

WATERDEEP: EXPANDED FACTION MISSIONS

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INTRODUCTION

Waterdeep is a city of politics and espionage, where a sharp wit and a silver tongue can get you just as far if not further than a sharp, silvered blade. Who will you offer your services to, or rather, who will you be approached by?

WHAT THIS BOOK IS FOR

This book serves as a more in-depth look at the faction missions from Chapter 2 of *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist*, expanding upon them into more than a single paragraph and a single skill check per level. If you don't have *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist*, it can still serve as a few basic missions for whatever secret society you might think will align with it.

If you're already using *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist*, I suggest using the faction missions in this book in place of the ones listed in Chapter 2 of the module, but leave the method of the party joining the factions the same. For the sake of convenience, all future instances of the book 'Waterdeep: Dragon Heist' will be referred to as *WDH*.

WHICH FACTION?

There are numerous factions listed, your party can align themselves all with one, all with different factions, or none at all! If you're using this book, odds are you want them to align with at least one of them. I would suggest just using Chapter 2 of *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist* as a way to see which faction the players join as it provides a lot more insight into what motivates these organizations, but simply use this book as replacement for the missions listed therein. However, if you choose to ignore that book entirely, or do not own it, here are a few summaries of the factions and who might approach the party with offers to join:

BREGAN D'AERTHE

The Bregan D'aerthe are a secretive society of drow, mostly men, who operate outside of the norms of dark elf society. They might reach out to the party if they have a drow among their numbers, or if they've shown themselves to be strange, cunning, or strangely cunning.

If the party are contacted by the Bregan D'aerthe, they are visited during the day by a fancy human man named J. B. Nevercott, a haberdasher who makes suits for a living. He claims to be an agent of his 'benefactors', only smugly changing the subject if they suss out his true intentions or the identities of his benefactors, the Bregan D'aerthe. He promises gold, fame, and the loyalty of his benefactors should they align themselves with him. Whenever he has a new job for them, he visits them personally to deliver it.

EMERALD ENCLAVE

The Emerald Enclave are a society of druids and rangers who seek to preserve the balance of nature. They might reach out to the party if any among them cast any sort of nature magic, or if they've shown themselves to have a distate for evil or the undead.

If the party are contacted by the Emerald Enclave they are visited by a white cat that speaks in a melodious male voice, telling them to go to Phaulkonmere in the Southern Ward if they want to join the Emerald Enclave. It dashes away after delivering the invitation. The party can seize it with a DC 17 Athletics check, but now that it has delivered its message it is only a dumb old cat.

Phaulkonmere is a lavish mansion, but the elven nobles within have no idea what the party are there for. As they are currently hosting a fancy party (or are preparing to host, depending on the time of day) they turn the party away. Outside, they are confronted by Melannor Fellbranch, a half-elf druid who works for the enclave, as he is the one who sent the cat. He is their groundskeeper, but is also a proud druid. He promises gold and a variety of magical charms should they align themselves with him. Whenever he has a new job for them, he sends a cat or squirrel that is enchanted with *Animal Messenger* to inform them. To any who joins, he immediately rewards with a *charm of restoration*. If any party member sees THIS as reason to join, he turns away their greedy intentions.

FORCE GREY

Force Grey, also known as the Gray Hands, are a last resort paramilitary force of Waterdeep. Dedicated to protecting the city and those who inhabit it, they handle anything the City Watch, City Guard, or even the Lords themselves don't want to dirty their hands with. They might reach out to the party if they've proven themselves allies of this peace, perhaps by saving a noble.

If the party are contacted by Force Grey then a random member of the party is contacted by a *sending* spell that tells them to bring their friends to Blackstaff Tower in the Castle Ward right away. If the party ignores it, the spell is attempted again on a different party member, but after that no further attempts will be made.

Blackstaff Tower is home to Vajra Safahr, a powerful spellcaster who enlists the party to help her with missions for the Force Grey, promising them gold and varying levels of amnesty and exemption to the laws of Waterdeep. Whenever she has a new job for them, she will contact them with *sending* and inform them of the details.

HARPERS

The Harpers are noble, altruistic spellcasters who stop at nothing to keep powerful magical items out of the hands of evil-doers. They might reach out to the party if they demonstrate noble hearts or at least the capacity for goodness somewhere in them.

If the party are contacted by the Harpers then a small flock of magically animated origami cranes flies into the party's hands. Each one unfolds into a ticket to the opera tonight at Lightsinger Theater, granting each one a pass. Each ticket is also signed by 'Mirt', and the most shabby among the party also has a note written on it that specifies formal attire is a must.

At the opera, the party is approached by a heavysset human in an ornate green jacket identifying himself as Mirt. He asks the party about joining the Harpers, promising them gold and the loyalty of the Harpers whenever the tide starts to turn against them. Whenever he has a new job for them, he sends a magically animated paper bird with details written upon it.

LORDS' ALLIANCE

The Lords' Alliance is similar to Force Grey, but operate more openly. Dedicated to protecting the city, they work hand in hand with the City Watch to ensure justice is done. They might reach out to the party if they've proven themselves Waterdeep citizens of great import, or if they've otherwise shown some pride in the city.

If the party are contacted by the Lords' Alliance then a human drunkard named Jalester Silvermane contacts them under the guise of being drunk, mumbling seeming half-truths about working for the Lords' Alliance with promise of gold and how awesome it must be to have the cops just let you get away with stuff. If the party agree to join the Alliance, he immediately sobers up, revealing it all to be a ruse. He will keep up this guise if he has to give them missions in public, otherwise preferring to seem charming and professional in private.

ORDER OF THE GAUNTLET

The Order of the Gauntlet seeks to stomp out evil in all its forms, primarily in the form of clerics, monks, and paladins devoted to righteous gods. They might reach out to the party if they've shown they're capable of good, or are already open worshippers of good-aligned deities.

If the party are contacted by the Order of the Gauntlet, then they are visited by a female human knight named Savra Belabranta who would like to swear them into the order at the Halls of Justice, in exchange she promises gold and free healing services. Afterwards she will visit them personally to give them their missions.

ZHENTARIM

Zhentarim are a shadow organization that trades in mercenaries, smuggled goods, and weaponry. They might reach out to the party if any members are evil, or at least not too morally strict.

If the party are contacted by the Zhentarim then a flying snake will creep upon them in the dead of night with a parchment wrapped around it's body. The parchment merely suggests that if they want to change the world for the better, they should talk to Davil Starsong at the Yawning Portal.

Davil drinks at a circular table surrounded by mercenaries, seemingly just there for after-work drinks, but they're all secretly here to receive missions for the Zhentarim. He promises the party gold as well as a discounted rate on mercenaries should they agree to work together. Whenever he has a new mission for them, a flying snake with a parchment detailing it arrives to them in the night again.

BREGAN D'AERTHE



Nevercott is a charming man, and it's quite hard to tell what he's really thinking or why he has allied himself with the drow... Nonetheless, he's happy to have a 2nd level party prove their loyalty with the following mission:

A SIMPLE DELIVERY

"There's a man I often tailor suits for, a large heavyset individual who goes by the name of Laertes Hansberg, I swear I've never seen a noble so fat. Anyway, he'll be picking up a new hat from me tomorrow evening. On his way home, I want you folks to be there, and I want you folks to snag a handkerchief out of his pocket, and I want you folks to ensure that handkerchief gets to Yra, a little tiefling girl who lives down by the docks in a box. You can do that, right?"

INTERROGATING J. B. NEVERCOTT

If the party presses for more details J. B. is as deflective and cryptic as ever, refusing to explain what the hankey is for, why Yra needs it, and why he cares. A DC 22 Insight check will at least reveal that J. B. doesn't hate Laertes, so this can't be that bad... right? If the party gets too confrontational, he teases the party about how MAYBE they don't really want the Bregan D'aerthe on their side and MAYBE he should be talking to someone else... if the party takes him seriously, he laughs, and tells them it was a good joke, but seriously, get that handkerchief.

NEVERCOTT'S HABERDASHERY

A good way the party might want to find Laertes is heading straight for Nevercott's and waiting for him. If the party decide to do this, it is worth noting that the J. B. Nevercott who mans the shop is not the same man who gave them their mission. J. B. claims to not recognize them, but will happily tailor suits and hats for them if they have the coin for it. The Nevercott that hands out their missions will explain this discrepancy as just him maintaining cover in public, as nobody can know he's an agent of the Bregan D'aerthe.

Nevercott's personality and appearance are detailed on page 27, in the Harpers mission 'Spy Party', though you may also recognize him on the cover of this pdf!

FINDING LAERTES HANSBERG

Laertes isn't hard to track down. He's a heavyset man who will be seen walking out of Nevercott's Haberdashery in the North Ward about an hour before sundown with a flashy white hat to match his dingy white suit. The party is likely to see various citizens bowing and stepping aside to clear his path. A party member can approach him from behind and slip a hankey from his pocket with a DC 12 Slight of Hand check. On a fail, he turns to them, angry and disturbed. If this happens, that person and anyone openly associated with them has disadvantage to Charisma checks with Laertes.

INTERACTING WITH LAERTES

Laertes Hansberg is a higher up in the Stablemasters' and Farriers' Guild, and is quite quick to bursts of emotion. If someone is caught trying to pickpocket him, he becomes furious, and asks them for a good reason not to report them to the city watch. If they play into his ego and talk about how stylish he is, he will calm down, and while still distrustful, will consider letting them off with but a warning.

If they approach him to talk to him, and demonstrate some reverence for a noble so proud and mighty, they will have Advantage on charisma checks. If the party asks for a handkerchief, they must pass a DC 12 Charisma check depending on how they ask:

- If they pretend to be sick, or crying and need a hankey, the check is Deception
- If they threaten him, the check is Intimidation, but even if it succeeds he will immediately notify the guard.. after handing over the handkerchief
- If they tell him how amazing he is and that they just want a small token to remember the stylish and handsome noble by, the check is Persuasion

TAKING IT TO YRA

Yra lives in a large wooden crate on the corner of Net Street and Dock Street. If the party are being hunted by the watch, they'll have to pass a DC 12 Stealth check to even approach her without **four guards** trying to arrest all of them.

If the party find the crate and give her the hankey, Yra goes from a playful child in attitude to more like the wickedest of demons... She makes sure the monogram on the hankey is in fact L. H., and then disappears in a burst of fire. The party will neither see her, nor Laertes Hansberg ever again.

CONCLUSION

Once Yra has the hankey, their work is considered done, and the party is rewarded by Nevercott in the following ways:

- Any Bregan D'aerthe member gains 1 renown
- Any City Watch who saw the party assault or threaten Laertes has just... disappeared
- Each party member gains 700 XP. If using a milestone system, they should all now be 3rd level.

NEVERCOTT'S HABERDASHERY

Item	Cost
Clothes, Extravagant	30 gp
Hat, Fine	15 gp

STOP THE PRESSES



Nevercott visits the party in Trollskull Manor again, eager to provide them more work. He'll give out the following mission to a 3rd level party, only to be interrupted by the sound of an explosion outside (see WDH Chapter 3: Fireball):

"I must apologize, the sort of work I'm about to ask of you is, well, frankly beneath you, but I've no other contacts available at the moment. I have in my hands an expose on the devil worshipping ways of certain nobles in this city. I need you to get it in the hands of Gaxly Rudderburst, the publisher of The Waterdeep Wazoo, without him knowing who wrote it, or where it came from. His office sits between Immar and Stallion in the North Ward. Get it on his desk without anyone seeing you, got it? [Is interrupted by explosion] ...what in the nine hells was that sound?"

FOLLOWING J. B. NEVERCOTT

During his explanation, Nevercott slides the letter across the table to the party. If they head out immediately to investigate the sound, they find Nevercott to have disappeared. Detect magic or any similar abilities will sense the presence of *illusion* magic, as he used a Cloak of Invisibility to disappear and leave as the party opened the door.

If the party did not immediately investigate the sound, he decides to instead, and calmly walks out to look into it. As a crowd is starting to gather, he slips himself within them and disappears. For details on this encounter, see Chapter 3 of Waterdeep: Dragon Heist.

THE SCANDALOUS LETTER

The letter Nevercott gives the party is a scandalous document mentioning secret deals behind closed doors, orgies, and blood rituals among various noble families of Waterdeep.

The following families are mentioned, but not explicitly associated with these acts:

- Snobeedle
- Cassalanter
- Highchurch
- Delimirev
- Hansberg

RITUALS IN THE NIGHT

Any character who reads the letter can make an Arcana check to identify the rituals described. A conjuration wizard makes this check with advantage. They obtain the following information depending on how high they rolled:

10+ These rituals seem to be associated with *conjuration* magic.

15+ These rituals seem intended to summon devils, and are described with too much detail to be inaccurate... but that doesn't make them incriminating, only well-researched.

20+ These rituals are accurate and incredibly expensive to perform properly, so if they did happen within Waterdeep, they definitely happened at the behest of it's upper-class.

SNEAKING INTO GAXLY'S OFFICE

If the party slips in during the day, the building The Waterdeep Wazoo is based out of is quite busy. A good disguise and a DC 13 Deception check are enough to slip in and pretend to be an overworked, underpaid, and confused intern who can make a DC 10 Sleight of Hand check to slip the letter onto Gaxly's desk. If either one fail, they are confronted by an impatient Gaxly who demands to know what they're up to.

