



WATERDEEP
CASE IN DOCKS

A three to four-hour adventure for 1st through 4th level characters

W A T E R D E E P CASE IN DOCKS

A cargo that was intended for the lord Dakrondrot disappeared from the Gracious Lady ship in broad daylight, but the lord is not in a hurry to contact the City Watch and looks for adventurers to his own investigation. Could it be that a force much greater than ordinary thieves is involved here?

A Three to Four-Hour Adventure for 1st through 4th Level Characters
Optimized for APL 2



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ABOUT THE ADVENTURE

Theft is the best compliment one can possibly pay a thing.
– Vladimir Nabokov, *Despair*

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st- to 4th-level characters** and is optimized for **five characters with an average party level (APL) of 2**. Characters outside this level range can't participate in this adventure.

The adventure takes place in Waterdeep.

BACKGROUND

Waterdeep – a city on the Sword Coast, a pearl full of wonders. The city of many cultures and religions, order and chaos, the city of adventures.

Many creatures are trying to find their calling here, or at least a place in the sun, but not everyone succeeds. There is a constant struggle in the city and every influential resident wants to get even more power. Any means from bribery to murder are used. And of course, everyone else wants to get something out of it in this confrontation.

Lord Dakrondrot has hired several trusted men to consolidate his influence in the city, but they need to be supplied with weapons and armor.

The lord wants to do this bypassing the smiths guild because he does not want to attract too much attention to himself, so he orders weapons from Baldur's Gate and bribes the magisters so that the cargo is not declared when the ship arrives at the city docks.

But agents of the **Iron Throne** find out about the cargo. They plan to steal the cargo to blackmail lord Dakrondrot and force him to buy weapons through their channels.

The cargo is delivered by **Gracious Lady** and during the unloading of the ship, one of the bribed sailors throws the cargo overboard where agents are waiting for it and with the help of a hand crocodile they take the cargo to the **catacombs** under the docks.

The Iron Throne contacted the lord, but he has not yet agreed to their terms and wants to find the cargo. So he starts looking for adventurers who can oppose the Iron Throne and help him.

Estin, the secret beloved of the lord's daughter **Mairlie**, tried to find the cargo himself to gain the favor of the lord, but he was caught by the agents of the Iron Throne, and they keep him in the catacombs, where the stolen cargo is still located.

OVERVIEW

The adventure has **three parts** and takes approximately **three to four hours** depending on the actions and decisions of the players.

They can visit the lord's residence (**Part 1**) or inspect the docks (**Part 2**). Any of these options lead them to the stolen cargo in the catacombs (**Part 3**).

Part 1: Family Secrets. The characters meet lord Dakrondrot and his daughter Mairlie, find out about her beloved Estin, search his house, and find his diary, which contains information about the catacombs.

Part 2: Docks Adventures. The characters visit the docks, inspect the Gracious Lady, and meet her captain, who directs them to the Oink and Quack pub, where sailors tell them about the catacombs.

The characters can also find a secret entrance to there under the pier next to the ship.

Part 3: The Catacombs. The characters enter the catacombs, where confront the agents of the Iron Throne, find the lord's stolen cargo, and free Estin.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

The following hooks are some possible ways to involve the characters in this scenario:

Bulletin Board. While looking for work, the characters read a note on a bulletin board: "A particularly valuable cargo disappeared from the ship Gracious Lady. A solid reward awaits the finder. Lord Dakrondrot, Castle Ward, Shadow Alley, 3".

Gloomy Stranger. In one of the city taverns, an old captain takes a seat with the characters. He worries about thefts, which have become more frequent at the docks. The captain knows a lord who lost his cargo from a ship and will pay good money for its return.

Friends in the Zhentarim. If there is a Zhentarim representative among the characters, the agents of the faction contact the party and tell them about the missing cargo that belongs to one of the members.

