

INANIMIS' INTERESTING NPCs

Part 1



**14 Original Characters
with Interesting Backgrounds**



INTERESTING NPCs

PART 1

Throughout your own Campaign you will need to create tons of random NPCs. Most or some of these NPCs will be created on the spot but that doesn't mean that they won't be memorable. A weird accent, a missing eye, a peculiar habit etc could make up your most interesting NPC without you even intending to. The players love what they love. In this homebrew I will try to list a number of interesting NPCs to drop in your world whenever and however you want. These NPCs are not many but I tried to make each one of them unique.

INNKEEPERS

They serve you your ale and they shelter you for the night. They are as important as any major character and they can be quite interesting. They have information you need and you have coin *they* need. Here are some interesting guys and gals you might meet running the local inn.

BARTOLOMEO SANZA

A Tiefling owning an Inn named "Thief's End". Bartolomeo is an ex-thief of a guild called *The Copper Daggers*. He gave up on a life of crime when the guild started to take on darker jobs such as assassinations, hence the name "Thief's End". Of course that doesn't mean that Bartolomeo doesn't still have his old contacts. His face always bears a smile. He answers each and every one of your questions calmly without expressing any emotions and without expecting to get paid more than what your ale costs. But if you just use him as an information booth for free, his information will start being less useful. And less real. Most people in his Inn are people that would give their life for Bartolomeo, either because they like his ale or because he pays them to protect him. He is not defenceless, he knows how to handle himself. But some cheeky adventurers might prove a problem for one person only. That's why the Inn is fully equipped with traps and bodyguards that will toss out any rude customers.

VAL VARDA AND SHAKA JACKTOOTH

Val Varda is a Human with arms that could choke the life out of a cow. He owns an Inn named "Drunken Pig". He is as huge as an Orc and doesn't take kindly to anyone being rude to him, his customers or his waiters. He regularly takes part in pit fights where is he currently Champion after beating Shaka Jacktooth, the Half-Orc Innkeeper that owns an Inn across the street from "Drunken Pig". Shaka Jacktooth owns the "Black Dog" Inn. His skin is dark and he is short for an Orc. Shaka is prone to raging if someone insults his cooking (*which is pretty bad to be honest*) or if someone implies that Val Varda is stronger than him. No matter their conflict Val and Shaka are enemies that deeply respect and care for each other as they found two strong similarities bonding them. Their love for fighting and their hatred for Elves.

MAURICE DUMON

An old Elf with a french accent, Maurice owns "La Perle Blanche". A high-class Inn, founded by the ex-cook of a long forgotten king. Maurice's dishes are incredible in appearance and in flavour. Here's a list of fancy made-up foods that would reside on Maurice's menu:

- Lobster with cinnamon and blueberry.
- Venison cooked with red wine and corn.
- Honeyed shark with lemon and nuts.
- Carbonara spaghetti with beef.
- Salmon with cheese cream and caramelized apples.

The only thing that costs more than his dishes are his... other services. Maurice is also a master poisoner. His poisons work extremely slowly, with the first effects appearing after a week or even a month. And they are always deadly. Apart from that he is actually very kind and very eager to help. After all, poisoning is just business. Just a mean business.

HOMER CASTELLAN

A hardy Dwarf that keeps the Inn running by himself. He is an adept in magic, using an Unseen Servant, who he calls Jeremy, to serve food and ale while he cooks and takes down orders. His "Rusty Lute" is his pride as he manages to keep it running every single day for 50 years. Homer is a lonely man but ever so cheerful. At the end of every night, before he closes shop, he brings out his lute and plays an old almost forgotten tune. You see, his father, Jeremy Castellan used to be a famous bard that decided to go off with an adventuring party 50 years ago. He left his lute behind and his family. Since then, Homer decided that he won't accept anyone's help until his father returns. Homer will always offer his help but never accept any.

NATALIA XANTHAS

A Half-Elven woman running an inn is a rare sight but you feel like home in the "Broken Dragon" Inn. The huge scar that starts from above her left eye and runs all across her face is one of the first things you'll notice about her. Natalia survived the attack of an owlbear when she was still young. The same owlbear whose head adorns the Inn's northern wall. On her spare time she is a huntress. She knows how to navigate the forest near her city since she was a child. At night, she keeps an eye out for her village. Most of the guards are humans so they have a hard time spotting enemies in the dark. Innkeeper by day, scout by night, Natalia can take care of herself.



RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

Sometimes, while travelling between cities you get random encounters. This random encounter could be a merchant. Or ten beholders. Here are some memorable encounters for your players.