INTERACTING WITH GAXLY

Gaxly Rudderburst is a human commoner dressed in a dark grey suit with a short black moustache and a shaved head. He is irritable and impatient, demanding news on his desk yesterday! If the party member doesn't seem to work for Gaxly he demands they leave immediately. If they do look like they work at the Wazoo he impatiently demands they get out and get him some news.

If they offer him the letter he demands to know who it's from. The player can say it's from an anonymous but reliable source and make a DC 10 Deception check. This check is made with disadvantage if they don't seem to work for the Wazoo.

If the player fails these checks, Gaxly demands they leave, and will even shout at an intern to get the City Watch involved so they can escort these intruders out. The Watch will never come as Gaxly makes these absurd demands regularly, but it may still intimidate them.

BREAKING INTO GAXLY'S OFFICE

If the party arrives after sundown, they find the Wazoo completely empty. They'll have to pass a DC 15 Stealth check or be spotted by the Watch and have to explain themselves...

All the doors are locked, but can be opened with a DC 10 Thieves' Tools check or any spell that can unlock a mundane lock such as *knock*. Once inside, they can easily plant the letter and slip out, making another DC 15 Stealth check or be pursued by three members of the watch.

CONCLUSION

The next morning, J. B. Nevercott will be happy to read the expose he planted, and reward the party the following ways:

- Any Bregan D'aerthe member gains 1 renown.
- They find an invitation to dine with Zardo Zord aboard his flagship, open to them for any night at their convenience. Their agents will keep an eye on the party to ensure they'll have a feast prepared whenever the party decides to take him up on this offer.
- Each party member gains 250 XP.

HORRIBLE NIGHTS

N

evercott visits the party in Trollskull Manor again, likely waiting for them return. Whenever the party next arrives after hitting 4th level, likely to rest, he'll insist they take on the following work:

"Good to see you again folks, trust you're doing well? ...well that's great, anyway, I need you all to do me a favor, see, we've got a member of the Xanathar Guild locked in your basement. Keep him safe for three days, and then we'll be out of your hair. Trust me, it'll be worth it."

FOLLOWING J. B. NEVERCOTT

He won't let them follow him, insisting on leaving alone, but if they try to stealthily follow him he eventually gets lost in the crowd, using his *hat of disguise* to change on the fly.

THE PRISONER

Within the basement of Trollskull Manor is Ott Steeltoes (see appendix B of WDH) bound by *iron bands of Bilarro*. He has no idea how he got there, as he was drugged in his sleep before being captured. He demands to be set free, insisting that his work is vital to the future of the city, but refuses to explain why.

Each night the manor will be attacked by Xanathar agents trying to find him, though the party could move Ott out to avoid it entirely. That being said, if he is not in their cellar on the fourth morning, it will prompt a confrontation from Nevercott, who will ask where he is. If the party tells him the truth, he smiles and leaves. If Nevercott is not told where Ott is, he somehow finds out anyway, but the party is no longer considered members of the Bregan D'Aerthe.

If interrogated, Ott will insist he has no idea why he's there, and insists he has no idea what they could want with him... but will disclose anything he knows with enough pressure or threat. What he knows and how he behaves are detailed on page 214 of WDH.

AVOIDING THE CONFLICT

If the party refuse to partake, Ott is rescued quite easily by the attacking Xanathar agents, assuming the party turn him over or just leave the Manor. Alternatively, the party can keep him somewhere safe, but the Manor will be utterly destroyed in their absence by Xanathar Guild members searching for Ott. If they're willing to let their hard work renovating it (or lackthereof) be undone, this is a good option, otherwise, proceed as follows.

NIGHT ONE

Shortly after midnight, six **bugbears** loyal to Xanathar creep from a sewer and advance upon the Manor to retrieve Ott. If the door is barricaded they will make Athletics (+2) checks to try and break it down, or proceed through a window. They are easily distracted, and will try to fight the party before rescuing Ott.

NIGHT TWO

Just before sundown the next day, Morton, Errol, Elric, and Stodge (see page 26) arrive for some drinks. They express interest in how the manor has been fixed up and ask for a tour, with Morton claiming he used to visit it when it was a tavern when he was younger. This is a lie, as the four have been devoured by **intellect devourers** that are using their bodies to search for Ott. If they cannot find Ott they leave peacefully, otherwise one of them will seize Ott and flee while the others block the party's path.

NIGHT THREE

An hour after sundown, the front door of the Manor, no matter how well defended, is instantly turned to ash as a **beholder zombie** hits it with a disintegration ray and floats into the building. It WILL destroy everything here, including the countertop and the floorboards, in its search for Ott, but once again prioritizes enemies. If the party is there, it will fight them, otherwise the Manor is essentially destroyed, and will cost 1,000 GP (in addition to any other yet unpaid renovation costs) to undo.

THE SUNRISE

Unless the party is actively watching Ott, he just disappears as strangely as he arrived. If they are watching him, Ott just instantly disappears as the sun rises that day. Anyone casting *detect magic* or a similar spell senses an aura of abjuration around where he was. The *iron bands of Bilarro* remain, as a gift to the party.

CONCLUSION

Jarlaxle disguised as J. B. Nevercott is never seen again, as he is far too busy with other matters at this point in the story to meet the party. Regardless, the party is rewarded the following ways:

- Any Bregan D'aerthe member gains 2 renown
- They get to keep the *iron bands of Bilarro*

DAGGERS IN THE DARK

Jarlaxle himself comes to the party, no longer in the guise of Nevercott. Possibly at the Manor, or possibly right behind them as they scope out the location of the last key to the vault, maybe as they research the lair of the true villain... in either case, he makes the following offer to the 5th level party:

"Nice to see you folks without any pretense for once... I have a favor to ask. We have a spy deep within Xanathar's organization, but it's become more and more apparent that his interests no longer align with my own. Assassinate him and I'll make it worth your while, especially if you can do it quickly and quietly."

NOTE: IF JARLAXLE IS YOUR VILLAIN

If Jarlaxle is the main villain, you might think his attitude would change regarding the party... however, he is a shrewd, cunning drow, overflowing with competence and confidence. He has no fear of presenting himself to the party face-to-face, maybe making a comment like 'I don't like you, and you don't like me, but...'. When he does meet them, he will not be carrying any vault keys or the *stone of golorr* on him, and if the party has any on them he will not make an attempt to steal them as a show of respect.

HEADING TO THE XANATHAR'S LAIR

The lair is detailed in Chapter 5 of WDH, and as such I won't be detailing it here. Jarlaxle leads the party to a sewer grate in Castle Ward and enters, guiding them there by torchlight if any of the characters lack darkvision. During this trip he will explain how he's been playing them this entire time, eager to detail everything he's already done, but not detailing anything he is PLANNING to do. He's cocky and arrogant, but not stupid. They will meet up with four male **drow** that work for Jarlaxle named Arannis Nur'zekk, Beldar Tlabath, Rylvar Tlabath, and Draknafein Uriss. They are there to help the party kill Nar'l, but will not disclose the secret mission they're to fulfill for Jarlaxle... stealing Nar'l's *bag of holding* after he's dead.

The party will soon come upon a winding stone staircase, spiraling upwards and carved with eyes that flow a faint magical light. Jarlaxle will not follow them in, but will offer one final reminder to the party and the drow of their mission: find and kill Nar'l Xibrindas, and try to get in and out quietly. This staircase leads to area X1 of the Xanathar Lair.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

The party can proceed through the lair however they'd like, and if a vault key or the *stone of golorr* are here, you'd be better off following the book more than any advice I can write here. However, here are a few things to keep in mind that are unique to this mission:

- The **drow** stay with the party, and follow their lead when not offering their own advice. They dislike working with non-drow, but respect Jarlaxle too much to act against them. When calculating XP, they count as party members.
- Nar'l should be in area X18, please see that entry for information on how Nar'l interacts with the party. Even if he betrays the Xanathar, the **drow** are still under orders to kill him, as are the party. Jarlaxle would not take a risk on him.
- After Nar'l is dead, the **drow** may stick around to find the *bag of holding*. In this case they are likely to split up from the party, explaining 'they have their own methods of escape', as a total lie to continue infiltrating the lair.
- If the party is not quiet about it, and implicates the Bregan D'earthe, Jarlaxle is quick to run damage control, sowing rumors and dissent and implicating Trollskull Manor and its inhabitants as rivals trying to frame him as they start up another crime gang. This will likely have dire consequences for the party in the future, as the Xanathar Guild seek to destroy the Manor by the end of the month.

CONCLUSION

If the party managed to kill Nar'l, quietly or otherwise, they will be rewarded the following ways:

- Any Bregan D'aerthe member gains 2 renown
- Waiting for them on a table or countertop at Trollskull Manor are golden trophies shaped like Jarlaxle, one for each member of the party, worth 250 GP each.

EMERALD ENCLAVE

Melannor Fellbranch has little patience or humor, but he knows a good heart when he sees one. Upon meeting the party he quickly gives them the following mission for a 2nd level party:

DARK HARVEST

"There's a scarecrow brought to life terrorizing the farms. It's been killing livestock and terrifying farmers but no person has died yet so the City Guard doesn't think it a priority. The last report came from the Stoutfellow farm. I'll trust you to handle it"

FINDING THE SCARECROW

Undercliff is a rolling grassland with scattered forested areas to the east of Waterdeep. It is not recommended that the party just go around attacking scarecrows, as most of them are actual scarecrows serving a purpose on the farms. If they follow Melannor's advice, they'll head straight to the Stoutfellow farm, otherwise they may pursue other avenues of tracking them down, such as interrogating the Snobeedles, who run a far larger orchard, or perhaps talking to the prisoner farmhands of Amendsfarm.

There are actually three scarecrows, all terrorizing Stoutfellows as part of an attempt to drive them out of business by the Snobeedles. All three of the Stoutfellows' scarecrows in their cornfield are possessed by evil magic and must be dealt with.

UNDERCLIFF

As the party leave the city and head east, they'll eventually come to the outside of the Stoutfellow farm. Once they do, describe the following in a way that fits your setting:

-The border back into Waterdeep is less than an hour behind you

-You are surrounded by verdant fields of grass (change to thick snow if you are running this in the winter)

-Before you is a crossroads with a simple wooden signpost. It points down the road you've come down, saying Waterdeep, with a path to the left saying 'Stoutfellow Farm' and a path to the right saying 'Snobeedle Orchard & Meadery'

-In the distance behind the sign you can see another farm being worked on, with thick stone walls surrounding it.

This last farm is Amendsfarm, the prison farm where those serving minor sentences to the city of Waterdeep can work off their debts to society. The party is free to investigate any of these however they wish.

AMENDSFARM

Amendsfarm is surrounded on all sides by a twenty foot high stone wall with harsh metal spikes lining it and a constant patrol of human **guards** walking the perimeter. If the party wishes to climb this wall, they must make a DC 14 Athletics check to climb the wall, taking 1d4 piercing damage from the spikes and falling off if they fail.

As they are climbing, they must make a DC 12 Stealth check to be unseen by the guards. The following things can affect their stealth check:

- If it is raining, they are covered by rain, making them hard to see but also making it hard to climb. Make the roll as normal.
- If it nighttime make the Stealth check with Advantage.
- If they fail the Athletics check, make the Stealth check with Disadvantage as they fall to the ground.

If they are spotted failing to climb the wall they will be pursued by three **guards**, and may have to explain themselves. If the party manages to get at least one hundred feet away from Amendsfarm grounds, the guards lose track of them, but the party cannot ever return to this farm and may now be wanted depending on how good a look the guards got of them.

BREAKING THE LAW

If the party was spotted or arrested they'll be expected to pay 200 GP as well as work at Amendsfarm for three days. No excuse will be good enough for the guard, however a DC 10 Persuasion check can get the sentence reduced to 100 GP with no labor. If the party cannot pay either fee they must all work at the farm for 10 days. It is suggested to just skip ahead to afterwards, with the characters leaving the farm with 1 level of exhaustion.

AMENDSFARM GUARDPOST

On the easternmost point of the farm is a small stone building where the guard changes regularly. The party can visit, where the warden of Amendsfarm, a **knight** named Gavin Clearwind will greet them from behind the viewing slot of the door of the outpost, begrudgingly.

Clearwind has little patience, and will gladly tell the party what he knows of the scarecrow if it means they'll leave him be. He will tell them Amendsfarm hasn't been harassed by this 'scarecrow' the other farms complain of, maybe they can't get through the walls, or his operation just isn't on it's hitlist. Either way, it's no business of his, and he's sure the guard will deal with it once they're able.

SNOBEEDELE ORCHARD & MEADERY

The Snobeedles are rich, affluent halflings who have a large family who make their money stomping grapes into wine for the nobles of Waterdeep. The orchard is more upscale, doubling as a resort as well as hosting live music festivals in the summer.

GUEST RELATIONS

There's a drinking hall with a gift shop in this room. If you're visiting in Eleasis, they can even pick their own grapes for a small fee of 4 SP. The drinking hall is staffed by three halflings named Gregor (male), Velra (female), and Porrim (female). If visiting in the winter, only Porrim is working. You can even buy a small brass pin you can wear on your clothing of the Snobeedle family crest, as a sign of how much of a fan you are of their wine.