ADJUSTING THIS ADVENTURE

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

DETERMINING PARTY STRENGTH

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

PART 1: FAMILY SECRETS

In the first part, The characters meet the lord Dakrondrot and his daughter Mairlie. She tells them about her beloved Estin, who also looked for the cargo and disappeared a few days ago. Mairlie asks the characters to search his house to find any clues about where he might be. In the house, the characters find Estin's diary, which tells how to find the catacombs, where the stolen cargo is located.

LORD DAKRONDROT'S RESIDENCE

The characters easily find the lord Dakrondrot's residence even if they don't know the exact address. The influential family is known to many in the area.

The lord's mansion is located in a quiet, not crowded place. This is a three-storey building in the classicism style, surrounded by a metal fence with elegant forging.

The characters are greeted by a lean aged butler with a weathered face. When he finds out what business they have come for, silently leads them through a well-tended garden into the house.

He escorts the characters to the living room and quietly leaves. There is no ostentatious wealth in the room, the furniture is selected with great taste and understanding. After a while, the lord appears on the stairs leading from the second floor and goes down to the guests.

THE LORD

The lord **Ilvur Dakrondrot** (lawful evil male Tethyrian human **noble**) meets the characters coldly.

He is a slender middle-aged man with graying brown hair, his blue thick fabric coat is buttoned with all silver buttons, and a high collar completely covers his neck.

He believes that the characters are wasting his time because he has no more information than the whole city already knows. If they ask to clarify the reward, Ilvur names the amount (**60 gp each**), but if the characters try to bargain, he categorically stops all attempts.

If the characters want to know what kind of cargo they are looking for, lord Dakrondrot says that it is a commercial secret and persistently asks not to open the crate, even if they manage to find the cargo, which he personally doubts.

LADY DAKRONDROT

When the characters leave the residence, they are caught up with the Lord's daughter, **Mairlie Dakrondrot** (neutral good female Tethyrian human unarmed **commoner**), a young girl with curly brown hair. The corset of her blue dress grips her breasts a lot, so it takes a while for her to catch her breath and start talking to the characters.

If the characters want to know what happened, then with a successful DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) or a Charisma (Intimidation) check Mairlie tells about her beloved **Estin**, who also went on the quest to impress her father.

It seems that he went on the trail of criminals, but there has been no news from him for several days, and she is afraid that he could get into trouble. The lady tells the characters where Estin lives (for example, Trades Ward, Blackmul Street, 15).

ESTIN'S HOUSE

Estin's house, a small stone building with two floors, is one of the many workshops and craftsmen's houses on this bustling street. During the day, there are many passersby who enter the workshops to make or pick up an order. Sometimes carts with goods and materials pass along the street and the City Watch patrol.

On the front wall there is a sturdy wooden door and a wide glass window, with two shutters on the sides, there are two more small windows 15 feet above ground level. The buildings on this side of the street are packed tightly to each other, so it will take time to get around the house, but on the back, there will only be a solid stone wall.

ENTERING THE HOUSE

The front door is closed. A character can try to pick the lock without drawing the attention of people on the street succeeding on a DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check. If other characters distract passersby' attention in any way, this check takes advantage. Picking the lock requires thieves' tools and a successful DC 10 Dexterity check.

Forcing open the door requires a successful DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check. The window has AC 9, 10 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Any attempts to break down the door or the window surely attract the attention of passersby, and they tell the City Watch about the incident.

FIRST FLOOR

On the first floor of Estin's house, there is a metal workshop and a small kitchen. The narrow staircase to the second floor is located right at the front door.

WORKSHOP

The workshop has been closed for a long time. The workbenches are dusty, and the tools are neatly arranged on shelves and hooks. Just one piece of raw metal, scissors, and a small hammer on the table give away what was once worked here.

KITCHEN

Although the kitchen is cleaned up, it is done quite carelessly, as if hastily and without much will. There are several stale vegetables on the shelves. The sacks of cereals and millet are almost empty.

SECOND FLOOR

There are two rooms on the second floor. The doors are not locked.

