

Loresmyth's Ultimate Guide to:

# REMARKABLE GUILDS

& THEIR HEROES



JVC PARRY, ASHTON BAKER

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& THEIR HEROES



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# EVERY LEGEND HAS A HERO

*Raise your gaze from the bloodied dirt and toward the heavens. See how the clouds have begun to part. It is a sign—the infernal armies have done their worst, and now retreat down into the bowels of the Infernal Realm. See how our brothers and sisters rise from the field of battle? Their strength and valor have protected them, and us as well. The mercy of our goddess has granted us a reprieve from the embrace of death, so that we may stand as a bastion to hold back the cruel and the vicious from the weak and the innocent. We are strong, for there is strength in mercy, just as there is wisdom in kindness. Stand, squire, and look out upon the Shields of Osanya. You are one of us now, anointed with the blood of our enemies in the battle against evil.*

—The White Lion, Shields of Osanya



## FOR THE GREATER GOOD

For many adventurers, the lure of gold, fame, and power is what drives them to save a kingdom or take up arms against monstrous foes. True heroes, however, are driven by more than personal gain—they seek to embody a creed, serve their fellow mortals, foster peace, create wonders, or simply make the world a better place than how they found it. One thing unites these goals: a belief in the “greater good.” This means that one should work for the happiness, security, and enrichment of all, but not because one is forced to. Rather, each person should embody what they wish to see in the world, and if each person followed that example, the world would be a better place to live in.

## UNITED AS ONE

The heroic institutions described in this book are not all guilds in the traditional sense of the word—many do not represent a craft or trade like the medieval guilds of our own world. In this book, a guild is defined by its commitment to the greater good. While the *Society of Benevolent Brewers* has crafts—those of brewing and of alchemy—these brewers’ true goal goes beyond making money; they wish to foster peace between warring nations and spread harmony across the world. The *Eldritch Wardens* are not a trade guild at all—they sell no wares and make no money. However, they are still a guild according to this book because they are wholly dedicated to the defense of the Mortal Realm.

The guilds in this book range from groups of wondrous craftspeople whose innovations push the boundaries of magic to hard-riding beast-tamers and explorers who defend the borders of civilization from monstrous creatures. While more traditional and mundane organizations of craftspeople—such as clothiers, locksmiths, cobblers, and the like—will always have a place in the world, the organizations in this book are more akin to factions that players can join, ally with, or even rival. These remarkable guilds offer a host of fantastical, intriguing opportunities to the denizens of whatever world they’re placed in.

## THE NATURE OF HEROISM

At the heart of every heroic faction is an *ideal*, a gleaming, righteous tenet to which its members hold themselves and each other accountable. These principles guide the dedicated through the darkness and on toward a brighter future for all. Ideals, such as honor, selflessness, or wisdom, help to unify people under one banner. In this way, all guilds are working to be heroic and to serve the greater good. But heroism has many faces. Some see heroism primarily as the defense of the weak or innocent, while others see it as the defense of truth, order, and justice, no matter the cost. Still others see heroism

in subtler terms: the invention of wondrous items that improve the lives of thousands might be worthy of the term, as could the defense of the beautiful, endless cycle of nature. Every adventurer who wishes to walk the path of the hero will have to decide what heroism means to them.

## USING THIS BOOK

*Remarkable Guilds & Their Heroes* is an inspirational world-building guide designed to help you create engaging and memorable organizations for your roleplaying game. Heroism takes many forms, and this book focuses specifically on guilds (or more broadly, factions) that are motivated by heroic goals. These can range from a group of smiths who use dragonfire to forge items for defenders of the realm to a troupe of bards and performers who preserve mythic tales. For whatever you want to create, we're proud to provide you with the tools needed to unleash your imagination.

### CHAPTER 1: REMARKABLE GUILDS

This is a gallery of heroic and wondrous factions crafted by the Loresmyth team, each with its own distinct leader to learn about, righteous goals to pursue, epic items to wield, and memorable members to meet. If you're looking for new allies (or rivals) to inspire your players, these guilds are ready to make their grand entrance.

### CHAPTER 2: BRINGING YOUR GUILDS TO LIFE

Heroic factions do far more than merely aid others or hand out quests; they're living, breathing organizations that take on challenges, bolster their ranks, and fight against the forces of evil. This chapter details the big picture of a guild's operations, including wealth, influence, ranks, and unique quests.

### CHAPTER 3: CREATING YOUR OWN GUILDS

From extraplanar wizard universities to secret societies of investigators, the heights and depths of the multiverse are the limit for new guilds. This chapter gives you a plethora of tables to help you build your own guild from the ground up and spark your imagination. Special attention is given to creating a fascinating new leader and a distinct cast of guild members.

### CHAPTER 4: PLAYER-OPERATED GUILDS

What player hasn't thought of founding their own faction? This chapter contains the blueprints for players to create their own valorous guild, including recruiting new members, building a headquarters, collecting resources, gaining a powerful patron, and undertaking dangerous missions.