WHAT THE HALFLINGS KNOW

Gregor, Velra, and Porrim know nothing of the scarecrows. They've heard about them, but as they've never attacked the Snobeedle Orchard they've never had reason to care. However if one asks to speak to their boss, or one of the Snobeedles, they'll happily contact one. After a few moments, one of them returns with a female halfling noble named Blossom Snobeedle, who wears a poofy white shirt and several silver rings.

BLOSSOM SNOBEEDELE

Blossom considers herself a woman of the people, a noble who 'remembers her roots'. This is a stretch, as the Snobeedles were already on their way up even as she was a child. She's trying not to let on that her son Dasher has gone missing, assuming the boy has gone off on one of his little escapades on the city. If the party insists on getting involved, please see the 4th Level Zhentarim quest for more information.

If asked about the scarecrow, Blossom claims to know nothing, aside from a bit of nervousness, hoping they don't come for her farm next. A DC 17 Insight check will reveal her to be a complete liar, and a DC 15 Intimidation check will get her to reveal the truth. Anything short of this, she will view as the desperate pleas of commoners to smear her good name, and will consider mentioning the party to her friends in high places... this means nothing, but Blossom genuinely believes it does.

If the party manage to pull the truth out of her, they find out she has paid for the scarecrows to be commissioned to drive the Stoutfellows out of business, as she's scared of losing her monopoly. The scarecrows are controlled by one of the rings on her hand, and the party can demand it from her now that she's been found out. Once the ring is removed, it crumbles to dust, and the scarecrows transform into ordinary scarecrows, the mission accomplished.

SNOBEEDELE DRINKING HALL

Item	Cost
Mug of Ale	8 cp
Bottle of Snobeedle Vintage	15 gp
Snobeedle Crest Pin	30 gp
Inn Stay	6 gp

STOUTFELLOW FARM

The Stoutfellows are a family of up and coming halflings, who have, in recent years, come into a quickly growing fortune as their own wine has become quite popular ever since Zardoz Zord declared it his favorite. They're hiring at least one new hand for the farm every month for the past year, and it's getting to a point where they may have to hire two.

MR. AND MRS. STOUTFELLOW

During the spring and summer, the farm is as busy as can be, with halflings run to and fro to pick grapes and stomp wine. If the party asks any halfling who's in charge, they'll point to one of their bosses, who in turn will point to Mister and Missus Stoutfellow.

Mary Stoutfellow is the savant who found the perfect blend to make the perfect wine, and oversees stomping it. A heavysset halfling woman with a conniving grin, she's quite proud of the work she's done to put her husband's farm on the map.

Jack Stoutfellow is a perpetually tired man, who always wears a weay grin. Thin and hardworking, he's amazed the farm is doing so well, he just wishes he could keep enough people on staff for him to get a full night's sleep again.

The Stoutfellows can usually be found in their house on the farm, counting coin and balancing the books. If the farm is visited during the fall or winter, this is the easiest way to find them, by the lantern light from their home.

If the party asks them about the scarecrow they'll beg for help. It doesn't seem to be one of their scarecrows, so it likely comes in from the hills, running in and destroying vines, smashing grapes in it's horrible fake mouth. If the party dispatches of it, they'll gladly offer up a barrel of Stoutfellow Reserve, a barrel of fine wine that can be sold for 60 GP.

WAITING FOR THE SCARECROW

As the scarecrows attack nightly, it'd be in the party's best interest to wait for the scarecrow to come down from the hills. It will enter the fields from the outside at around 2 A.M., so have the party call for watch order, assuming they don't all just stay awake for this. Whoever is awake at this time, call for a DC 14 Perception check. On a success, they see the scarecrow, and can ambush it. On a fail, the scarecrow initiates combat with a surprise round.

If the scarecrow is defeated and the Stoutfellows notified, they happily reward the party as promised. However, the next day the Stoutfellows demand the barrel back, angrily shouting that the party didn't stop anything! The scarecrow was in fact only one of three, and they all were attacking one at a time. If the party agrees to help, call for another watch as they ambush and defeat the last two scarecrows, who have traveled in a group to ensure their success. If the party destroys them as well, they will have finally stopped the ambushes, but the Stoutfellows will not be confident they've been foiled until a week has gone by with no scarecrow attacks. If the party does not agree to fight off more scarecrows, the Stoutfellows demand their wine back, or 70 GP if they've already drunk any of it. If the party cannot pay, they are blacklisted by the Vintners', Distillers' and Brewers' Guild, but can easily be let back into their good graces by paying what is owed.

CONCLUSION

Once all three scarecrows are defeated, their work is considered done, and the party is rewarded by Melannor the following ways:

- Any Emerald Enclave member gains 1 renown
- Melannor agrees to provide free food for the party, as well as takes care of any animal companions they acquire, having his own safe space for them somewhere on Phaulkonmere's grounds
- Each party member gains 500 XP, in addition to any obtained by fighting Scarecrows. If using a milestone system, they should all now be 3rd level.

SIX FEET UNDER

As the party is investigating the Fireball (see Chapter 3 of WDH) a player wearing a *charm of restoration* hears a female voice in their mind. This is Jeryth Phaulkon, a woman residing at Phaulkonmere who will take over as their contact for the Emerald Enclave here on out, and requests help from the 3rd level party:

"Thank you for listening to me, sorry to inconvenience you, but I've been given some disturbing news... there's a necromancer stealing bones from the City of the Dead and animating them as skeletons. The night watchman has asked for help, and the Enclave are the only ones who have listened. Please talk to him at your earliest convenience."

A BONE TO PICK

If the party enters the City of the Dead, they can find Ambrose Everdawn (LG male human Tethrian **knight**) either on patrol or resting in a small shack that serves as a graveskeeper's lodge. If the party explains why they're here, he gladly accepts their help and leads them to a recently defiled grave.

THE GRAVE OF GREGOR GRIMMSBY

Ambrose takes them to a humble grave of Gregor Grimmsby, a human man who had little reverence for the gods or tradition, and so requested only a plain coffin and a tombstone, to save money for his family as well as give them some peace as he passed. It has sadly been torn apart, the coffin lying empty, dirt piled up around it.

The following information can be gathered depending on how the party seeks to investigate:

- If investigating the coffin, call for a DC 13 Investigation check. On a success they realize that tattered clothes and rotting scraps of flesh have been left behind, lending credence to Ambrose's claim of it being a skeleton. They also notice scratch marks on the inside of the coffin, suggesting the creature was animated before being dug up.
- If investigating the dirt or general burial site, They easily find two sets of footprints. Call for a DC 16 Survival check. On a success they realize this was the work of a halfling, due to the short paces between the footprints and the length of the feet.
- If investigating any signs of magic, call for a DC 12 Arcana check. On a success they find some bloodstains that identify this as a *necromantic* spell, but they also note one set of footprints have no trail.
- If they decide to investigate the lack of footprints, call for a DC 17 Survival check made with advantage to try and find a matching set of footprints anywhere else in the City of the Dead. While none lead to the grave, they can find some nearby... and can eventually follow it back to Dandymops on Nethpranter's street.

WHAT ACTUALLY HAPPENED

Losser Mirklav, a halfling necromancer steals the bodies to provide safe test-subjects for his own necromancer students. Neither he nor his students are registered with the Watchful Order of Magists and Protectors as they fear the prejudices that would come with being necromancers. So, once a week, he goes out into the middle of the night in dark robes, and casts *greater invisibility* as he enters the City of the Dead. Once he finds a grave he thinks he won't be interrupted resurrecting, he casts *greater invisibility* on himself one last time, and then starts to cast *animate dead* upon it. Once the ritual is complete, he commands the skeleton to climb out of it's grave and hide out in a certain room in the sewers of Waterdeep. He then casts *greater invisibility* on himself one last time as he returns to his home and storefront, a wig shop named Dandymops in Trade Ward where he goes down into the cellar, connects to the sewer and meets up with the skeletons, leads it into his home, and 'kills' it, so it can serve as a practice dummy for his students.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

If the party manages to find all the clues they can head straight to Dandymop's and confront Losser. Otherwise, they can do a stakeout overnight. As he only works once a week and this was done just last night, they'll have to wait at least 1d6 days before he makes another attempt... but once he does, the party need only make a DC 18 Perception check to notice gentle footprints being formed in the graveyard, seemingly out of nowhere. If they don't spot him, they eventually hear the sounds of pounding on a grave as **skeleton** tries to dig itself out. If the party only arrives after the skeleton has already been animated, they arrive too late to stop Losser. However, if they destroy the skeleton, it never arrives to Losser's basement, which will cause him to realize how close he came to being captured, and stop doing this.

DANDYMOP'S

If the party go to Dandymop's they find Losser in professional attire tending to the shop. He seems quite tired, but this is likely because he is always busy making powdered wigs for Waterdeep's uppercrust. If the party interrogates him, he claims to know nothing, but a DC 12 Insight check will reveal that he does totally know something. If accused of digging up the bodies, he swears he has nothing to do with it, but a DC 10 Insight check will reveal that he definitely had something to do with it. If accused any further, he casts *misty step* to try and teleport out of his shop, and then *greater invisibility* to escape the party. In any case, no matter what the very act of the party showing up will convince him to stop. If the party fights him, see the following section:

LOSSER MIRKLAV

If they party confronts Losser at the graveyard, he tries to escape them. He is a lightfoot halfling **mage** with the following changes:

- He is chaotic neutral and has 31 (9d6) hit points.
- He has these racial traits: He is Small, and his walking speed is 25 feet. He can move through the space of a Medium or larger creature. He has advantage on saving throws against being frightened. He speaks Common and Halfling.
- He has the *animate dead* and *blight* spells prepared instead of *counterspell* and *ice storm*. All his spell slots were ready when he left for the graveyard or greeted the party at his store, but if confronted at the graveyard may have used a 4th level slot or two on *greater invisibility*.

TACTICS

Losser does not want to fight, and will do anything to escape. He is likely to do the following as soon as possible to ensure his freedom:

- He would have cast *mage armor* before entering the graveyard.
- He would cast *greater invisibility*, expending a 5th level spell slot if necessary to ensure the party cannot see him as he runs away. Depending on the weather, he may leave clear footprints.
- If still invisible, he will likely use *misty step* to put as much distance between the party as possible while avoiding leaving a trail.
- Once he is confident he is out of sight, he will likely cast *fly* to fly off into the night.
- If forced into fighting, he will cast *fireball* if being pursued by the party, but if only one person has managed to keep up with him he will instead hit them with *blight*. He will only fight to protect himself, and would rather run than kill, if given the choice.

If captured, Losser will explain his plight, and beg the party to let him practice in peace, promising not to desecrate the bodies at the City of the Dead ever again. If the players are suspicious, call for an Insight check. He is being honest, but a high Insight check will at least let them be confident in his claims. If Ambrose Everdawn is with them, he will demand Losser be brought to justice, along with his students. Losser would sooner die than sell out his students, and if he feels he will be magically compelled to reveal them, will cast *blight* on himself.

CONCLUSION

If Losser is confronted and dealt with, the mission is considered immediately complete. If the skeleton is prevented from returning to Losser, it will be two weeks before Ambrose is confident the necromancer has been dealt with. In either case, the party is rewarded the following ways:

- Any Emerald Enclave member gains 1 renown
- The party member that Jeryth Phaulkon trusts most is given a **Charm of Detect Magic**. This magical pendant has three charges, and can let the user cast Detect Magic at the cost of one charge, without using any components.
- Each party member gains 200 XP, in addition to any obtained by fighting the skeleton or Losser.

WDH CHANGES: LOSSER

Losser Mirklav appears on page 85 of Waterdeep: Dragon Heist, and is left mostly the same. However, I have made the following changes to make this mission more interesting:

- He no longer carries *ice storm*, as WDH suggests removing *greater invisibility* instead. As it made more sense for a grave robber to want to go unseen, I decided to leave him this spell.
- He is no longer chaotic evil, and is instead chaotic neutral. I wanted to make his situation more interesting and morally gray, so I gave him a more interesting reason to be harvesting skeletons, as well as giving him a reason to have beds for his apprentices that are mentioned and never elaborated upon.

WHAT ABOUT THE SPRING ENCOUNTER IN THE CELLAR?

Losser is supposed to be a minor threat as the party enters the Cellar during the Spring Encounter Chain. If he has already been defeated, they find the shop locked up but abandoned. If he has merely been stopped but the party doesn't know he was the one doing it, he is dealt with as described in the book, with his shop being locked up because it's currently being 'renovated'. This is cover for him preparing to leave the city, now believing the City Watch to be too close to discovering him. If the party confronted him but let him be, his shop is open and he's even friendly to them, guiding them into the cellar and even commanding the skeletons to leave them be. Note: His spell slots are currently expended as he had been teaching necromancy earlier that night, so he is not a valuable person to bring along, and will stay by his storefront instead of following them in properly.

SUFFER NOT THE LIARS

During the party's search for the stone, a player wearing a *charm of restoration* hears another message from Jeryth, who has the following request for the 4th level party:

"Sorry to inconvenience you, but I have need of your services again. Doppelgangers threaten the balance of power in Waterdeep. Rumor has it a group of them are hiding out among the staff of the Yawning Portal. Root them out and rid the city of them if you can. They'll likely try to lie and insist they're harmless, do not trust them."