BEDROOM

The room looks like no one has been here for months. The large wooden bed neatly tucked in and the woolen blanket in the dust. In the corner by the window stands a wooden dressing table on gracefully curved legs with a carved frame. There is a wardrobe next to it, which also has not been opened for a long time because the moth had time to eat clothes.

ESTIN'S ROOM

The room is smaller than the bedroom but there is definitely someone living here. The bed is not made, clothes are scattered next to the wardrobe. There are books and crumpled sheets of paper on the floor. The room also has a sturdy desk with writing utensils and an overstuffed chair.

Books and papers. A cursory inspection of the books reveals that these are romantic and sentimental novels. Crumpled sheets of paper are written scraps of poetry and unfinished stories.

Hidden savings. A character who searches the floor and succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check finds an unnailed board, which rises easily when pried with something sharp. Under it is the cavity of which lies a canvas bag with 100 gp.

Estin's Diary. The characters can find a large leather-bound notebook in a desk drawer. "Estin" is embossed on the cover.

The notebook has a simple poison needle trap and requires a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to locate. A successful DC 12 Dexterity check is required to disarm the trap. If the trap is not disarmed, whoever opens the notebook first takes 1 piercing damage and 4 (1d8) poison damage.

The notebook contains entries in Common, each with a date. The entries are written in the first person and tell about the life of a young man, his thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Towards the end of the diary, the characters may find references to Mairlie Dakrondrot, her secret romance with Estin, and their moonlight dates. The last entry tells how Estin found the place where Lord Dakrondrot's cargo is likely stored (for example, Dock Ward, Aline's Way, 5). Read the following to the players:

"I knew that the sailors were involved! I tracked them to a dead-end street near the docks. They entered the door with a wooden crate and returned without it. I swear the cargo is there. And I'm going to prove it. There is no time to wait, tonight I will go there and soon we'll be together with my beloved Mairlie."

The characters can now travel to the catacombs (see Part 3).

MEETING THE CITY WATCH

If passersby told the City Watch about the characters, then when they go down the stairs **four** constables (**veterans**) enter the house.

The constables indict the characters for illegal trespassing to private property and want to arrest them. The characters can do several things:

- Start a fight and kill the constables.
- Bribe the constables for 30 gold coins.
- Fool the constables with a successful DC 14 Charisma (Deception) check. If a character fails the check, the constables start combat.
- Escape from the house with a successful DC 14 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check. If a character fails the check, the constables start combat.

If the characters lose the battle, they spend the night in a watch post and get one level of exhaustion. In the morning the lady Dakrondrot posts bail for them.

OUTLAW CHARACTERS

Four constables are the common size of the City Watch patrol in this part of the city, and they don't expect much resistance to request any help.

Show the players how justice works if they don't win the constables. Otherwise, let them feel the consequences of their actions in the form of City Watch prosecution and investigation.



PART 2: DOCKS ADVENTURES

In the second part, the characters visit the docks and inspect Gracious Lady. On the ship, they meet the captain, who sends the characters to talk with his crew at the Oink and Quack pub. There, during the Royal Dragon game, the characters find out where the catacombs are in which the stolen cargo is hidden.

The tracks on the ship indicate that the second way to get to the catacombs is by inspecting the underwater part of the pier. There the characters find a drain hole that leads them to the back entrance.

DOCKS

The docks are located in the south of the city. If none of the characters have been there before, they easily recognize the way from any citizen, but they will be followed by curious glances.

This is the busiest place in the city. There are a lot of ships on the piers and in the harbor. Carts with loads scurry here and there and the drivers shout at the slow onlookers. Many sailors of all races and ethnic groups travel in noisy crowds or singly. It smells like spoiled fish and rotten seaweed. Dogs bark and seagulls cry.

The docks are patrolled by the City Watch, but the area is unpleasant, so they don't try hard. Usually, guards walk in large groups along with the lightest parts of the docks. They know nothing of any cargo and have not seen anything unusual, but explain how to find Gracious Lady.

GRACIOUS LADY

The ship is moored at one of the berths. This is a two-masted caravel with a low draft and a massive superstructure at the stern. The sails are deflated, there is no cargo and no one on the deck. A narrow gangway leads from the pier to the ship. The characters can easily board using it.