BERNARD THE UNDEAD BARD

The name says it all. This guy is an undead bard. He avoids big cities for obvious reasons. He uses Seeming to pass as a human. He sings at a language that is hard to come by, Sylvan. His tales sound jolly to an ear that doesn't recognize the words and people tend to like him, until he drops his non-undead façade. Contrary to most undeads, Bernard is actually... immortal. He cannot die. He is cursed to live as a bard and tell the tale of his grief in a language spoken only by Fey.

*One day I walked through a magical door.
I passed to a world that I'd not seen before.
Life was so jolly with trees that could sing.
And there I met her, the daughter of a King.
Her skin was as smooth as cotton and silk.
Oh, what a curse to love a Feywild thing.
She taught me to love, she taught me to smile.
But her father thought that humans were vile.
She confessed that she loved a man named Bernard.
He forbid her to marry the sinister Bard.
She put on his ring, disobeying her father.
Oh, how I pity the grief of her mother.
The King, with a swing, cut her body in half.
And her blood cursed a bard, with a swing of his staff.
Now Bernard wished that he'd died.
He was banished from love and all of Feywild.
He was cursed to live as his skin fell apart.
And cursed to retell the tale of Bernard.*

DAX THE MERCHANT

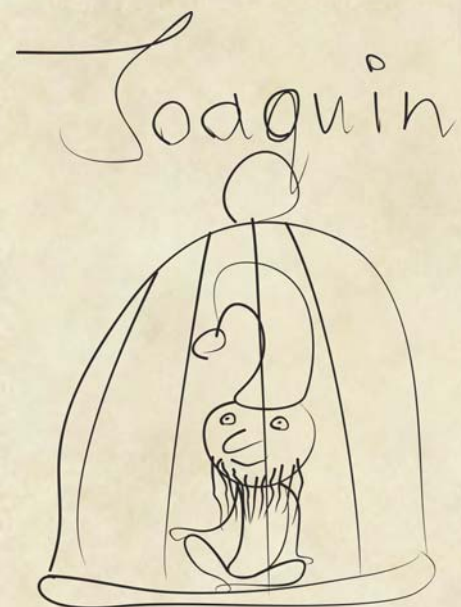
Dax is a Gnomish, travelling merchant. He looks like a leprechaun and carries with him a bag of holding. You will most likely find him under a tree, sleeping. But he is ever vigilant. Once he notices someone approaching he will be up on his feet, ready to serve. Dax works in mysterious ways. He has few basic things to sell, like potions and some magical rings but his usefulness lies in you ordering something to him. He will write down your order and if you buy anything *else* from him, he will give you his magical token. This token is used to contact Dax. While using the token you must tell him where to meet you. The token is basically a coin imbued with the spell *Sending*. Upon contacting Dax, he will try to reach you as soon as possible. It might take him a couple of days, but he will have your order ready and he will renew your token. Dax will never talk about himself as he has a strict rule to always be professional. If the players try really hard to make him open up, he will reveal that his wife left him one night ten years ago. They went to sleep together and when he woke up she was missing. He found brown hair where she slept but his wife was a redhead. He carries the hair with him. What happened to Dax's wife? A high Arcana check will show that the hair belong to a werewolf. Either his wife is a werewolf, or she was abducted by one. I leave that up to you.

OLD MAN JOAQUIN

You see a man sitting inside a birdcage without a lock in the middle of nowhere. The cage is magical and it cannot be broken. He talks jibberish in Common. *"Kill my mother and bring her head. Stab her in the back until she's dead. Just bring my momma back to me. Alive or not, as long as she can't see."* If you ask his name he will look at you and shout "Joaquin". He will *not* answer in a normal way to anything else. If the players start Investigating they will be able to tell that there's ash and feathers around him. If the players spot the feathers he will look straight at the player that spotted them first, lift his finger up and say "Bring back my momma. She left me here. I just need her eyes, you don't have to kill her, but I don't care. If you help me I will reward you. Big reward! As big as her!". A Phoenix will then appear in the sky. If the players manage to kill it or just bring its eyes to Joaquin, one player will be rewarded with 60 feet Blindsight. If the Phoenix is still alive, Joaquin will casually open his cage's door and ride the blind Phoenix, help the players and leave.