THE YAWNING PORTAL

The party must determine if Durnan, Bonnie, neither, or both of them are doppelgangers. Bonnie is, but the party may not know this. As doppelgangers can read thoughts, if the party is searching for her and are quiet about it, she'll know they're looking for her. Next time a party member asks any NPC anything, call for an Insight check. This is ultimately irrelevant to whoever they're talking to, but if they roll above 19 they notice Bonnie nervously staring at them. She then notices them notice her, and quickly starts to leave, trying to act casual, walking quickly out the door.

CONFRONTING BONNIE

If Bonnie confronted in the tavern, Mattrim Mereg is quick to intervene, to try and distract the party, buy them drinks... but as soon as a party member feels certain she's a doppelganger, she interrupts, coming clean and saying she'd just like to talk with them, and they sit down to have a conversation.

Bonnie and four other doppelgangers arrived in Waterdeep about three years ago, looking to make an honest-living, however absurd that might be for doppelgangers. She insists she's been keeping an eye on her friends, keeping them in line. She'd be happy to introduce them if they'd like, but really they're not bad!

This situation should be mostly roleplayed, with a DC 15 Intimidation or Persuasion check made at least once. Listed below are a few notes on the personalities of the major players:

BONNIE (DOPPELGANGER)

Bonnie's real name is not Bonnie, obviously, and she may already know one of the party members, but they do not know she's a doppelganger. She's the only member of her gang genuinely interested in living an honest life. She can arrange meetings with the other doppelgangers in her gang, but as they all lead their own lives their schedules are a bit complicated to work with... but she will, if given time.

MATTRIM "THREESTRINGS" MEREG

He lives in the Yawning Portal inn, keeping an eye on the Zhents here... he has faith in Bonnie, but partially because the two are lovers. He knows she's a doppelganger, and honestly finds her ability to shapechange quite attractive.

DURNAN

The bartender, didn't know Bonnie was a doppelganger, and doesn't care. She's a hard worker who's had plenty of times she could have abused his trust... never did.

WILLIFORT CROWELLE (DOPPELGANGER)

A doppelganger that takes the form of an aging male tiefling in a black suit with thin-rimmed spectacles, he works as a personal servant to the Cassalanter. He happily tells the party that he means his benefactors no harm, which is sincere, but will decline to explain the details of his work, making up lies about non-disclosure agreements that come with working for them and their business, but will happily divulge that the Cassalanter know he's a doppelganger. He's quite evil, shrewd, and conniving. He is available any time, with two days in advance to prepare.

NANEATHA LCHARILSTAR (DOPPELGANGER)

A beautiful noblewoman, she greets the party courteously and insists she's living a clean, honest life, or at least as honest as one can as a noble in this rotten city. If she meets the party at the Yawning Portal, Durnan greets her, but notices the lack of familiarity in her attitude. Doppelgangers are shrewd, but Durnan is a practiced adventurer, who realizes in a rage that this thing has killed and replaced his old friend. He angrily shouts at her, telling her to leave, but will not strike her as she is a 'noble' within this city, after all. She is only available in the evenings.

CECIL WEISS (DOPPELGANGER)

A male human bard, Cecil insists upon his innocence as well, expressing only a desire to make it big in the city of splendors, to become a legendary musician, actor, and playwright, assuming he finds time for all three. He will tastefully step around the accurate accusations that he's disguising himself as rival performers and destroying their reputations. He is available any time as long with a day in advance to prepare.

VANIEL SHORTWICK (DOPPELGANGER)

Disguised as a male halfling bartender, Vaniel insists upon his innocence, well before being accused of anything. Paranoid to a fault, he insists he only mixes drinks at Hole in the Wall, a cozy hostel that mostly caters to halflings. In truth, this is the hostel the party can find on page 31 of WDH, which is home to wererats that are tenuous allies with the Xanathar Guild, and he does a poor job of throwing off this accusation.

CONCLUSION

No matter how these conversations go, Bonnie is likely to promise the party she's going to leave. She and her gang will if they passed the DC 15 check mentioned earlier, but Willifort is too loyal to the Cassalanter to leave. If they failed the check, they say they're leaving, but in truth just all change disguises. The party might encounter them again in the Cassalanter's Villa on Founders' Day. If the party thinks they're leaving though, they are rewarded the following ways:

- Any Emerald Enclave member gains 2 renown
- Each party member gains 600 XP.

SKIN OF A GRANFALOON



ne night, as the 5th level party is preparing to enter the vault, one character wearing the *charm of restoration* hears the following frantic message from Jeryth:

"The Xanathar Guild are making a play! A flying, horror known as a grell has been spotted in Dock Ward, on the move to try and track someone or something down, please stop whatever they're up to, I'm sorry I don't have more information!"

ALIEN AMBUSH

The grell are in fact after the party. If Xanathar is the villain, their motive should be obvious, otherwise it's because the party has a vault key or the stone and he wants it back... otherwise, he's just a paranoid nut who thinks they might have something or someone he might someday might not want to somehow have to deal with in some way. In any case, as the party turns a corner onto the busy streets, or a dark alleyway, call for a DC 15 Dex save. On a success they avoid the deft tentacles of a grell darting out to ambush them. On a fail, they are grappled, and the grell moves vertically upwards, 30 feet. After this, call for initiative as combat begins.

COMBAT

At the end of each round, another grell emerges from the shadows to attack a party member. After two grell arrive this way, they stop appearing. Each grell is under orders to grab a party member, prioritizing any who might be holding an item the Xanathar wants, and then flying straight up, before dropping them at a height of 100 feet (10d6 damage). It will do this until they die and it can pluck the item it wants off their body, or until the entire party is dead.

If the city watch, city guard, or griffon cavalry get involved, the grells still pursue their mission with deadly focus, seeking only to kill the targets they were ordered to kill.

CONCLUSION

If the party survive, Jeryth thanks them, and requests to meet them personally, at this she apologizes for putting them in so many risky situations, thanking them thoroughly and rewarding them the following ways:

- Any Emerald Enclave member gains 2 renown
- Each party member receives a *charm of heroism* as a small token of her thanks.
- Each party member gains 800 XP.

FORCE GREY (GRAY HANDS)

Vajra keeps things simple, giving orders and expecting them to be followed. As the party arrives she greets them with a smile, before quickly giving the following quest to the 2nd level party:

THE PASSIVE FIST

"You've seen Mount Waterdeep I assume? There's a single cave in the southern side of it. Inside this cave lives an old monk named Hlam. Ask him what he knows about the threats to the city and report back here."

CLIMBING MOUNT WATERDEEP

Mount Waterdeep is a huge mountain within the city, that both the Palace of Waterdeep and Castle Waterdeep are built into the base of, as well as the Peaktop Aerie sitting upon the summit of the mountain, where the griffin cavalry are based out of. As a result, it's quite the spectacle, and there are numerous ways to climb it, and Hlam's cave can be seen from the southern side, with a lantern light keeping it alit at night.

If the party chooses to just climb it directly they certainly can, but it is quite arduous. Call for a DC 12 Con Save. On a fail, call for a DC 12 Athletics Check. If they pass the Athletics check, they take 1 level of exhaustion. If they fail the Athletics check, they take 1d4 levels of exhaustion. In either case, they arrive at Hlam's cave in less than an hour.

If they choose to follow one of the many paths up the mountain, they arrive at sunset if they start at any time during the day. If they start at any time at night, they arrive at sunrise.

HLAM'S CAVE

The cave is a long tunnel lined with candles, halfway burnt down already. Deep within is a large circular room, 30 feet by 30 feet wide radius, surrounded with candles with a human monk meditating in the center, sitting cross-legged and facing the entrance. This is Hlam.

Hlam's statistics are detailed in Appendix B of Waterdeep Dragon Heist.

INTERACTING WITH HLAM

Hlam speaks in a soft patient tone, usually in short cryptic sentences. If the party wishes to intimidate him or fight him, he will gladly do so, but will stop just short of killing them. If they initiate a fight with him, but eventually resign, begging for mercy, he will smile happily and reveal to them his wisdom (see below). Alternatively, if they somehow defeat him but do not kill him, he will laugh and reveal his wisdom to these upstart but kind strangers.

If the party asks him what he knows, he says he knows many things, but if they ask about threats to the city, call for a DC 12 Persuasion check. If they pass, he reveals his wisdom (see below). Otherwise he wishes to test their mettle, and will seek to fight one or all of them (see above).

HLAM'S WISDOM

Hlam's wisdom is a simple, cryptic sentence foreshadowing the villain of the campaign. If you are using your own story, feel free to make up your own clue. If you are using Waterdeep: Dragon Heist, use one of the following depending on which villain you've chosen:

Xanathar	<i>"Evil grows more paranoid and less patient daily. They will strike before summer starts."</i>
Cassalanter	<i>"No matter good deeds or evil, innocent blood shall spill on Founders' Day."</i>
Jarlaxle	<i>"Nobody is who they seem, yet they will reveal themselves by the end of autumn."</i>
Manshoon	<i>"Evil's twin hides its face for now. Expect that to change before winter's end."</i>

If pressed for more detail Hlam declines, explaining that he is but a vessel for this wisdom, and even he cannot truly grasp it. Nonetheless, he advises the party to be careful about who they trust.

CONCLUSION

The party can easily descend the mountain after climbing it. The mission will be considered accomplished once they inform Vajra of Hlam's wisdom, and are rewarded the following ways:

- Any Force Grey member gains 1 renown
- If the party is arrested they are pardoned by Vajra... once
- Each party member gains 700 XP. If using a milestone system, they should all now be 3rd level.

ALL THAT GLITTERS

It's just past lunch as Vajra is given some worrying news by some panicked sailors... she immediately prepares a *sending* spell and messages the following to a trustworthy member of the 3rd-level party:

"A young bronze dragon has taken up residence in the Naval Harbor. It startled a few sailors recently but hasn't hurt anyone. I've had a few potions of water breathing delivered to your establishment. Use them to confront the dragon, and learn its intentions."

FREE DRINKS

If Trollskull Manor is open as a tavern, they'll find that a member of their staff if not Lif himself is guarding a cache of the potions behind the counter, ready to deliver it to their employer. Otherwise they're left in a small wooden box near the Manor. It contains one *potion of water breathing* for each party member.

MISTSHORE

The easiest way to investigate is to start from Mistshore, a run-down part of Dock Ward that's right next to the Naval Harbor. See Encounter 2: Mistshore in WDH for more information on this location and its denizens. Run it as though it is not in any season, unless they're explicitly here as part of an Encounter Chain as detailed in Chapter 4 of WDH.

Ways the party might investigate from here are as follows:

- If they ask around, they can find a talkative male elf **bandit** named Lashurien Malfuria who has seen the dragon, it leaped out at him, demanding to know about the Sea Maiden's Faire, but he was too drunk and terrified to give a reasonable response to the friendly dragon, so he was left as suddenly as he was approached.
- They're free to contact Grinda about the use of her apparatus, but her conditions remain as they are. See page 66 of WDH for more information.
- They may want to drink their potions and just jump in, which is just as valid an approach as any.

SHARK ATTACK

Once underwater, roll 1d4. If the party is in the *apparatus of Kwalish* and an even number is rolled, they are attacked by Obliteros the **giant shark**. If the party is swimming, they only encounter Obliteros if a 4 is rolled.

Obliteros is a giant shark affected by *awaken*, and carries the following changes:

- Her alignment is chaotic evil.
- Her Intelligence is 10 (+0), and it can speak and understand Aquan.

As Obliteros attacks, she shouts out "FRESH MEAT!!" in Aquan. If no party member speaks Aquan, any party member can pass a DC 10 Nature check to identify that as a sound that sharks cannot make, as though it is a spoken tongue.

If the party decides to speak to Obliteros she happily explains her plight, while sinisterly circling them...

She was awakened by a pirate with a magic golden skull she no longer remembers the name of... he was quite tasty looking, just like them. She ate many wayward sailors, just like them, and eventually he fell in the drink, and she happily ate him as well, just like she's going to eat them, and with that, she lunges forward to attack the party.

As an awakened shark, she knows when she's beat, and will swim away once she drops below half hit points.

THE WRECK OF THE NEVERLUSTER

The Neverluster is the biggest wreck here in the bottom of the harbor, definitely the most interesting as it's a massive galleon, now covered in barnacles. It rests 120 feet below the surface, and as the party approaches they will see a metal blur speeding towards them, a metallic bronze figure dashing towards them with determined ferocity. Call for initiative as he gets within 80 feet of the party.

ZELIFARN

Zelifarn is a **young bronze dragon** who acts only in self-defense. During his turn he only takes the Dodge action, seeking to scare the party away rather than harm them. If he gets within melee range, he will still not attack the party, only making an intimidating show of spreading his wings and baring his teeth, demanding the party leave, as the treasure within the Neverluster is his and his alone. If the party demand the treasure and try to fight him, he will not fight them with all his might, but will not pursue them should they flee. If the party claim to only want to talk, he will gladly, and even happily talk to them.

Zelifarn is curious, and talkative, and is genuinely curious about the festivals that come from the Sea Maiden's Faire! Sadly the sailors on board never like talking to him, but their ships are so interesting, and their parties seem so wonderful! If the party asks why he's here, he explains that there's lots of interesting goodies down here in Deepwater Harbor, how could he not start collecting them? A DC 13 Insight check will reveal that he truly means that, and means no harm to the city. He will even happily wave them off as he leaves.