MEETING THE CAPTAIN

After a while on the deck the characters hear muttering and cursing from the aft cabin. If someone knocks on the door or speaks in response, the voice from the cabin dies down for a second, then the characters hear heavy steps and in a moment the door is abruptly opened by the captain. The same happens if a character tries to open or pick the lock of the closed door.

The huge figure of the captain (chaotic neutral male Calishite human **bandit captain**) stands in the doorway, leaning on a wooden leg. He is a stocky man with large hands, shaggy hair, bushy eyebrows and a spiky beard. He reeks of booze, but his eyes are still sharp and he looks at the characters with a squint.

The captain is not eager to talk and constantly intersperses his speech with dirty curses, but the characters may find out the following:

- His name is **Bardar Shidar**, he has been sailing on this route for more than 10 years and has not lost a single cargo during this time.
- He is sure that Lord Dakrondrot's cargo arrived at the port, and what happened next is not his business. The job is done.

- For the past few days, he hadn't left his cabin and drank grog, so he hadn't seen anything strange.
- He assumes the characters can find something if they first find the crew of the ship, who usually spend time in the port pub Oink and Quack (for example, Dock Ward, Net Street, 3). He earnestly asks the characters to hurry the sailors, because the ship is leaving Waterdeep soon.

SUSPICIOUS TRACKS

A character who searches the deck and succeeds on a DC 18 Intelligence (Investigation) check notices fresh scratches on the gunwale on the starboard side. The scratches indicate that something heavy was being dragged over this side.

UNDER THE WATER

The water around the ship is almost clean and transparent, only with a greenish tint due to algae growing at the bottom of the bay.

The characters can dive under the water and inspect the pier. With a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check, they find a 5-foot radius circle drain hole in the wall with a metal grate. The grate is sawn in several places so that it can be easily opened inward.

Behind the grate begins a 10-foot-wide tunnel that gently rises up to 10 feet before exiting the water.

A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Strength (Athletics) check can reach this location and help other characters to make their checks. If a character fails a check even with help, he or she cannot follow the party.

CROCODILE'S DEN

A completely dark tunnel ahead, characters with darkvision can make a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check and notice the **crocodile** lurking among the stones. If no one sees him, but moves forward or lights a torch, the crocodile immediately attacks and the characters are surprised.

INTERACTING WITH CROCODILE

An *animal friendship* spell can help the characters avoid combat. If a character uses a *speak with animals* spell, the crocodile says, people transport crates on his back. He moved the last one a few days ago.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Fighting the crocodile does not have to be difficult, but if you want to add more challenge to the adventure (especially for a **strong** and **very strong** group), you can increase the width of the tunnel to 15 feet and replace the **crocodile** with a **giant crocodile**

PATH TO THE CATACOMBS

After meeting the crocodile, the characters need to walk another 20 feet through the dark tunnel before they reach the main room of the catacombs (see area C2, [page 8](#)).

OINK AND QUACK

The pub Oink and Quack is located near the pier. It is a gray one-story building of stone foundations and tarred pine planks. The sign is askew and worn out by time and bad weather. Sailors and dockers of all races and varying degrees of criminality walk through open doors hooting at each other and walk out scattering through the streets with a staggering gait and glass eyes.

Shouts and din come from the pub. Sometimes the sounds subside, but after a moment they begin with renewed vigor as a mixture of laughter, screams, and abuse.

BOUNCERS

Two big guys at the entrance, the half-orc brothers, **Zark** and **Zork** (lawful evil **veterans**) make it clear to the characters that it is forbidden to enter the pub with weapons. This applies to magic focusing items and other magic stuff that the brothers are perfectly aware of.

The characters may attempt to conceal a weapon with a successful DC 18 Charisma (Deception) or Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check. A failure of any character automatically fails all the past and the future other characters' checks because it makes the brothers frisk the characters again.

