be finished. This space holds several 4' tall mounds of black soil along the east wall. Buried in each is one large clay pot. The mounds await the attention of Anszarra, who planned to create four *Pots of Awakening* and then sell them to Talessa Heldargar of Neverwinter.

A set of rough earthen stairs descends 5' in the southern end of the cave.

AREA 11: UNFINISHED EXIT

At the foot of the stairs, a low-ceilinged tunnel runs for 10' to the edge of the stream. The water flows from east to west and there is no bridge. If a character enters the stream, they will be dragged under water and emerge in area 2 unless they make a successful DC 10 Strength check each round they are in the water. On the other side of the stream, the low tunnel runs an additional 20' to a narrow, rubble-strewn exit. The rubble and debris count as difficult terrain.

XP AWARDS AND TREASURE

This adventure awards a maximum of 4,800 XP for defeating the fiends in the lair.

- Dretch: 50 XP each. 800 XP total.
- Balgura: 1,800 XP.
- Shadow Demon: 1,100 XP each. 2,200 XP total.

TREASURE SUMMARY

The following summary lists the items of treasure found in this adventure, as well as their value. With the exception of the Box of Spell Calligraphy, mundane items and their gold piece values (such as for the supplies in area 9) are not included.

The adventure assumes the characters will keep any captured spellbooks to copy spells from. See the rules for copying spells into a spellbook (PHB p.114). The contents of Anszarra's spellbook and that of her apprentices are left to you to detail.

If the characters decide to try and sell one or more captured spellbooks, use [this formula](#) to compute the base value for each spellbook.

Consult Appendix A of this book for descriptions of equipment, magic items and charms not found in the Player's Handbook or Dungeon Master's Guide

AREA 6

- 1 pouch with 75 gp.
- 1 pouch with 75 gp.
- 1 apprentice spellbook.
- 1 apprentice spellbook.
- 1 pouch with gemstones worth 250 gp.
- 1 *Wand of Secrets*.

AREA 7

- 1 sack 300 gp.
- 1 sack 300 gp.
- 1 *Elemental Gem* (yellow diamond).
- 1 *Elemental Gem* (blue sapphire).
- 1 spellbook belonging to Anszarra.
- 1 arcane formula for creating *Pots of Awakening*.
- 1 Box of Spell Calligraphy worth 600 gp.