If you are using Jarlaxle as the villain, he will even promise the party a barnacle-covered chest he found if they look into the underwater vessel on the bottom of the *Eyecatcher* and tell him all about it. See page 145 of WDH for more information on this encounter.

CONCLUSION

The party can report to Vajra any number of ways, leaving a letter at Blackstaff Tower probably being the easiest one. If they write about Zelifarn in any way the mission is considered complete. If they didn't even encounter him, call for a DC 20 Deception check as they write the letter. Do not immediately tell the players whether or not they succeeded.

If the mission is considered complete, they are rewarded the following ways:

- Any Force Grey member gains 1 renown
- The party is given a pouch containing **dust of dryness** (see page 166 of the DMG)
- Each party member gains 300 XP, in addition to any gained by fighting off Obliteros.

If the players forged the letter, Vajra herself meets them at the Manor, holding the letter and chiding them like one would a child caught cheating on their test. She demands they actually investigate it this time, immediately. She will not tolerate any further delays, and they will lose their membership in Force Grey if a proper report is not brought to her before next sunrise.

THOUGHT CRIMES

As the 4th level party is investigating some lead or running across rooftops, one of them is momentarily distracted by another *sending* spell from Vajra:

"Meloan Wardragon. A trusted member of the Force, has been acting strangely, sour, hanging out at the Yawning Portal. Observe for ten days, then report."

AN INCONVENIENT SENDING

Even if the timing is poor, the party is understood to have gotten the message, and can watch Meloon whenever it's convenient, so long as the ten days are concurrent. They can go to Vajra to verify this, but she will be frustrated that they wasted time asking her instead of investigating.

MELOON

Meloan Wardragon has been replaced with an **intellect devourer** in his head, and can be confronted or watched from afar. He stays at the Yawning Portal now, and spends all day drinking and gossiping with adventurers who enter the tavern. He explains that his attitude may seem darker as he has been through some rough experiences lately... he's been accompanying heroes into the Undermountain, to try and keep them alive, but the dungeon has gotten more ravenous, more dangerous, he's seen more deaths in the past three months than the past ten years. It's too dangerous in there, and Durnan should close the damn thing up, in his opinion.

A DC 16 Insight check reveals this to be a complete lie, but why Meloon's lying is still yet unclear. If the party spies upon him, they will notice that he goes to bed rather early in the night. This is because he must wake up before dawn, so he may clutch *Azureedge* (see appendix A of WDH) and engage in a psychic battle of wills with it to keep control of the weapon. Any player who sees this strange ritual may figure out what's going on with a DC 15 Insight check.

CONCLUSION

If the party believes his lies or kill the intellect devourer, the result is the same once they report it Vajra:

- Any Force Grey member gains 2 renown

If the party rid Meloon of the **intellect devourer** Vajra rewards them with a *wand of secrets*, as well.

TERRIBLE THINGS TO WASTE

As the 5th-level party are getting ready to enter the vault, they are ambushed by an **intellect devourer** at some inopportune time. After dispatching it, they receive the following *sending* from Vajra about an hour later:

"Intellect devourers. Too many, too often. Infiltrate Xanathar's lair and eliminate their source."

HEADING TO THE XANATHAR'S LAIR

If Xanathar is the villain, the party should already be on their way here, otherwise there are any number of ways the party might find an entrance such as interrogating Xanathar agents, or remembering the mind flayer from Chapter 1 and heading back to that hideout and waiting to ambush him. If they do not remember this information and Xanathar is not the main villain, it may be a good idea to have them bump into Renaer Neverember, who is eager to help them and would likely remember this.

The lair is detailed in Chapter 5 of WDH, and as such I won't be detailing it here.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately the party's goal here is to assassinate Nihiloor. If this is accomplished the party is rewarded the following ways:

- Any Force Grey member gains 2 renown
- Every character who assisted is given a **potion of resistance**.
- Any character who died while helping the party or any party members themselves are brought back through the use of *raise dead* spells that Vajra happily covers the cost of.
- Each party member 800 XP.

HARPERS

M

irt is a jovial fellow, patient and accomodating. He hands each new Harper a pin of a harp in a crescent moon, before letting them enjoy the rest of the show. The next day the 2nd level party receives an animated paper bird with the following message on it:

A GIFT HORSE

"One of the drays working in the city is pulled by a talking mare named Maxeene. She wears a violet flower behind her left ear. Locate her, find out if she knows of any Zhent agents in hiding, and write any details on the blank side of this bird. Release it to send it back to me, thank you."

LOCATING MAXEENE

Maxeene is a **draft horse** with 10 Intelligence. A DC 12 Survival check can be made to track her from any point in the city by any character familiar with Waterdeep or with the Urchin background. Alternatively, they can spend an entire day wandering around the city and will eventually find her with a DC 10 Perception check. In either case she is found attached to a dray circling the market.

MORGAN'S DRAY

A dray is a towering vehicle of unique design, found only in Waterdeep. A long, glassed-in carriage with bench seating on it's roof. On this roof level a young human commoner named **Morgan Wolfwood** drives this vehicle, unaware of Maxeene's intelligence. The party can tail them and wait for them to stop, but will have to distract Morgan somehow as Maxeene will not talk as long as he is paying attention. Additionally there is a fare-taker at the back of the dray named **Marcus Wolfwood**, Morgan's older brother who is much more soft-spoken.

A few ways the party might want to distract Morgan are listed below:

- If the players want to buy a ride from the dray, he directs them to Marcus who will charge them 4 cp for a ride. However, as they're getting ready to ride they might strike up idle conversation with Morgan. Morgan is happy to give them the full extent of his attention, letting them easily buy the distraction.
- They party can set a different horse free and scare it, causing Morgan to abandon the dray so they can speak to Maxeene privately. If they do this, call for a DC 13 Sleight of Hand check. If they fail, Morgan immediately knows they provoked it. Morgan will seek out the panicking horse while Marcus interrogates the offender, becoming upset but not so upset that he gets the Watch involved.

MAXEENE

Maxeene speaks common, and will not show any signs of intelligence unless the players can prove to her that they are Harpers. A simple display of the silver pin one of them got from Mirt is enough to accomplish this, otherwise call for a DC 13 Persuasion check.

Once Maxeene is convinced, she explains that she gave a ride to a sun elf and his half-orc bodyguard two days ago. She picked them up at the corner of Net Street and Dock Street and dropped them off at the Yawning Portal. As the were getting off of the dray they muttered something about planting agents in 'the guild', but spoke about it in such a way that was apparent they didn't mean any guild, but rather The Guild, the Xanathar Guild, enemy of the Zhentarim. Based on this, Maxeene believes them to be Zhent agents.

THE ZHENT AGENTS

Based on what Maxeene said, it's a safe bet that Davil Starsong and Yagra Stonefist are Zhentarim agents. The party will have likely already met them, if not at least seen them at the Yawning Portal.

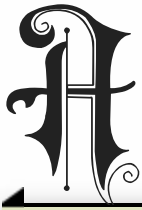
If confronted, Davil explains that while he represents the Zhentarim, he represents a different sect of the organization that opposes Manshoon and his desires for the Black Network. Whether the party chooses to believe him or not, their mission is not complete unless they report their findings to Mirt.

CONCLUSION

If they include an explanation on how Davil's goals for the organization oppose the organization at at large, it may cause Mirt to take an interest in them and look upon them favorably. Otherwise, the Harpers will consider Davil, Yagra, and anyone who openly associates with them a possible threat to the Harpers and peace of Waterdeep... either way, the party are rewarded the following ways:

- Any Harpers member gains 1 renown
- Remallia Haventree visits the party and explains that if they need a place to stay for the night for any reason, any reason at all... the doors of her villa are open to them.
- Each party member gains 700 XP. If using a milestone system, they should all now be 3rd level.

PEST CONTROL



At some point during the day, likely if they enter Trades Ward, a paper bird will bring the following message to a 3rd-level party:

"Uza Solizeph is an old woman who sells books out of a narrow three-story building on Sorn Street in the Trades Ward. She claims to have trapped a monster in her shop and fears for the welfare of her books and cat. The Watch isn't likely to lend a hand as Uza has a nasty habit of exaggerating... but the Harpers owe her. She's sobbing at Felzoun's Folly, a tavern on Sorn and Salabar. Please tend to her."

FELZOUN'S FOLLY

Felzoun Thar, known to his friends as 'Darkiron' runs this crowded bar where elaborate stained glass windows run along the face of the three-story tavern. He isn't much for talking, being the sole waiter and bartender of such a crowded establishment, he keeps busy.. but is never slow to serve.

Uza can be found with a glass and bottle of Neverwinter Nectar, constantly filling it and sobbing drunkenly about the dire fate her storefront is in. She is a lawful good female human Mulan **commoner** and will offer the party the following information if pressed:

"A monstrous orb of many eyes has chased my cat, Fillipa, into the shop! I... I locked them both in and ran away, but I just can't bear the guilt if she gets hurt... will you save my kitty, please?"

If the party agrees, she provides the keys to the front and back doors of her shop.

CURIOSITY & SATISFACTION

Curiosity & Satisfaction, sometimes just called Curiosity, is the name of Uza's bookstore. It's rather cramped as all three stories are really just one tall room arranged like a tower. There is a small desk by the front entrance that Uza uses to check out customers, and a door in the back for emergencies. As the party enters, call for a Perception check. On a 14 or above, they notice the **gazer** (see appendix B of WDH, or VGTM) floating in Uza's home before it sees them. On a 18 or above, they also see Fillipa, a small gray **cat** hiding behind a few books on the second story.

THE GAZER

The **gazer** is under orders from the Xanathar himself, and believes the cat to be a spy working for the Zhents as it saw Fillipa speak. This is false, as Fillipa was under the effects of an *animal messenger* spell, and as it has already delivered its message it had gone back to just being Uza's pet. Nonetheless, the gazer is determined to destroy it. As long as the party confronts the gazer, it will try to fight them, however if Fillipa comes out of hiding it will focus its efforts on destroying her.

Gazers are not very intelligent, but can fly, giving them a serious advantage in this environment. If the party climbs the ladders they can put the gazer in melee range, while imposing disadvantage to the player's Dexterity Saves while on the ladder.

If the party seeks to rescue the cat and flee, they may, holding the cat close and taking the brunt of any attacks made against Fillipa. If the party manages to escape the store and locks the gazer in, or destroys the gazer, the mission will be considered accomplished.

CONCLUSION

If they tell Uza they destroyed the gazer or locked it in her store, they are rewarded the following ways:

- Any Harpers member gains 1 renown
- Mirt sends them a paper bird informing them that they now have Silver Rewards Membership with the Guild of Apothecaries and Physicians. They need only mention this to any alchemist to get a 20% discount on the cost of any common or uncommon potions.
- Each party member gains 300 XP, in addition to any gained by defeating the gazer.

If the gazer was locked in, the Harpers eventually send other adventurers to deal with it. If the gazer was defeated, Uza goes back to her store and rewards the party by giving them a spellbook with the following spells in it:

- *Alarm*
- *Comprehend Languages*
- *Disguise Self*
- *Illusory Script*
- *Knock*
- *Misty Step*
- *Locate Object*

WELCOME TO THE FAMILY



s the party is exploring the encounter chain, likely in the Alley encounter, a paper bird flaps over to them and unfurls, delivering the following mission to the 4th-level party:

"Mattrim Mereg, you might know him as 'Three-Strings', has allied himself with a gang of doppelgangers and believes they may ally themselves with us. Talk to them, get a read on them, and figure out if they can be trusted. Pass along your findings to Mattrim."

MEETING MATTRIM

Mattrim Mereg can be found at the Yawning Portal, and the party's likely to have already seen him in Chapter 1. As they meet up they may talk about both being Harpers, helping each other out, before they get down to business and he introduces them to Bonnie.

TALKING TO BONNIE

Bonnie and the other doppelgangers are detailed on page 16 of this PDF, in the Emerald Enclave mission 'Suffer not the Liars'. There you can find notes on their personalities, interests, and behavior. Ultimately, Bonnie's the only one who's truly trustworthy. However the harpers care less about getting rid of them and more about recruiting the ones they can trust. Having Bonnie as an ally is well worth this endeavor alone.

CONCLUSION

For reporting their findings to the Harpers each party member is rewarded the following ways:

- Any Harpers member gains 2 renown
- Each party member gains 50 GP.

SPY PARTY

As the 5th-level party finishes the last encounter in the chain, a paper bird brings them their final mission, a locket tucked away in the folds of the paper:

"Lady Remallia Haventree is hosting a party at her villa on Delzorin Street, located between Vhezor Street and Brondar's Way in the North Ward. We have reason to suspect that drow spies have infiltrated the guest list. Attend the party and root out the disguised drow. We've put you on the guest-list already, but you'll have to bring your own attire. Dress sharply.

Bundled up in the paper bird is a *medallion of thoughts*, a valuable tool in finding the spies.

DRESS SHARPLY

The party can acquire Fine Clothes for 15 gp at any reputable business in Waterdeep, however if they really want to wow the guests they can buy Extravagant Clothes at Nevercott's Haberdashery as detailed on page 6 of this PDF. NOTE: While Jarlaxle often disguises himself as Nevercott, the Nevercott who works at the haberdashery is his own man who has no knowledge of the drow's actions. As such, anything the party tells Nevercott if they buy clothes from him has no effect on this mission.