PUB HALL

The pub has only one large dark hall. Daylight barely shines through the little greasy windows. There are rough wrought-iron candlesticks on the walls, and on some tables too. The smell of tobacco smoke hangs in the air, the smoke is so dense and heavy that it's hard to see the rafters on the ceiling, only the holes in the leaky roof give out where the hall ends.

There is a large table in the center of the hall, around which people crowded, they look over each other's shoulders to understand what is happening there. There are several smaller tables around. Most of them are empty. At others, motley people (**commoners** and **bandits** mostly) are sitting with blank eyes. There is a bar on the opposite wall from the entrance.

When the characters enter the hall, it becomes apparent that they stand out a lot from the other guests. The voices fall silent and everyone starts to whisper, pointing fingers at suspicious strangers. For all questions of the characters, the pub keeper **Tishy** (neutral human **commoner**) only silently nods towards the central table, and aloud offers to try his imported drinks and snacks.

ROYAL DRAGON GAME

The Royal Dragon game (a Waterdeep version of Yahtzee) is played at the center table. Players very quickly replace each other losing money. The dice fly across the table and, stopping on one of the edges, causing either shouting of joy or hum of disappointment.

At the head of the table is a swarthy sailor in a bright red bandana and an old scar across his left eye, which follows the game, accepts bets, and wins frequently. He notices the interest of the characters and invites one of them to play heads-up rather than obscure the view for the others.

The sailor introduces himself as the **Golden Jay**, he talks about the game and offers to play according to the following additional rules: bets start with 1 gold coin and are doubled in each next game, if someone runs out of money, they can bet using their equipment at the cost of sale.

Winning the game requires a successful DC 17 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check. If a character is proficient with the dice set he or she adds a proficiency bonus to this check. A character with the charlatan background makes this check with advantage. The character may stop the games at any time, then Jay asks to give up the seat to another player.

If the character wins three times in a row, Jay leaves the table with the excuse that he wants to take a piss. Any character can follow him and ask about the cargo of the Gracious Lady. The sailor quickly tells about the catacombs and wants the characters to leave and not interfere with his game. If no one follows Jay returns after a few minutes and under some pretext (for example, the characters were cheating) starts a fight.

A character may directly ask Jay about the cargo missing from the Gracious Lady during the game. In this case, the sailor offers to play for information against all the money and equipment of the character. Depending on the character's choice, one of the following scenarios occurs:

- If the character refuses, the sailors around provoke the characters to fight. If the characters don't respond, they are chucked out of the pub under everyone's acclaim but Jay offers to return if they change their minds.
- If the character agrees and wins, under the shouting of the sailors, Jay insensibly leans towards the character and quietly tells where the catacombs are and then asks the characters to get away without making a noise, otherwise, they may have problems.
- If the character loses, Jay takes the winnings, and persistently asks the characters to get out of the pub before the situation gets worse. Any resistance from the characters leads to the start of a fight.

FIGHT WITH SAILORS

The characters fight **six** unarmed sailors (**bandits**) without weapons if they could not conceal. If a character has a weapon, the sailors use bottles, chairs, or candlesticks as improvised weapons.

The sailors fight cautiously, retreat if they have few hit points, surround and attack weak targets.

If the characters defeat five sailors or there is only one character that has not incapacitated, Zark and Zork intervene, pull apart the fighters and kick the characters out of the pub. They throw out the characters' weapons next.

After a while, a sailor catches up with the characters and talks about the catacombs. He doesn't know much but is sure that all contraband goods are taken there.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These aren't cumulative:

- **Very Weak:** Remove two **bandits**.
- **Weak:** Remove one **bandit**.
- **Strong:** Replace three **bandits** with three **thugs**.
- **Very Strong:** Replace six **bandits** with six **thugs**.

PART 3: THE CATACOMBS

The catacombs are an old semi-flooded part of the city's plumbing system.

The characters can find it in three ways:

- read the last entry in Estin's diary at his house,
- get to the secret entrance underwater at the docks,
- find out from the sailors in the Oink and Quack pub.