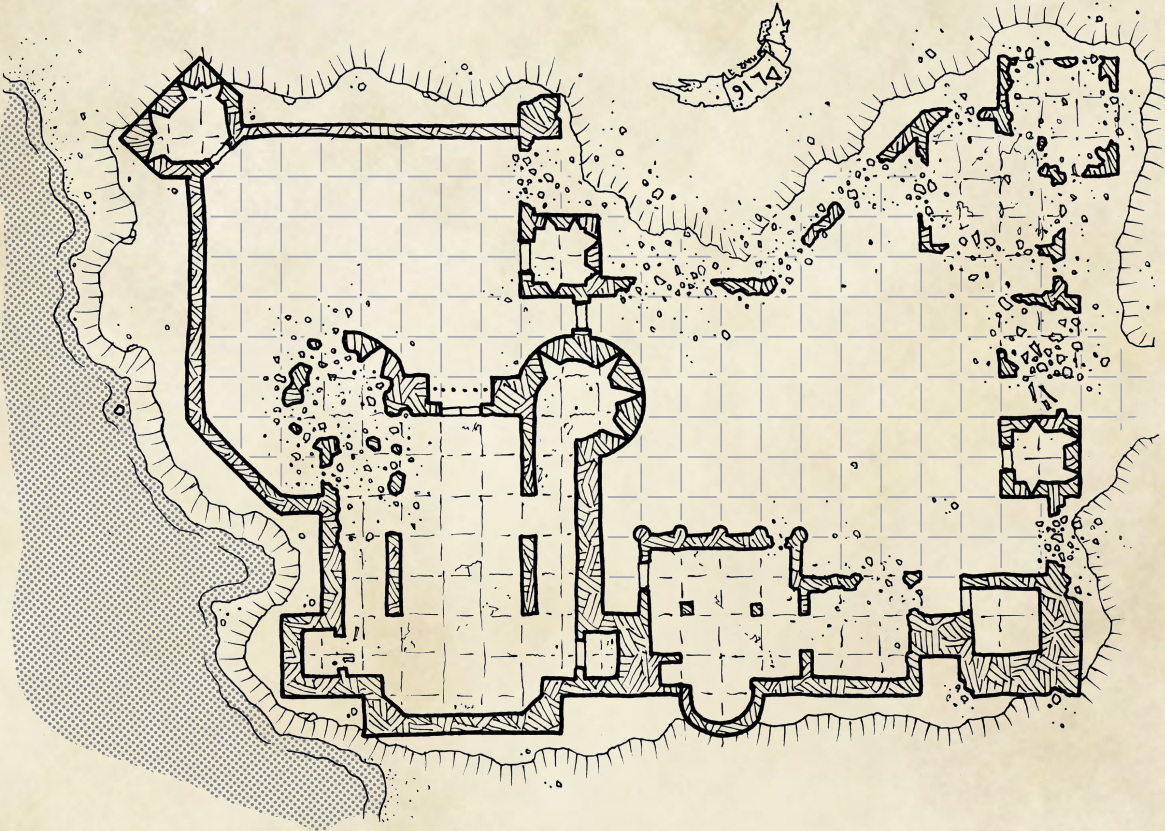
AREA 8

- 1 rune covered silk cloth worth 100 gp.
- 1 arcane formula for creating *Elemental Gems*.
- 1 sparkling emerald worth 1,000 gp.
- Miscellaneous spell components totaling 1,000 gp in value. Weight: 10 pounds per 1,000 gp. (Whenever the characters cast a spell with an expensive material component, they can deduct the component's cost from the 1,000 gp value of the recovered spell components.)

ADVENTURE AFTERMATH

- If the characters decide to destroy the *Crown of Demon Summoning*, or if they hide it so it can no longer be used, they earn an XP award equivalent to a CR 5 encounter (1,100 XP).
- If the characters resurrect Anszarra, Dralthus or the apprentices, award 250 XP per resurrected NPC. An NPC resurrected in this way becomes a contact (DMG p.93) of the characters.
- If the characters resurrect Anszarra and her two apprentices, the characters receive a Supernatural Gift from the goddess Mystra in the form of a Charm of Healing in addition to an XP award.
- If the characters figure out from Dralthus's ledgers that the two completed *Elemental Gems* in area 8 were meant for a customer of hers, and if the characters manage to deliver the gems to their intended recipient **without asking for a reward or payment**, award the characters XP for a CR 5 encounter (1,100 XP). This NPC is left to you to create. If the characters ask for payment, the NPC will offer to pay the creation cost for each gem (1,000 gp total).
- If the characters learn that Talessa Heldargar (see Chapter III) ordered four *Pots of Awakening* and they decide to make and deliver the pots to her, she will pay the rate agreed upon between her and Anszarra (200 GP each).
- The NPC that loaned the *Crown of Demon Summoning* to Anszarra is secretly a demon cultist who meant for her to be destroyed by it. Worse, this NPC owns the arcane formula for making such *Crowns*, and has commissioned a mage in Luskan to create 2 more of them. If the characters attempt to find and defeat this NPC or the mage making the crowns (names and stats left to you), the god Torm provides each character with a Supernatural Gift for their quest in the form of a Charm of Fiend Destruction.