THE FANCY PARTY

The party itself is held in a spacious ballroom with many guests in fancy clothes. If the party is wearing anything short of Fine Clothes, they stick out like a sore thumb and fail any attempt to blend in. They also make all Charisma checks here at Disadvantage. If they arrive in Extravagant Clothes they make all Charisma checks with Advantage.

The *medallion of thoughts* can find out what a creature is thinking, but it's hard to isolate a spy's thoughts in this crowded place so it'd be best to isolate people and talk to them first. Most of the attendees here have no idea Remallia is a Harper, nor do they have any idea drow may be in attendance, so discretion is advised. This encounter is a mostly social one, so feel free to improvise. Of note the following characters are here:

REMALLIA HAVENTREE

A female sun elf, she detests the Cult of the Dragon. She is likely to approach the party shortly they enter, chiding them for their poor clothes or praising them for their style. If asked about who she may suspect or why, she explains that she is actually allied with other drow as part of a philanthropic effort, and they informed her that there have been attempts to recruit them by the Bregan D'earthe. They've been talked to one too many times for it to be coincidence, so she knows someone is leaking information on her staff to them, but she had no idea who.

TARKUS FORRESTER

A tan-skinned human with a stain on his lapel, Tarkus is a nervous uncertain man who has no business being here. He's a carpenter who writes in his spare time, and while his writing has been praised for being a sweet blend of everyman's perspective and beautiful prose, he insists it's just a hobby. He was invited by Remallia who had just read his latest horror novel, *The Serpent of Salinger* and just fell in love with it.

TETHYN LAMBROS

A pale human noble with a short haircut and a silver locket, Tethyn is here as a favor to his sister, Tira. He'd prefer to have nothing to do with these people and their hedonism, but his sister insists he can do some real good for the city by courting their favor.

J. B. NEVERCOTT

A dark skinned human with a small black goatee and glasses, Nevercott loves to network. Everyone here has at least heard of him and would love to commission a custom outfit from him. He passes out business cards to everyone and keeps a smile on his face at all times.

WHO'S A SPY?

Jarlaxle Baerne himself is one of the guests, but because Nevercott insisted on attending he can't use his favorite disguise. He instead decided on a bold challenge, to pretend to be someone meek and unassuming. He had his spies intercept Remallia's invitation to Tarkus, and now operates disguised as him. If the party mention anything related to searching for a spy, or trying to find treasure, drow, anything Jarlaxle would care about, the surface level read of *detect thoughts* would alert them to him being Jarlaxle in disguise. Otherwise, call for an Insight check any time the party grows suspicious of anyone. The DC for the Insight check to read Jarlaxle's subtle mannerisms is 24 and figure out that he's the spy.

CONCLUSION

If Jarlaxle is exposed he's genuinely impressed, he removes his disguise to the surprise of everyone, congratulates the party for seeing through it, thanks Lady Haventree for a wonderful evening, and then casts *darkness*, and flees through the front door, dispelling the darkness once he's gone and casting *invisibility* to reunite with his people. With this done, the party is rewarded the following ways:

- Any Harpers member gains 2 renown
- Each party member gains 200 GP.

LORDS' ALLIANCE

Jalester appears depressed, drunkenly trying to drown his sorrows... however once the party has been welcomed by Lords' Alliance, he immediately sobers up, and offers the following secret communication to the 2nd level party:

DIRTY DEEDS DONE CHEAP

"The Dungsweepers' Guild is worried they're going to get caught in the crossfire of a gang war. We've promised them protection, but there's been a sudden... gap in our scheduling. We need you to fill it in. Meet up with Morton Till at the Muleskull Tavern on Ship Street at six bells, he'll fill you in on the details."

MORTON TILL

Morton Till is a human **commoner** who works as a dungsweeper. He is here with three other human commoners, Errol Glauber, Eleric Pathan, and Renard 'Stooge' Mannheim. They work as dungsweepers, meaning they are paid to clean up trash, filth, and other waste from the city streets. Morton will explain to the party what they were promised by the Alliance.

HELPING THE DUNGSWEEPERS

The party is expected to meet up with them at the start of their shift and protect them throughout the entire day, until sunset when they leave for the day. They are expected to this for ten days, after which the scheduling gap will be covered by different members of the Alliance.

As the party spends their days with them, they'll get to know the dungsweepers. Below are a few notes about their suggested personalities, but as they have little impact on the story, you're free to play them however you'd like:

- Morton is an impatient cynic, prone to bursts of violence when things don't go his way.
- Errol is a schemer, always up to some harebrained scheme to get rich quick, and quick to brag about his ideas to anyone who will listen.
- Eleric is kind and patient, he's known these two his whole life and always just sort of goes along with what they had in mind.
- 'Stooge' is the newest hire for the guild, and has been given the nickname commonly associated with the newbie. As a result he's quiet and nervous, still learning the ropes himself.

THE LONGEST TENDAY OF YOUR LIFE

On most of the ten days they are assigned to help, nothing really happens. The dungsweepers might find some interesting bit of trash, or talk to the party during a break, but otherwise things are quite uneventful. If your players don't like to spend a lot of time building character and role playing dialogue, maybe skip ahead a bit.

THEY DON'T PAY US ENOUGH FOR THIS

One notable event will happen during the tenday however. Roll 1d10 to determine which day this occurs on, then roll 1d4 to determine which of the following happens:

- 1 A **carrion crawler** emerges from a nearby alley, pursued by two City Watch **guards**.
- 2 A drunken **noble** believes he recognizes one of the party as an old friend who he loved to party with. If the party member plays along, they can attempt DC 12 Deception check made with advantage to please the noble. If they do, they gain 15 gp, the money the noble believes they are owed.
- 3 As one of the dungsweepers brush a mostly empty glass bottle into his basket, an alchemical reaction happens and a cloud of foul yellow smoke emerges from it. Treat this as though *Stinking Cloud* had just been cast.
- 4 'Stooge' finds the disturbing result of magical experimentation in the form of a bag of ants. Every segment of the ants has been separated from the other, the head, body, legs antenna all unattached, and all still moving. He almost quits on the spot, with the other three encouraging him to stick with it. If a party member wants to motivate him to keep the job, they can make a DC 13 Persuasion check with Advantage.

CONCLUSION

Jalester meets them on the tenth day on the streets of Waterdeep in a drunken haze. He leans up against one party member for support, and whispers to them that the City Watch will help them however they can, bestowing the following rewards upon the party:

- Any Lords' Alliance member gains 1 renown
- The City Watch understands that the party is on official business for the Alliance, and will help whenever they're able
- Each party member gains 600 XP. If using a milestone system, they should all now be 3rd level.

ATTEMPTED MURDER

Jalester is likely to be drinking at the Yawning Portal, but may stop by Trollskull Manor in a seemingly drunken haze. Otherwise he may bump into the party (possibly while they are seeking out the Nimblewright in chapter 3), slump up against one drunkenly, and quickly whisper the following mission out to the 3rd level heroes:

"Harko Swornhold has illegally returned to Waterdeep. A lowly mercenary with a lot of bad history in this town, was last seen recruiting kenku in the Dock Ward. Kill him before he can reunite with his old buddies in the Xanathar Guild. He's got a scar shaped like a wishbone on the back of his left hand, keep an eye out."

TRACKING HIM DOWN

As the party should be searching for the nimblewright, their search may eventually take them to Dock Ward where the Nimblewright Detector will be distracted by the Sea Maiden's Faire. Alternatively, they may decide to head over to Dock Ward and track down Harko on their own. In either case, the party can find Harko the following ways:

- If they split up, call for Investigation checks from each party member made with Advantage. The DC is 14, but whoever rolls the highest finds Harko immediately. If they have a way to signal the rest of the party, they can do so and the party will arrive in 2 Turns. Otherwise they can choose to trail Harko. If so, call for a DC 16 Stealth check. On a success they follow Harko to a dark alley with no visible exits, and can wait here to gather the others. If they fail the Stealth, Harko attempts to flee, and will escape in 2 Turns.
- If they stick together, ask them how long they want to search. If the party chooses to search for over 8 hours (or 'all day', as they may not literally say 8 hours) then assume they find Harko. If they search for any less than that, call for a DC 16 Investigation check. On a fail they find some tight-beaked kenku who refuse to say anything interesting, and if followed will lead the party to their actual jobs as legitimate dock workers.
- If any party member is a kenku, or disguises themselves as a kenku and separates themselves from the rest of the party while staying in the Dock Ward, Harko will approach them with a job offer in less than an hour. He wants to hire them as a bodyguard as they go to meet with the Xanathar. The party can choose to ambush him now, alternatively you can play this out with Harko going to the Xanathar's lair as detailed in Chapter 5 of WDH. He will beg for the Xanathar to forgive him for what he has done and to take him back, only for Xanathar to destroy him and tell the kenku to begone from this place. If this happens, the mission will be considered complete.

HARKO SWORNHOLD

Harko is a **bandit captain** who is being escorted by two **kenku** bodyguards. He is seeking out one more kenku to give him just a bit more protection before he seeks an audience with the Xanathar. In a fight he is more likely to run away than fight however, so while his kenku bodyguards keep the party busy he will flee, escaping the party once no party member is closer than 60 feet from him.

HARKO ESCAPES

If Harko escapes the party can try to find him again the same way they did before, doing so at disadvantage. As the DM, you may want to reintroduce Harko as a member of the Xanathar Guild or even a defector to the Zhents, or even as someone the party might simply have the good luck to bump into. In any case, he will recognize them and likely try to flee, unless he believes his new allies will give him the edge he needs to defeat them.

CONCLUSION

Once Harko is killed, the party can inform Jalester who will reward them the following ways:

- Any Lords' Alliance member gains 1 renown
- The party is given an invitation to sit with Mirt for dinner at his dilapidated mansion. He will advise the party in ways that will benefit them. At this dinner the party may mention that they need help with something, to which Mirt will express concern but only say he has faith in them. Secretly he will use his influence as a Masked Lord to help them, perhaps by gaining information they need or providing funds they need.
- Each party member gains 200 XP, as well as any gained by fighting Harko and his kenku.

PLAY WITH MADNESS

Passing as a homeless drunk on the streets, Jalester is sitting in front of the Old Tower encounter as detailed in Chapter 4 of WDH. As the 4th-level party walks past, he leaps up at them, seizing their collar, and gives the following mission, disguised as the ravings of a drunken madman:

"The Zhents are looking to add to their ranks, they're going to make a deal in front of the Blue Alley to recruit a Red Wizard of Thay named Esloon Bezant at sunrise tomorrow. He'd make a powerful ally, so keep him off out of their hands at all costs."

THE BLUE ALLEY

The Blue Alley is a legendary deathtrap in Sea Ward, which the Order of Magists and the Lords of Waterdeep tolerate for their own reasons. This makes it an ideal meeting place for groups with strength in numbers, as it exists in a 'T'-intersection, meaning one group enters from the west, and another group enters from the east. They either agree to their terms and leave the way they came, or panic, and try to flee through the Blue Alley, almost definitely meeting their demise...

THE MEETING

Esloon Bezant (LE male Thayan human **mage**) arrives first, with five **thugs** for security. He's expecting to meet a Zhentarim agent, but has no idea what they look like. The party can pretend to be him, or ambush him to convince him this whole thing was a trap and the Zhents are not to be trusted.

If they talk to him, he explains that he holds no particular allegiance to the Zhentarim and could easily be swayed into swearing off of them... for 500 GP. Alternatively a DC 16 Persuasion check can convince him to seek work elsewhere, as the Zhents are more trouble than they're worth.

If the party do not address him, a halfling with a chef's apron and a cleaver in the pocket soon arrives to speak with Esloon. He is Manafret Cherryport, a lieutenant of Manshoon, and is here to win Esloon's favor by offering Esloon an Alchemy Jug and 700 GP for now, with more to come as he does work for them. He'd be happy to oblige, as are his men, who will then follow Esloon, the entire group disappearing as they turn a corner and Manafret casts *greater invisibility* on them and uses message to guide them to front of Kholat Tower, ready to start work for his mysterious employer.

CONCLUSION

Assuming the party stops the deal from happening, they are rewarded the following ways:

- Any Lords' Alliance member gains 2 renown
- Esloon and Manafret each carry spellbooks that can be stolen, that contain all their prepared spells.

MANAFRET CHERRYPORT

Manafret is Manshoon's chef, detailed on page 149 of WDH. He is a lightfoot halfling **mage** with the following changes:

- Manafret is neutral evil and has 31 (9d6) hit points.
- He has these racial traits: He is Small, and his walking speed is 25 feet. He can move through the space of a Medium or larger creature. He has advantage on saving throws against being frightened. He speaks Common and Halfling.
- His spellbook contains *disguise self* instead of *shield*, and *blur* instead of *suggestion*.

THE PHANTASM

As the 5th-level party finishes up the encounters detailed in Chapter 4, and returns to Trollskull Manor, they are approached by the staggering body of Jalester once again. He is not putting on a drunk act, rather he has a long gruesome black arrow jutting out of his left leg, another in his stomach. He pleads with the party:

"An assassin, here in the Trollskull Alley... somewhere, I can take care of myself, but he's hunting me, hunting the Watch, stop him before he hurts anyone else."