In the third part, the characters get to the catacombs. To do this, they can wait until nightfall to find out the password and deceive the guard, or knock down the door and break through with a fight. If they find a secret passage underwater, they can enter the catacombs through it and take enemies by surprise.

Here are agents who guard boxes with various contents. The characters kill them all or try to negotiate. Either way, they find the stolen cargo inside and free Eric. He will offer the characters to make it look like he found the stolen cargo instead of them.

OUTSIDE

The entrance to the catacombs is in a dead-end street between the backyards of several buildings. It is a quiet place with almost no people. Narrow alleys lead here and daylight falls through the closely spaced roofs, creating the feeling of a deep well. That is why the air seems musty, it smells of dampness and mold. This is a massive wooden door.

The characters may try to enter the catacombs during the day or wait until night.

DAY

The door is locked and has no handles or keyholes. If the characters try to open it or knock, they hear a guard's hoarse voice from the other side, asking for a password.

If the characters say the password (they can find it out at night) the guard opens the door and lets them in, but inside he realizes that he does not know the characters, draws his weapon, and tries to escape into the catacombs. The characters may knock down the door, it requires a successful

DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check. On a success, the door opens with a clang, and the guard inside is caught by surprise. In combat, he will retreat deep into the catacombs to his allies.

If a character fails the check, the guard immediately runs deep into the catacombs to warn the others about the attack.

NIGHT

If the characters are watching the entrance before nightfall, then around midnight, a cart loaded with crates driven by **two** men (unarmed **bandits**) arrive at the entrance and the guard (**thug**) opens the door.

The characters may start combat at this moment, then the cart drivers begin to scatter, and the guard runs into the catacombs to warn the others about the attack.

If the characters wait for the men to move the crates inside and drive away, they can track down and interrogate them. These are ordinary sailors who have no idea what is in the crates and just deliver the cargo wherever they were told. The sailors easily tell the characters the password (any short word such as "herring"), because they are very scared.

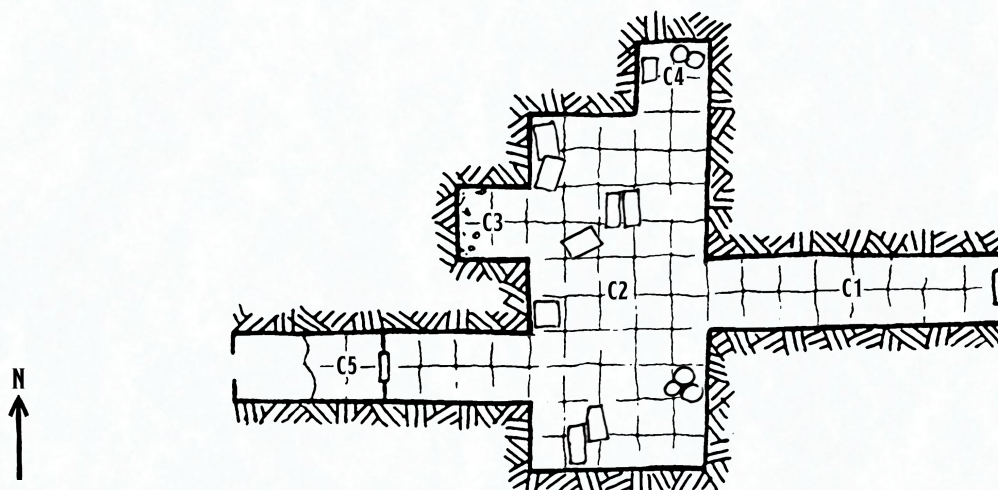
INSIDE

It is quiet inside the catacombs, no sounds from the street are heard here, only torches crackle, and water gurgles somewhere far away. It smells of smoke and musty. The walls, covered with plaster for a long time ago, are now peeling and covered with dust and soot (see map 1).

C1. CORRIDOR

Inside the corridor, the characters may see that the door was closed with a large metal bolt. There is a small curved stool nearby. A torch inserted into the wall 10 feet from the door. Then there is a 30-foot dark corridor that ends with a passage to the main room from which a dim twitching light emanates.