THE SCREAMING KEEP



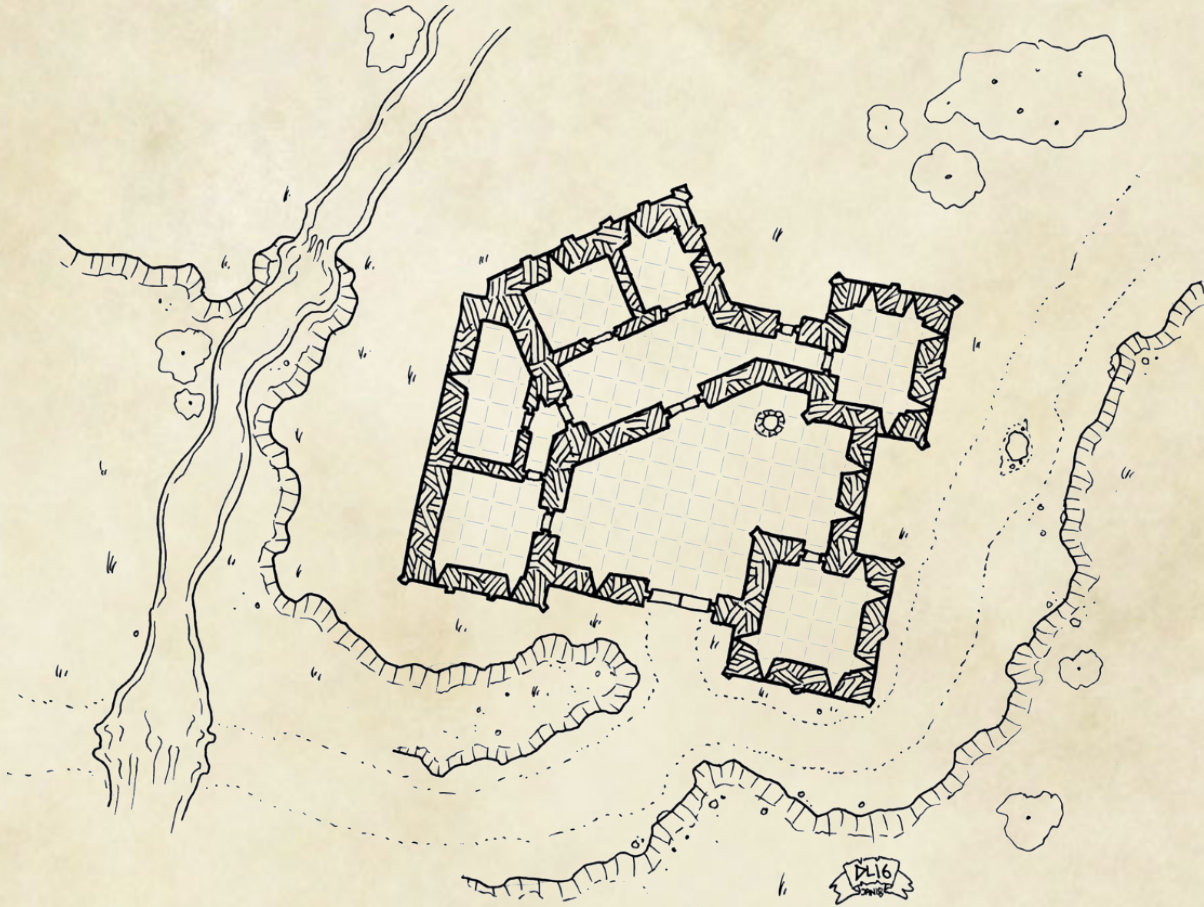
The Screaming Keep

SWORD SHRINE



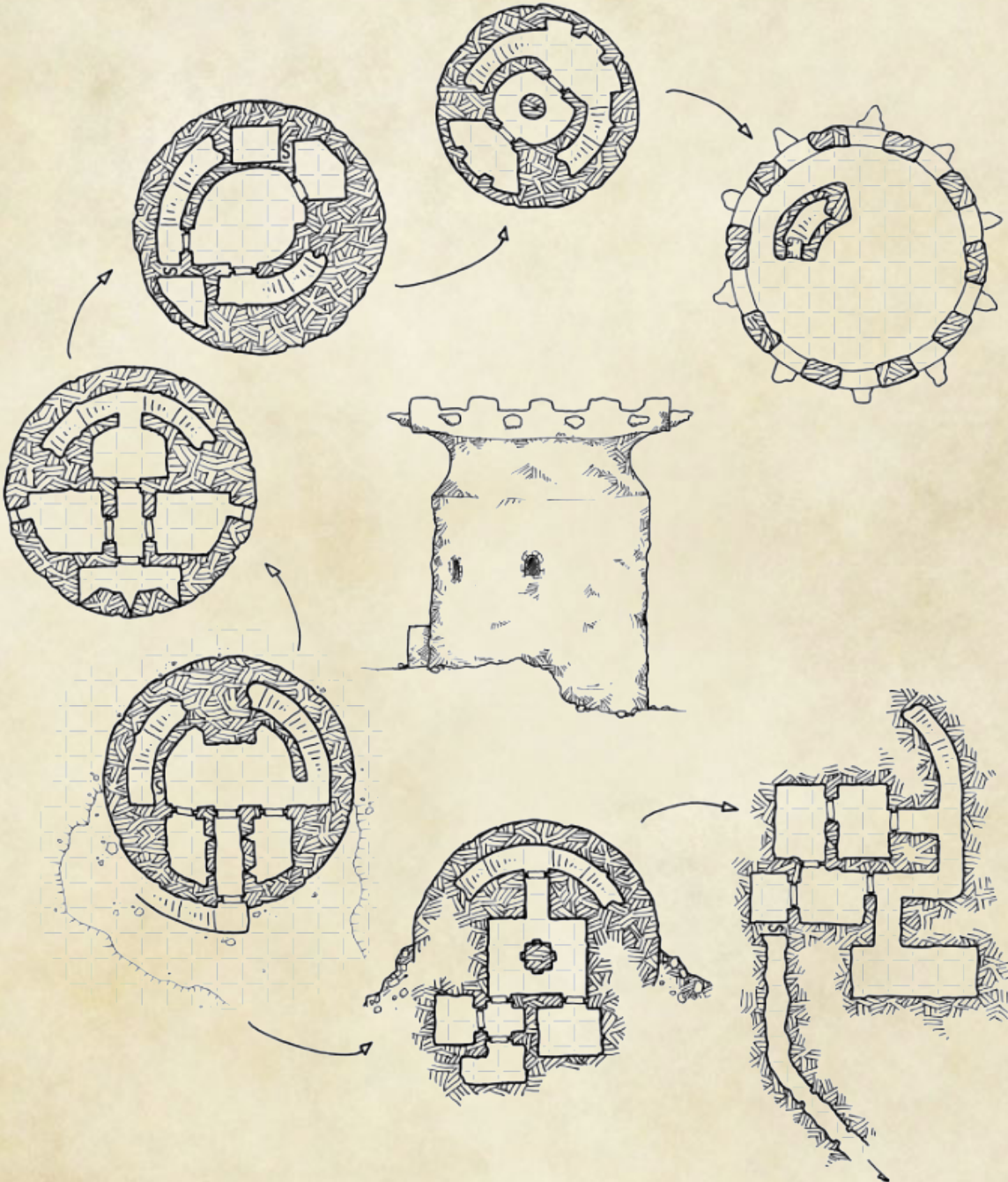
Sword Shrine

WAYSTOP KEEP



Waystop Keep

THE WINDING TOWER



The Winding Tower

APPENDIX A: GAME RULES

Game rules from official products other than the core rulebooks that are referenced in this sourcebook may be found here. These rules will have a tag in the following form: [product abbreviation, page number].

New game rules unique to this sourcebook are found here as well, with the tag: [new (spell, magic item, monster, etc.)]. Monsters from official products included in this sourcebook may be found in the adventures where they are used (see Chapter 5).

EQUIPMENT

ADVENTURING GEAR

Item	Cost	Weight
Box of Spell Calligraphy	1,000 gp	5lb.

A Box of Spell Calligraphy holds writing quills, a sharp knife, rare inks, gem dust, vials, mixing bowls, and unusual substances. Whenever the box is used for writing a spell into a spellbook, the cost to the writer is reduced from 50 gp per spell level to 25 gp per spell level. (The 2 hours per level time requirement remains unchanged.) Deduct 20 gp from the value of the box per level of the written spell. When the box's value is reduced to 0 gp, it may be used as a set of Calligrapher's Tools. A Box of Spell Calligraphy retains its full value on the marketplace, less the value of any materials previously used.

MAGIC ITEMS

NEW MINOR PROPERTIES

Property	Description
Ageless	This item never shows its age. It does not rust, become worn or show wear and tear from repeated use.

NEW ITEM QUIRKS

Quirk	Description
Overconfidence	You feel utterly confident and self-assured to the point of not fearing the consequences of your actions when using the magic item.



BATTLEFIELD HELM

Wondrous item, common [new magic item]

This helm has 3 charges. You may expend a charge to cast *Sending*. No other creature hears sound coming from your mouth when you expend a charge in this way. The helm regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn. This helm possesses the War Leader minor property (DMG p.143)

CLOSE QUARTERS GAUNTLETS

Wondrous item, common [new magic item]

While wearing these gauntlets, your unarmed strike deals 1d4 damage.

CROWN OF DEMON SUMMONING

Wondrous item, rare, requires attunement [new magic item]

This crown has 1 charge. While you wear the crown, you may expend a charge to summon demons from the Abyss. Demons summoned in this way appear in the nearest unoccupied space. You must concentrate to maintain control over the demons. While you concentrate you may telepathically command the demons, which follow your commands to the best of their ability, even if the command would result in their destruction. The demons return to the Abyss 1 hour after being summoned or 1d10 minutes after you stop concentrating.