TENDING TO JALESTER

Jalester's wounds are severe, he is down to 45 HP, but they're not getting any worse. If the party can hide him, give him some cover, he'll be safe. He explains that the assassin is on the rooftops, and now that he's seen them help him, they're likely targets as well. He's very sorry for this, but he desperately needs their help.

THE ASSASSIN

The assassin is **Ziraj the Hunter**, detailed in Appendix B of WDH. Sick of the Lords' Alliance giving the Zhentarim trouble, he's been deployed to get rid of one of their more public agents, Jalester. He's on a nearby rooftop, and will shoot at the party if they travel openly. If they move down the streets, every time they turn a corner, leave a building, or climb up a wall, have Ziraj make three attacks with his Oversized Longbow on this single target. A clever party can use this to draw his fire, and if they do so can make a DC 10 Perception check to find out exactly what roof he's making his shots from.

If the party approaches quietly, call for DC 12 Stealth checks every time they turn a corner, leaving a building, or climb up a wall. On a fail they draw fire from all three of his shots. If they approach a member of the City Watch, Ziraj flees, and if they have not made it up to his rooftop, disappears entirely leaving no trace.

If they do confront him, he will fight back to his best ability. If the City Watch are involved in this confrontation in any way, say by following the party up to him, or by having one person confront him while other party members seek out the Watch, he is accomodating, and surrenders. Ziraj has faith his Zhentarim contacts will break him out of jail.

CONCLUSION

As the City Watch tends to Jalester's wounds he apologizes to the party, and provides them the following rewards:

- Any Lords' Alliance member gains 2 renown
- Every party member receives 50 GP.

ORDER OF THE GAUNTLET

Savra greets the party with a smile, maybe even a hearty slap on the back of the biggest and boldest member of their group. She soon clears her throat and gives the following mission to the 2nd level party:

A VIOLENT COUNTER-OFFER

"Zhents are running extortion rackets in the Field Ward. The innkeeper of the Loose Gyre hasn't been able to pay up, so the Zhentarim have given today as the deadline. That means they'll be in today to collect. Show them that we won't be intimidated by criminal threats."

THE LOOSE GYRE

The Loose Gyre is a small tavern in Field Ward, the most run-down part of Waterdeep. In truth, it isn't even really a 'ward', but is just referred to one due to its size and population. As a result, the whole 'ward' is quite messy, and lousy with crime.

Despite this, a halfling woman named Lara Roundabout runs this tavern. Short-tempered and proud, Lara refuses to pay the Zhents one nib! But also, she actually can't pay them.

THE LOOSE GYRE

Item	Cost
Mug of Ale	3 cp
Bottle of Liqueur	6 gp
Inn Stay	4 sp

HIGH NOON

The Loose Gyre isn't the busiest establishment, but they stay busy. As one patron leaves after the lunch hour, four human **thugs** walk in. The largest of which, a tall burly human named Gregor McConnor demands payment of 200 gp or else they're going to ruin this establishment.

MEDIATION OR DECIMATION

If the party demands the Zhents step down, call for a DC 14 Intimidation check from whichever party member is talking the most. If the party is outnumbered by the Zhentarim thugs, do so at disadvantage, unless the party show themselves to be dangerous through some other means such as magic or madness.

If successful, the thugs leave without breaking anything. If the party mentions that the Loose Gyre is protected by the Order of the Gauntlet, it will send a clear message to the Zhentarim that this place is under their watch.

If the party fails, roll for initiative as the thugs start to fight the party, and destroy as much of the bar as possible.

PROPERTY DAMAGE

The Loose Gyre has four tables that can be destroyed in a single swing each. The tavern also keeps many bottles behind the counter and a barrel of ale. It would take three turns of effort to destroy all the bottles, as well as one turn to destroy the barrel. The tables are collectively worth 1 point of Property Damage. The bottles are collectively worth 1 point of Property Damage. The barrel is worth 1 point of Property Damage. If the Loose Gyre takes 2 points of Property Damage, Lara will be forced to shut down at the end of the month and the Zhents will have accomplished their mission.

Any time a party member sees a thug try to attack one of the objects in the Tavern, the player can roll a Dex Save to intercept. Treat this Dex Save like the object's AC. If the thug beats the Dex Save on their attack roll, the damage they object. If the thug does not beat it, they are stopped, and begin fighting the party member instead of doing any property damage.

During the fight Lara is guarding the barrel of ale with her life. She uses the same statistics as a **veteran**.

The thugs will not fight to the death. If any of their HP drops below half, they will run for it, and if Gregor's HP drops below half he orders a full retreat for his group.

CONCLUSION

If the Zhents are defeated or otherwise driven away, Lara congratulates the party and gives them a free round of drinks. In addition, they can report the success to Savra at the Halls of Justice to earn the following rewards:

- Any Order of the Gauntlet member gains 1 renown
- The party can stop at Helm's Hall in Southern Ward to receive free healing and restoration magic as they need it
- Each party member gains 500 XP. If using a milestone system, they should all now be 3rd level.

ANTI-VENOM



avra will track down the party once they're 3rd level, and can appear at any time in Waterdeep to give them the following mission:

"At least a dozen noble estates have been robbed by the 'Black Viper', a notorious thief that by all accounts should be dead. Popular theory is she's a noble, but we don't know for sure. I won't ask you to take her down, because I don't want to see you dead, however one broadsheet 'The Waterdeep Wazoo' seems to have some insider information on the rogue. I want you to talk to their editor and report back to me what they know, if anything of substance."

THE WATERDEEP WAZOO

The building The Waterdeep Wazoo is based out of is quite busy during the day. A good disguise and a DC 13 Deception check are enough to slip in and pretend to be an overworked, underpaid, and confused intern who will have advantage on any checks made to gain information from their 'co-workers'. However the party can also just talk to the publisher and see what he knows.

GAXLY RUDDERBUST

Gaxly Rudderbust (N male Illuskan human **commoner**) is the publisher of the broadsheet dressed in a dark grey suit with a short black moustache and a shaved head. He is irritable, and impatient, demanding news on his desk yesterday! If the party member doesn't seem to work for Gaxly he demands they leave immediately. If they do look like they work at the Wazoo he impatiently demands they get out and get him some news. If they express interest in the Black Viper he tells them, annoyed, to mind their own business. If it was worth knowing, he would have published it.

The party can get him to talk on a DC 12 Intimidation or Persuasion check, or give him a bribe. If the bribe is less than 50 GP he says so, maybe by saying "I don't even run a classified ad for less than fifty dragons!" or something to that effect.

If he talks, he'll insist they didn't hear it from him, but he thinks the Black Viper is actually a secret evil twin sister of Ammalia Casslanter, and wears a mask to hide some horrific scar. This can be enough information to satisfy Savra, though the party can investigate further if they'd like.

THE CASSALANTERS

The Cassalanters and their estate is elaborated upon further in Chapter 6 of WDH, though this 'evil twin' Gaxly suspects does not exist. This information is willingly given if the party interviews anyone at their villa, though the party can sneak in and investigate if they'd like.

As the party would be extremely underlevelled for actually running a heist on the place, it is suggested to have one of the tiefling servants find the party and throw them out, annoyed, before they can actually steal or damage anything. The consequences should be minor if they decide to tell the truth to the tiefling, who will laugh them off, saying something like "Oh you aren't thieves or assassins, just some paparazzi!" and tell them to stop wasting their time.

CONCLUSION

Ultimately all Gaxly has is a rumor, an insubstantial one at that. All the party really needs tell Savra is there was nothing of note to report, but can tell her any information gained on this mission to claim the following rewards:

- Any Order of the Gauntlet member gains 1 renown
- **Hlam** (see Appendix B of WDH) begins silently following the party as a guardian angel. As a monk, he's quite dextrous and very good at stealth. Nobody will know he's following them until he leaps from the shadows to help them during a fight. During this fight he should wind up gravely injured, and while he will live, he will not be able to help them any further.
- Each party member gains 250 XP.

EXTERMINATE US



avra tracks down the 4th-level party at any point during the encounter chain in Chapter 4, probably unwelcome, as they may be trying to keep a low profile and she's not exactly subtle. Regardless, she gives them the following mission:

"Endshift Tavern is a popular tavern among off-duty guardsmen here. Some of them are getting too hammered and waking up with their gold lifted off them... normally I'd just reprimand them, but as only guards seem to be targeted I'm suspecting something more deliberate than petty thievery. The innkeeper has seen giant rats out back, a possible lead I think. Investigate and report back."

ENDSHIFT TAVERN

Endshift Tavern is on the eastern side of Field Ward, and almost always has two or three drunken city guardsmen hanging out, drinking, and making merry. They have little help to offer, being either too drunk to be reliable, or upset you would expect them to keep working even when they're CLEARLY off-duty.

Aside from the guards, there are three halflings who seem remarkably sober, but then halflings do have a strong constitution when it comes to food and drink. This is their favorite bar! That's all there is to it!

THE HALFLINGS

The halflings are actually members of the Shard Shunners, **wererats** who have longtime grudges with the City Watch and City Guard for making their illegal dealings more difficult... so they bleed them for gold as a method of payback! They are:

- Roscoe Underbough
- Kelso Fiddlewick
- Danika Fiddlewick (Kelso's younger sister)

The party may have met them at any number of points thusfar, Roscoe was holed up in the Xanathar Hideout in Chapter 1, and Kelso and Danika are employed by Emmek Frewn to sabotage the party's tavern. If any of these are brought up, without alluding to their wererat nature, the halflings nervously sidestep the question, and if any questions are made about whether or not they're stealing the gold, a DC 16 Insight check will see through their lies and make it apparent they're involved somehow.

If the accusation is made that they're wererats, the guards stop drinking and take notice, cornering them, interrogating them... which causes them to change and try to escape. The party and the guards are likely more than a match, however.

Another way the party might deal with this is by following the guards as they drunkenly stumble out of the bar, needing to pass a DC 17 Stealth check follow them unseen by the halflings. If the halflings realize the party is there they stop stealing from the guards entirely, as they do not want to risk being caught in the future. If the party is unseen, the halflings follow the guards carefully, getting close and then lifting the coinpurse off of them easily enough. Call for a DC 20 Perception check if any party member is following them, to see if they catch eye of this theft.

CONCLUSION

If the party confront the halflings, stop them, or report their findings and the thefts stop happening, they are rewarded in the following ways:

- Any Order of the Gauntlet member gains 2 renown
- Each party member receives one *potion of healing*.

SAVRA'S LAST STAND



he 5th-level party is likely eager to track down the Stone of Golorr, to enter the vault, but along the way will find vile, swooping bat-like fiends surrounding Savra, heavy crossbow in hand, trying to fight them off. She is outnumbered, and could use the party's help.

SAVRA BELABRANTA

Savra Belabranta (NG female Tethyrian human **knight**) is surrounded by devils, likely in Field Ward or near the Halls of Justice, but can really be anywhere it would be convenient for the story. She may tell the party to leave her, as this is her fight, but this will cause one of the five **spined devils** surrounding her to notice the players and attack them.

Savra heard reports of these creatures attacking citizens and fled to help out, but in truth they were just bait to lure her out as the Order of the Gauntlet has caused the Cassalanter too much trouble, so they seek to get rid of her.

GYSHEER OMFREYS

Gysheer Omfreys (LE female Tethyrian human **cult fanatic**) is the one the Cassalanter cult deployed to assassinate Savra. She summoned the devils in a nearby alley and sicced them upon her.

She tries to stay in the shadows, unseen. If you're using a map, place her in an alleyway the party cannot see unless they move to Savra's side. With or without a map, call for a DC 16 Perception check every time Gysheer takes her turn. On a success the party sees her hiding from them.

Gysheer does not move until the second round of combat, during which she will try to cast *hold person* on Savra to try and paralyze her. She will then cast *spiritual weapon* to summon a ghostly trident to try and execute her. If cornered, or if the **spined devils** are defeated, she will try and flee.

SUBDUING GYSHEER

Savra wants to question her, but only magical compulsion will force Gysheer to mention the Cassalanter. If Cassalanter are implicated Savra begins the long arduous process of gathering enough information on nobles to get a warrant for search and questioning... she may be willing to work under the table and get the party's help. In either case, Gysheer is arrested.

CONCLUSION

If Savra is saved and the spined devils defeated, she thanks them and rewards them the following ways:

- Any Order of the Gauntlet member gains 2 renown
- Each party member receives one *potion of greater healing*.

ZHENTARIM

Devil cheers and offers a drink to the party as they arrive. He knows he's shady, he knows his group has a bad rep, but they really, REALLY do just want to end all this gang violence in Waterdeep, and to that end he offers the following mission to the 2nd level party:

BAD TIME TO BE AN ELF

"Elf and half-elf sailors in the Dock Ward keep finding themselves on the wrong end of a blade. Three dead so far, each beheaded in the middle of the night. The City Watch is clueless, as usual. Stake the place out and see if you can't put a stop to it."

DOCK WARD

The Dock Ward overlooks the sea on the south side of Waterdeep. The party can interrogate the locals for more information. Call for a DC 12 Investigation check. They make this check with advantage if they talk to the City Watch, but make it with disadvantage if they mention they're working for the Zhentarim. If the party succeeds, they find out all the murders have happened near Muleskull Tavern on Ship Street. Otherwise, the party can just stake all of Dock Ward out for a few days. If they do, skip to Stakeout.