MAP 1. THE CATACOMBS



1 square = 5 feet

C2. MAIN ROOM

There are several small windows under the ceiling on the south wall through which the sky is barely visible. Beams of light illuminate dust hanging in the air and clouds of smoke from burning torches on the walls. Crates and barrels are neatly arranged throughout the room.

Two agents of Iron Throne (**thugs**) and their commander (**spy**) are here. They tied Estin up and left him in the southwest corner of the room and his equipment in area C3.

FREEING ESTIN

In the main room, a character who makes a successful DC 15 Dexterity (Stealth) check can discreetly untie Estin (chaotic good male Illuskan human unarmed **guard**) and talk to him. Estin whispers his story and begs the characters for help. If a character asks him, he points to the crate in which lord Dakrondrot's cargo is located.

The characters can give Estin a weapon, then he will fight in combat on an equal basis with them, otherwise, he will join the combat using his fists, but only when advantage will be on the side of the characters.

DEVELOPMENT

There are two conditions in the room that depend on the actions of the players:

- If the characters knocked down the door, the guard managed to warn the others or the characters raised the alarm in another way, the agents hide behind the crates and prepare for defense.
- If the characters got inside using a password or disarming the guard before he could warn the others, the agents play cards sitting on the floor and do not immediately notice the characters.

FIGHTING WITH AGENTS

If the agents have time to take up the defense, they shoot from crossbows until the characters get too close. The guard comes running from the corridor and joins the battle if he is still alive and not incapacitated. All agents fight desperately, protect their commander and do everything to win.

Treasure. Commander carries 6 gp, some playing cards, a *potion of healing*, and a key from the door in area C5.

ADJUSTING THIS ENCOUNTER

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These aren't cumulative

- **Very Weak** Remove one **thug** Replace one **spy** with one **thug**.
- **Weak** Replace one **spy** with one **thug**
- **Strong:** Replace one **spy** with one **veteran**.
- **Very Strong** Replace two **thugs** with two **veterans**

NEGOTIATE WITHOUT A FIGHT

The characters may talk to the agents and try to get the cargo to avoid the fight with a successful DC 19 Charisma (Deception) or Charisma (Persuasion) check. On a failed check, the agents pretend to agree, but after a moment grab their weapons and start combat.

If a character is trying to intimidate the agents, they tease the characters and begin to kick them out of the catacombs.

C3. BLOCKED PASSAGE

The passage is littered with earth and stones from the collapsed ceiling because groundwater has undermined the masonry several years ago.

C4. STORAGE ROOM

There are several sacks of millet, a couple of barrels of corned beef, and a crate of a dozen bottles of ale. If the characters search the room, they will find a canvas bag behind one of the barrels. It contains Estin's stuff: a dagger in a scabbard, a bottle of alchemical fire, and a pin in the shape of a harp.

C5. CROCODILE'S DEN

A 20-foot tunnel with no lighting angled downward ends with a metal grate that has a latticed door closed with a padlock. The door can be unlocked with the key from the agents' commander or by a character who makes a successful DC 12 Dexterity check using thieves' tools or can be forced open with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check. All of those actions alert the **crocodile** inside and he immediately attacks if the characters have not been here before (see "Interacting with Crocodile", [page 5](#)).

Behind the crocodile, the tunnel goes into the water and after 10 feet ends with a metal grate sawn in several places. The characters that succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw can swim underwater and up at docks near the Gracious Lady (see Part 2), others cannot leave the catacombs this way.

COMPLETING QUEST

If the characters get the stolen cargo and free Eric, he asks them for a favor. He offers them 100 gp to pretend that it was he who found the cargo.

If the characters agree, he will find them and pay the next day (if the characters have stolen his savings, he borrows money from Mairlie).

If the characters refuse, he calmly says goodbye and leaves the catacombs.

ROLEPLAYING ESTIN

Estin seems calm and reasonable, but it is still noticeable how emotions overwhelm him inside. He answers all questions directly, but abruptly. And he tries to hide his belonging to the Harpers, even if the characters find his pin.