KIJJAL AK'ARD THE DRAGON SLAYER

You hear an indistinguishable cry in the distance. As you follow the origin of the cry you see a massive body. The body is still. After approaching more you see the dead body of an adult black Dragon. A Tiefling is sitting in front of it, resting his sword on the ground. The man looks over his shoulder to you. "Another one falls to my sword. Another flying lizard back to the depths of hell. I am Kijjal Ak'ard. Who are you to walk my path?". Kijjal will be a bit rude, but will not engage in combat. In truth Kijjal Ak'ard is a weak warrior. He found the body of the Dragon there and using *Thaumaturgy* he produced the "cry" that drew the players in. Upon further inspection, players will be able to tell that the Dragon has been dead for a couple of days. Kijjal uses his skills in Illusion to take credit for various achievements. That's how he gets by. He is fairly famous to nearby villages but no one has been able to tell he is a fraud. *Who killed the Dragon, though?*



GUARDS

You will meet a lot of people in your travels but some of them won't be happy to see you. Or maybe they will. Guards people. How to meet some memorable guards.

LARRY JERKINS

Larry is a burly veteran guard. By veteran I mean pretty old. He is one of those guys that wouldn't necessarily risk his life to save a civilian. Or get up from his chair when someone calls him. Or pretty much do anything. He is the dream guard of every thief. He ignores every illegal action around him because he simply can't bother himself to chase someone, get in a fight, drag them back to a dungeon, write a report etc. But Larry has a price. He is ready to ignore a murder right in the middle of the city square if your coin is enough. And if your coin is *not* enough? He will just call someone with a better sense of justice than him to arrest you. But Larry wasn't always like this. He used to be vigilant. He used to value the law and chase down criminals with ferocity. Everything changed when he found his wife's dead body. One of the guards of the city, a guard in a higher position than Larry, tried to rape her and she resisted. The guard sliced her throat and left her to die. Larry walked in, in her final moments. She whispered what happened to him. Larry tried to chase down the guard but the corruption ran deep. He didn't manage to get justice for his dead wife. So he simply gave up. He gave up on the system, on his life and on his values. He is now simply Larry Jerkins.

DAMIAN LIGHT

The Bastion of Pelor. The Fury of God. The Sword of Justice. Damian has been called a lot of things. He is an Elven Paladin. Beautiful and strong, smart and valiant, Damian is justice incarnate. The thing about Damian is that he will not hesitate to kill. He will try to avoid it but if his target is dangerous and might hurt innocent people he will not hesitate to put a hole where your heart should be. He has no remorse for undead, demons, devils and general creatures that their very existence is an insult to his religion. He is also prone to rage. His name is linked with some dark things. He has killed even petty thieves. He is cocky and arrogant and even though he has done a lot of good his judgement is not always correct. He values balance and order a lot but he is an unstable asset that needs to be watched a lot by other Paladins. He is always followed by his Golden Order. Not because he needs help. But sometimes he has to be restrained.

GRUUM THE HALF-ORC

Gruum is loyal but Gruum is a Half-Orc. In a world where most Half-Orcs live in barbarian tribes, being green *and* a guard is unheard of. People do not respect him, not even the rest of the guards. But Gruum is loyal. He does his job as best as he can. He receives a great deal of racism every day but there's one thing that keeps him going. His half-elven friend, Toby Jak. Gruum and Toby are partners. Gruum is always trying to prove himself and Toby always has Gruum's back. Gruum left his tribe when he was young in search of a more noble cause which he found in the role of a city guard. Unfortunately, there are no plans for him to rise in the ranks, as a Half-Orcish high-ranked guard would be an insult to the uniform. Nevertheless, Gruum will not stop trying to rise.

TOBY JAK

Toby is a Half-Elf. He is friends with a Half-Orc, Gruum. They both became guards and since then they are friends. Toby is a huge fan of Damian Light. He aspires to be like him but having Gruum for a friend is not easy. Toby had offers for advancement many times. He could be promoted to a higher rank but instead he chose to wait for his friend and rise together. Toby comes from a noble family that's far away from the city that he is guarding. He joined the ranks because he felt that he had to do something about the injustice of the world. Also ladies love a man in a uniform. Unlike Damian, Toby doesn't kill in his fights. Ever. He is a smart and strong Half-Elven fighter that can take care of himself and also take care of a city.



LEGAL STUFF & FINAL WORD

The software that was used for the making of this homebrew was homebrewery.naturalcrit.com

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FINAL WORD

You can use these NPCs in any setting you like, I tried to include enough information for their backstory but also to leave some things open to interpretation, because after all, sometimes it's fun to fill the empty spaces. Also, if you'd like, check out my other works by clicking [here](#).

P.S. The art was made by me. In my spare time, I am Da Vinci. This is just Part 1. I wanna keep these short because I want to emphasize on the quality of an interesting NPC and not the quantity. I will release more of these later in the future. All of these will be PWYW (*Pay What You Want*).

Also have a free Bernard the Undead Bard ""art"".