MULESKULL TAVERN

Muleskull Tavern is run by Richard Charleston, a human commoner who thinks himself a noble. The tavern is quite large and extravagantly clean. Despite this, it's fairly empty. This is mostly due to it's dual status as a Guildhall for the Dungsweepers' Guild.

If the party interrogates Charleston, he expresses concern but doesn't really have any leads himself. That being said, there is a half-elf sailor drinking at the bar named Heldar, who may have more information.

Heldar greets the party warmly, if drunkenly. He doesn't know what they're talking about regarding violence towards elves, but if warned, he merely smiles and pats the scabbard of the scimitar around his waist, saying this is all the help he needs.

If the party decides to stakeout the Tavern, skip to Stakeout. If they want to escort Heldar, call for a DC 12 Persuasion check. They can make this check with Advantage if they talk him up a bit first. If he agrees to let them follow him, skip to Ambush. If they fail the check and decide to insist anyway, he may get violent. He has the stats of a **bandit**, but it should be worth noting that the party is here to protect him.

STAKEOUT

If the party decides to stakeout, call for a DC 12 Constitution Save from all of them. Each one who fails takes one level of Exhaustion before the Ambush happens. Ignore this check entirely if the party decides to stakeout the Muleskull Tavern, as the Ambush happens too quickly for them to really get tired.

If the party are staking out the Muleskull Tavern, the Ambush happens the same day. Otherwise, they don't spot the Ambush until the third day of their stakeout. In either case, call for a DC 18 Perception check. On a success, they spot Heldar, a drunk half-elf **bandit** stumbling into a dark alley as a **drow gunslinger** (see appendix B of WDH) creeps behind him, shortsword in hand.

If the party fails the Perception check, they only realize Heldar has been ambushed once they hear his pained screams as he is stabbed by the gunslinger and takes 1d6+4 piercing damage. If they succeed, they arrive just as Heldar is about to be stabbed.

AMBUSH

A **drow gunslinger** (appendix B of WDH) creeps in the shadows behind Heldar and quickly draws his sword and strikes!

If the party was following Heldar as his personal entourage, they notice the gunslinger coming. Call for Initiative rolls and begin combat once he's forty feet behind them.

If the party was following Heldar from afar, call for a DC 12 Perception check. On a success they see him coming, and combat begins with the gunslinger forty feet behind Heldar. On a fail they don't notice until the gunslinger emerges from the shadows, only ten feet behind Heldar.

If the party was on a stakeout, position them based on how the stakeout ended.

The gunslinger is named Soluun Xibrindas, and he bears a lifelong grudge against elves and half-elves for how they've treated him and his people. If accusations of being a member of the Bregan D'arthe are thrown at him, he insists he is unaffiliated with them. This lie is easily seen through by a DC 8 Insight check, but it has no affect on his behavior during this ambush. In combat, he prioritizes elves. If reduced to below half his hit points, he will flee.

CONCLUSION

If Helder is saved, he gives each party member 50 gp and a hearty pat on the back. If they report their success to Davil, he they also gain the following rewards:

- Any Zhentarim member gains 1 renown
- Davil introduces the party to Istrid Horn, Master of Trade and Coin, who will be willing to give the party a 2,500 gp loan with a flat 10% interest rate that must be paid within three months. (To summarize: they must pay back 2750 gp)
- Each party member gains 500 XP. If using a milestone system, they should all now be 3rd level.

KEEP THE CHANGE

Some night after the party hit 3rd level, a flying snake with a parchment wrapped around its body arrives to them in the night. It leaves as stealthfully as it approached, with the following printed on the parchment:

"There's a shop in the Trades Ward called Weirdbottle's Concoctions. The gnome who runs it is an old friend named Skeemo, who made some Potions of Mind Reading for a client. Pick the potions up, take them to the God Catcher, you know, the statue in Castle Ward. You'll find a woman in a purple cloak an hour after sundown. Give her the potions, and pocket her payment for yourself."

THE BIG PICTURE

The DM should know that the woman in the purple cloak is Esvele Rosznar, the **Black Viper** (see appendix B of WDH), and that she's going to use these potions to assist the heist she is planning to pull on the Cassalanters' villa. If you're running WDH in the Summer, she can be found in the Garden Mudroom on Founders' Day at the time of the heist. (See page 119 of WDH). Otherwise, she will attempt this heist roughly one month after getting the potions. In exchange for her help, the Zhentarim want her help tracking down Manshoon.

However, Skeemo is secretly working for Manshoon, and is poisoning the potions in an effort to get rid of her at the behest of his employer. If he succeeds, the Black Viper will be nowhere to be seen for the rest of this adventure as the party unknowingly poison her.

WEIRDBOTTLE'S CONCOCTIONS

Seemingly an ordinary alchemy shop, if the party arrive as patrons Skeemo greets them warmly and offers the potions listed in the attached table.

If the party mention the Zhentarim, or their 'business', Skeemo nods and locks the shop up early, dismissing anyone in the shop that isn't working with the Zhentarim, including other party members. If they insist on staying, he will permit it with a DC 13 Persuasion or Intimidation check. Otherwise he will NOT conduct business with them.

SKEEMO'S POTIONS

Potion	Cost
<i>Potion of healing</i>	50 gp
<i>Potion of greater healing</i>	250 gp
<i>Potion of clairvoyance</i>	250 gp
<i>Potion of growth</i>	125 gp
<i>Potion of invulnerability</i>	250 gp

Once he's confident they can speak privately, he then casts *detect magic* to ensure he's truly alone. If the party chose to mess with him, he casts *suggestion* and suggests they leave. See appendix B in WDH for his in-game stat block on how he casts his spells. Once alone, he retrieves a small silk-lined coffer from beneath the counter, and opens it up, revealing four *potions of mind reading*. He closes it back up, hands it to the player, and re-opens his shop, sending them off with a pleasant, patient smile.

THE POTIONS

The potions are actually *potions of poison*, but taste like *potions of mind reading* if sampled. If the party decides to try one, or cast *identify* on them, see page 188 of the DMG for details on this item.

THE WOMAN IN PURPLE

The God Catcher is impossible to miss, a massive statue near the market, and around sundown a woman in a purple cloak can be found, obviously looking for someone.

If the party approaches, they can start a small conversation with her, though she is not particularly talkative. If she removes her cloak for any reason, or the party removes it from her, they can see her costume, and immediately realize she is the **Black Viper**, a legendary assassin rogue thought to have died over a century ago. At this reveal she confidently says her reputation has preceded her, and takes what is hers.

If the party warn her about the potions being poison, she makes a note to identify them before drinking, and appreciates their concern.

In any case, she hands them a pouch containing 15 Suns (PP) before walking away in the shadows of the city, never to be seen again, hopefully.

CONCLUSION

If the delivery went well the party gains the following rewards:

- Any Zhentarim member gains 1 renown
- Each party member gains 250 XP.

If the Black Viper was warned about the potions being poison, she begins investigating what happened, but is unable to track it down to Skeemo specifically. Skeemo himself insists the potions were made by an understudy of his and is unable to say EXACTLY where they came from, other than just insisting to keep a closer eye on his apprentices. Due to this, the Black Viper is in the party's debt, and if sought out through Zhentarim contacts will be happy to assist the party indirectly, through espionage, distraction, intelligence gathering and such, but will not involve herself with the party through direct combat. She works alone.

WHAT ABOUT THE SUMMER ENCOUNTER IN THE OLD TOWER?

The Black Viper, Esvele Rosznar is supposed to own the Old Tower in the Summer version of Dragon Season. If she drank the poison, she would only have drunk one and have been made tragically unwell by it's effects. Now too weak for burglary, she bides her time as a noble, the 'Black Viper' identity effectively retired. If she meets the party she recognizes the party as the ones who sold her the potions, but has no room to accuse them without exposing her secret identity.

As a result, she merely tolerates them, add +5 to the DC of any charisma checks made to interact with her, unless they can somehow convince her they had nothing to do with the potions being poison... which would be quite difficult, considering she won't ask them about it openly.

ON DASHER



Zhentarim's signature, a winged snake will bring the 4th-level party a new mission as they're running through the encounter chain, likely as they're checking out the Windmill:

"Waterdeep's richest halfling family, the Snobeedles, is offering 500 Dragons for information leading to the safe return of a missing family member named Dasher Snobeedle. This would obviously help our efforts, look into it."

The 'Dragons' in this case are Gold Pieces.

THE SNOBEEDLES

The Snobeedle family and their orchard is detailed earlier in this PDF, in the Emerald Enclave mission 'Dark Harvest' on page 11. If the party talk to Blossom about it she'll gladly give away any information she believes is relevant to their investigation. She'll explain that Dasher loves to go into the city, among the common people, and pretend he has nothing to do with them, an obsession with being 'of the people', as though they didn't have to pull themselves up by their bootstraps to get where they are! Regardless, as part of his little 'escapades', he often drinks with other halflings at 'Hole in the Wall', an all halfling hostel.

HOLE IN THE WALL

Hole in the Wall is detailed earlier in this PDF, in the Emerald Enclave mission 'Suffer not the Liars', on page 16, under the entry for Vaniel Shortwick. That being said it is also the hostel that the Xanathar Hideout is built into in Chapter 1 of WDH, so you can consult that for information as well. Regardless, talking to Vaniel or any other halflings there while asking about Dasher requires a DC 18 Insight check. On a success, the party realize they know exactly what happened to Dasher, but are hiding it for whatever reason. Whether or not they know the halflings here know anything about Dasher, if a member of the party mentions Dasher they may attempt a DC 18 Persuasion check to get them to talk anyway.

Dasher is hidden, appropriately, in a hole in the wall. A secret room built into the attic where the Shard Shunners work out schemes and operations. Dasher considers these people his true family, even considering Vaniel his lover. Dasher has become a **wererat**, and everyone here except for Vaniel is a wererat as well.

Dasher will make an offer of 200 GP to the party if they keep his secret, say nothing to anyone about it, tell the Zhentarim that they just couldn't find him. If the party brings up the 500 GP offer, he explains that he can go as high as 300 GP, but it's hard to make money on these streets, not that his mother would understand that.

If the party tries to force him to come with, they will have to fight him, another **wererat**, and Vaniel, a **doppelganger** pretending to be a wererat. Please see page 30 of WDH for statistics for halfling wererats.

CONCLUSION

If the party return Dasher to his family, his mother tearfully thanks them and gives them the 500 GP she promised, keeping him under lock and key, likely with a mild poison to keep him too ill to ever leave home again. A few days afterwards they are confronted by **Davil Starsong** (appendix B of WDH) demanding his cut. He'll let them keep 150 GP, but the rest goes to the Zhentarim. Otherwise, the party is rewarded the following way:

- Any Zhentarim member gains 2 renown

BLOOD OF THE COVENANT



Devil Starsong is likely to come to the 5th-level party personally, waiting for them in Trollskull Manor with Yagra with the following mission:

"Skeemo Weirdbottle has conspired against us. He's been poisoning our deliveries to certain allies, certain agents. I need you to eliminate him. Make it look like an accident, if you can."

DAVIL'S SUPPORT

At this point Devil trusts the party, obviously more than his old friend Skeemo, and will happily drink here at the Manor with Yagra, waiting for them to return with good news. They should know where Weirdbottles at this point, and should be able to deal with him however they see fit.

BLACK VIPER SUPPORT

If the Black Viper had not been poisoned in the earlier mission 'Keep the Change', she will trail the party, quietly looking for opportunities to help them kill the man who tried to poison her.

WEIRDBOTTLE'S COMPLICATIONS

Skeemo and his business are detailed in the 'Keep the Change' mission, but as the party approaches this time it's locked up, and a nearby dray can be seen driving off. A DC 16 Perception check will notice a cloaked halfling mixed in with five other human **commoners**. This is Skeemo trying to escape. If he realizes he's being followed, he casts *fly* and tries to escape this way. If the Black Viper is following, she will be on a nearby roof and shoot him down with her hand crossbow, landing the hit and forcing him to land as his concentration is broken. At this, he will cast *greater invisibility* on himself and try to escape through the crowded streets.

If the players catch him, and kill him, they must find some way to get away with it undetected. If they fail to catch him and kill him, he will escape to Kolat Towers, detailed in chapter 8 of WDH. The party can find an old notebook in his shop mentioning these towers as a haven, a potential lead. If the party loses track of him and breaks into his shop, and assuming she's still around, they'll find the Black Viper there already who will give them the notebook.

CONCLUSION

Skeemo himself is carrying a satchel that holds his spellbook that details every spell he has prepared, as well as a *potion of mind reading* and 150 GP in a silk coin purse. Weirdbottle's Concoctions contains many potions of all varieties... but all are in fact, quite poisonous, and are *potions of poison* disguised as the potions he usually sells. If Skeemo is killed without the Black Network being implicated the party is rewarded the following way:

- Any Zhentarim member gains 2 renown

If Skeemo escapes to Kolat Towers and the party find clues suggesting as such, the Doom Raiders will happily agree to help them investigate, as well as the Black Viper if she's still around.

FINAL NOTES

It's been a lot of fun writing this, and I hope you have a lot of fun running it! It was quite difficult getting everything to connect and doing the research to make sure every detail works together to make everything feel like deep, immersive experiences in the city of Waterdeep!

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