REWARDS

If the characters themselves return the cargo to the lord, he pays the promised gold coin reward (**60 gp for each**). The characters also get **450 experience points each** if they went through the adventure without killing anyone.

The characters from the **Zhentarim** may receive **one additional renown point**, but if the characters have done so that the cargo was returned by Estin, then the **Harpers** may receive **one additional renown point** instead.

WHAT'S NEXT?

This adventure can be the start of a campaign or a story arc in Waterdeep and its suburbs, here are some options for continuing the story:

- If the characters helped Estin to return the lord's cargo, they will soon be invited to a magnificent wedding as guards for the newlyweds, because the Iron Throne certainly will want to take revenge.
- If the characters returned the cargo on their own, the lord will hire them to eliminate his strong rival, on whose side an unknown magician has appeared.

CREATURE STATISTICS

The following creatures appear in this adventure:

NOBLE

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 15 (Breastplate)
Hit Points 9 (2d8)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +5, Insight +4, Persuasion +5
Senses Passive Perception 12
Languages Any two languages
Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. The noble adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the noble must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

COMMONER

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 10
Hit Points 4 (1d8)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses Passive Perception 10
Languages Any one language (usually Common)
Challenge 0 (10 XP)

ACTIONS

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

VETERAN

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 17 (Splint)
Hit Points 58 (9d8 + 18)
Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +2
Senses Passive Perception 12
Languages Any one language (usually Common)
Challenge 3 (700 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The veteran makes two longsword attacks. If it has a shortsword drawn, it can also make a shortsword attack.

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage, or 8 (1d10 + 3) slashing damage if used with two hands

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target *Hit:* 6 (1d10 + 1) piercing damage

BANDIT CAPTAIN

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

Armor Class 15 (Studded Leather)
Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)
Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws STR +4, DEX +5, WIS +2
Skills Athletics +4, Deception +4
Senses Passive Perception 10
Languages Any two languages
Challenge 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The captain makes three melee attacks two with its scimitar and one with its dagger. Or the captain makes two ranged attacks with its daggers

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

REACTIONS

Parry. The captain adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the captain must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon

CROCODILE

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 12 (Natural Armor)
Hit Points 19 (3d10 + 3)
Speed 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	5 (-3)

Skills Stealth +2
Senses Passive Perception 10
Languages –
Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

Hold Breath. The crocodile can hold its breath for 15 minutes.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d10 + 2) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 12). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the crocodile can't bite another target.

GIANT CROCODILE

Huge beast, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (Natural Armor)
Hit Points 85 (9d12 + 27)
Speed 30 ft., swim 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
21 (+5)	9 (-1)	17 (+3)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

Skills Stealth +5
Senses Passive Perception 10
Languages –
Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Hold Breath. The crocodile can hold its breath for 15 minutes

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The crocodile makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its tail.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 21 (3d10 + 5) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 16). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the crocodile can't bite another target

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target not grappled by the crocodile. *Hit:* 14 (2d8 + 5) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 16 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

BANDIT

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

Armor Class 12 (Leather Armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages Any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack* +3 to hit, range 80 ft./320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage.

THUG

Medium humanoid (any race), any non good alignment

Armor Class 11 (Leather Armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages Any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/2 (100 P)

Pack Tactics. The thug has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the thug's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The thug makes two melee attacks.

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

SPY

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 27 (6d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +5, Insight +4, Investigation +5, Perception +6, Persuasion +5, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +4

Senses Passive Perception 16

Languages Any two languages

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Cunning Action. On each of its turns, the spy can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). The spy deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the spy that isn't incapacitated and the spy doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The spy makes two melee attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target *Hit* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage

GUARD

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (Chain Shirt, Shield)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Skills Perception +2

Senses Passive Perception 12

Languages Any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

ACTIONS

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target *Hit* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage, or 5 (1d8 + 1) piercing damage if used with two hands to make a melee attack