When you expend a charge, select one row from the Summoning Chart to determine the CR and quantity of demons you summon. You may mix demon types of the same CR if the crown allows you to summon more than one fiend.

To pay the Blood Cost, you must first submerge the crown in a container holding the blood of the number of creatures listed before expending a charge. These creatures must all have died in the last 24 hours. If you pay the Blood Cost but fail to expend a charge within the next 24 hours, you must pay it again to summon a demon of CR 6 or higher.

SUMMONING CHART

Demon CR	Quantity	Blood Cost
1/4	Up to 8	0 creatures
1/2	Up to 4	0 creatures
1	Up to 2	0 creatures
2-5	Up to 1	0 creatures
6-9	1	10 creatures
10-13	1	50 creatures
14-17	1	250 creatures
18-20	1	1000 creatures

The crown possesses both the Wicked minor property (DMG p.143) and the Overconfidence item quirk. The crown regains 1 expended charge daily at **sunset**.

MEANS OF DESTRUCTION

The crown has 20 hp. It is as durable as any magic item (has resistance to all damage). Submersing the crown in a container of holy water for 24 hours destroys it utterly.

POT OF AWAKENING

Wondrous item, common, [XGtE, p.138]

If you plant an ordinary shrub in this 10-pound clay pot and let it grow for 30 days, the shrub magically transforms into an **awakened shrub** at the end of that time. When the shrub awakens, its roots break the pot, destroying it.

The shrub is friendly toward you. Absent commands from you, it does nothing.

SUNRISE SLEEVE

Wondrous item, uncommon [new magic item]

Arcs of magical energy form into runes that crawl over this intricately crafted lace sleeve from your elbow to your fingers whenever you expend the last charge from a wand.

Once per day, if you expend the last charge from a wand, then at the end of your turn the wand regains a number of spent charges as though the sun had just risen (see the wand's description to determine how many charges it regains at dawn). If the wand's description indicates there is a chance the wand is destroyed when its last charge is expended, then do not roll to see if the wand is destroyed.

WAR WAND

Wand, common (requires attunement) [new magic item]

This wand has 5 charges. While holding it, you can use an action to expend 1 of its charges to transform the wand into a simple or martial weapon you are proficient with. The kind of weapon is determined when you attune to the wand. The wand remains transformed until you are disarmed, you let go of the transformed wand or you spend an action to will it back to normal (this does not expend a charge). If you transform the wand into a weapon that can be thrown, then resolve any ranged attack made with the transformed wand first; it returns to normal after the attack is resolved.

This wand regains 1d4 + 1 expended charges daily at dawn. If you expend the wand's last charge, roll a d20. On a 1, the wand crumbles into ashes and is destroyed. This wand is made of steel. It tapers to a needle-sharp point.

SUPERNATURAL GIFTS

NEW CHARMS

Charm of Fiend Destruction. Whenever you destroy a fiend with a spell or weapon attack while it is away from its home plane, it dies permanently. This charm vanishes from you when you complete your quest, if you die before the quest is complete, or you quit your quest.

Charm of Healing. This charm vanishes from you whenever you are reduced to 0 hit points. When the charm vanishes from you in this way, you receive the benefits of a *Heal* spell. Subtract any remaining damage from the hit points you gained from *Heal* before applying its effects. If there is still damage remaining, you die as normal.

SPELLS

EVERYTHING BUT THE BONES

3rd-level illusion, [new spell]

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Components: V, S, M (One piece of bone)

Duration: 1 hour

You temporarily infuse a piece of bone with magical properties.

If you give a creature the material component you used to cast the spell, that creature becomes invisible until the spell ends. However, the creature's bones remain visible. Anything the creature is wearing or carrying when it accepts the material component becomes invisible.

Additional objects picked up or put on by the creature after it accepts the material component remain visible. Objects dropped or removed from the creature after it accepts the material component become visible.

The creature receiving the material component must wear or carry it for the duration of the spell. The spell ends when the duration expires or the material component is no longer worn or carried by the creature. If the material component is not given to a creature within one round after the spell is cast, the spell ends.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, you may infuse one additional bone for each slot level above 3rd. The number of rounds you have to hand out the bones is equal to the total number of bones you infuse with this spell.



APPENDIX B: INSPIRATIONS AND RESOURCES

I don't know about you, but for me adventure ideas and the outlines for D&D campaign arcs don't materialize fully formed in my head whenever I need them. To write adventures and build campaigns you need inspiration, and I have learned over the last 35 years of playing D&D that you take inspiration whenever and wherever you find it.

And sometimes you need help to fully realize an idea. Thank goodness for the Internet, right?

What follows are some of the sources of inspiration for this book. As well some of the online resources I used to turn my ideas for this book into letters on the page. I hope they provide you with the seeds for endless hours of adventure at your gaming table.

INSPIRATIONS

Amon Arath, [The Way of Vikings](#), from the album Jomsviking. Metal Blade Records.

Eivør, [Trøllabundin](#), from the album Slør. A&G Records Ltd.

Faun, [Diese kalte Nacht](#), from the album Von den Elben.

[Federkleid](#), from the album Midgard.

[Walpurgisnacht](#), from the album Luna.

Universal Music Group.

FILL-IÚ ORO HÚ Ó, a traditional Celtic song, performed for channel TG4 (Teilifís na Gaeilge).

Garmarna, [Her Mannelig](#), from the album Guds Spelemän. Phonofile (on behalf of Massproduktion); UBEM, Warner Chappell, ASCAP, UMPG Publishing, and 8 Music Rights Societies.

HEIDEVOLK, [Nehalennia](#), from the album Uit Oude Grond. Napalm Records.

Patty Gurdy, [The Longing](#), from the album Shapes & Patterns (EP). imusician_digital (on behalf of iM Digital), and 2 Music Rights Societies

OMNIA, [Fee Ra Huri](#), from the album Live On Earth. PaganScum Records 2012.

Wind Rose, [To Erebor](#) and [The Returning Race](#), from the album Stonehym. Inner Wound Recordings.

ONLINE RESOURCES

[The Draconic Translator](#)

[Wyrms of the North: Hoondarrh "Red Rage"](#)

by Ed Greenwood.



APPENDIX C: ARTISTS

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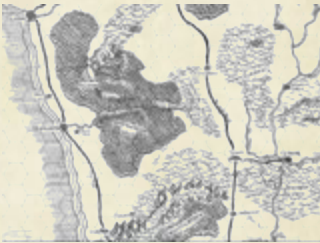
APPENDIX D: DMs GUILD ATTRIBUTIONS



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["The North Campaign Map"](#)

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SNEAK PEAK: DOWNTIME LOCATIONS

The business of downtime hastens the flow of time in the campaign world. Players announce their downtime activities and how many work weeks they hope to spend doing them, the DM consults the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, dice are rolled and outcomes determined.

The goal here is simple: make the time between adventures useful and fun without using up all of the available session time everyone has to play D&D.

USE WHAT YOU WANT AND IGNORE THE REST

The publication history of Neverwinter stretches back as far as 1988, when *The Savage Frontier*, by Paul Jaquays, devoted a third of a page to describing Neverwinter. Since then, several Realms novels, a handful of sourcebooks and some memorable computer games have all been set in or utilized Neverwinter as a backdrop.

Good news, that, because we get to pick from the best locations in Neverwinter when it comes to downtime and NPC interaction.

Sooner or later your players will ask *where* they can buy magic items in Neverwinter. If you decide that's not possible, then your players will probably want to know *who* is the best source for supplies to craft magic items in the City of Skilled Hands, and *how long* will it take to gather what they need?

If the character's magic supplies gathering doesn't go so well because a rival NPC interfered, then *when*, they'll ask, does the inn open up where the rival NPC happens to be staying the night, and *what* is the name of the place?

If you don't utilize rivals in your campaign, there's still the possibility of a bad die roll during downtime. A carousing character might end up in jail, for example, while a character running a business might end up owing more than they can afford to run the place.

If you own a copy of *Xanathar's Guide to Everything* (p.125-134), then you have access to new options for downtime activities the characters can undertake. Should the party wizard become convinced they can brawl with the best of them and so choose to engage in pit fighting (XGtE, p.131), you may decide to inflict a **consequence** on the character if their dice utterly betray them.

When stuff like this happens, unlucky characters are likely to want to address the situation at the gaming table. That's where this chapter comes in.

The City of Neverwinter