### APPENDIX I: EXALTED ITEM CREATOR

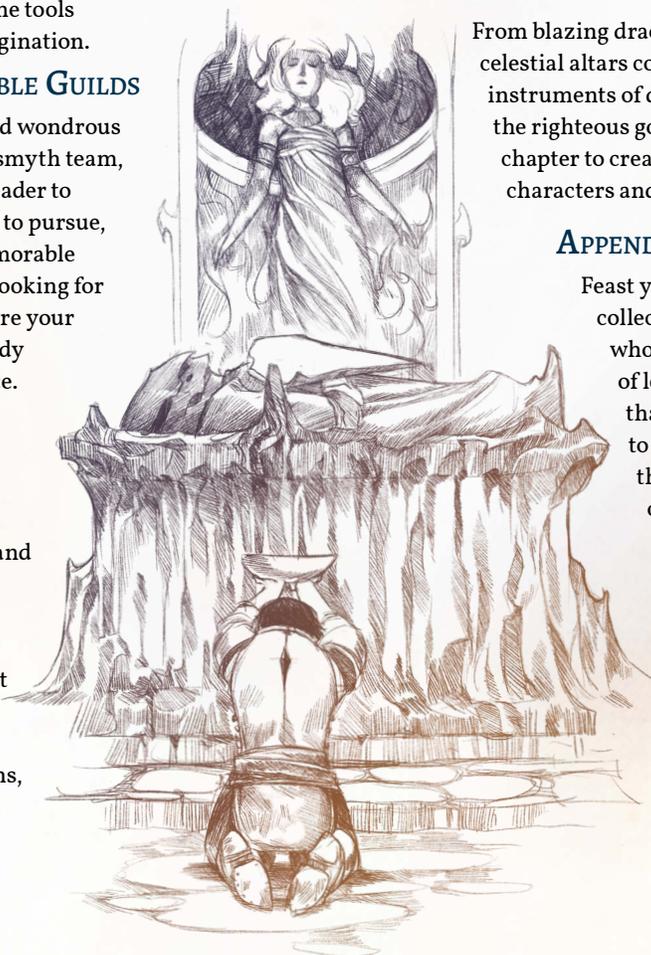
From blazing draconic forges and sanctified celestial altars come weapons, armor, and instruments of destiny, each crafted to achieve the righteous goals of their creators. Use this chapter to create heroic custom items for player characters and non-player characters (NPCs).

### APPENDIX II: FABLED RELICS

Feast your eyes upon a wondrous collection of one-of-a-kind items whose names and deeds are the stuff of legends. From a magical staff that allows its user to time travel to a harp that brings songs to life, these powerful relics are fit for only the greatest of heroes.

### APPENDIX III: GUILD HEADQUARTERS MAPS

Each of the ten unique guilds contained in this book has a custom map of its headquarters, which includes a sanctum for its leader and unique features tailored to the guild, such as libraries or training rooms.



I would like to take this moment to issue a special thanks to everyone who helped make this book a reality. On behalf of the entire Loresmyth team, I wish you countless hours of roleplaying fun for you and your gaming group.



Chris van der Linden, Founder of Loresmyth



CHAPTER 1

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# THE REMARKABLE GUILDS



# THE BENEVOLENT BREWERS SOCIETY

Wealth	⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
Resources	💧 💧 💧 💧
Defence	♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥
Authority	⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡
Services	Custom Brewing, Brokering Meetings, Diplomacy
Disfavored	Fighters, Assassins, Criminals
Favored	Bards, Dwarves, Halflings



*The elf tribes of the Vastland had been at war for generations. They were a fractured people, split into dozens of warring bands that fought over entire forests. It seemed that there would never be another Elf Court held in the Vastland. Then, everything began to change—the tribes began to remember their shared heritage and their ancient bonds... They say it all happened when Alandeor Blackroot was approached by a silver-tongued dwarf...*

— Jermin Garson, Chronicler for the Society

**O**n the surface, the Society of Benevolent Brewers is a guild of distillers, alchemists, and artificers who supply taverns and bars across the Mortal Realm with their signature drinks.

Though the sale of its famous beverages has been incredibly profitable, the guild has another, subtler side to it: the Brewers are heavily involved with realm-wide politics, especially diplomacy and peace-making. The guild hosts private summits where opposing houses are brought together, warring factions are united, and bloody feuds are ended.

Though its dual nature may seem strange to outsiders, the Brewers find it to be quite natural: as the beloved creators of delightful beverages of all varieties, the contacts and wealth that they create through their business enterprise also allow them to socialize with and influence notable individuals from across the realm, from innkeepers to countesses. The guild uses these contacts to promote an agenda of peace and harmony, bringing people together in their drinking halls and breweries to broker peace treaties, settle disputes, and negotiate trade deals.

The guild's philosophy is based on the idea that peace comes from three pillars: the prosperity of the common people,

the humility of rulers, and the friendship between nations. This puts them at odds with many ambitious nobles and warlords who see conquest, destruction, and domination as necessary tools for securing power and prestige, but the Brewers have found that their vast network of friends and alliances can bring almost anyone to the negotiation table.

## SIGNATURE SUMMITS

The highest goal of the Society of Benevolent Brewers is to spread peace across the Mortal Realm. In order to make this dream a reality, the Brewers organize summits and invite influential individuals and factions to visit their guild halls. These summits, which are designed to calm tensions and resolve disputes, are typically informal, private meetings where the Brewers facilitate discussions, but they're also elaborate parties involving song and dance, as well as toasts, extemporaneous speeches, and even jokes tailored to the occasion. Though these activities might seem to be frivolous at the outset, the Brewers carefully craft these summits to lighten tensions and encourage friendliness outside the formal, strict procedures of statecraft.

The Brewers are capable of organizing these summits because they are one of the most well-informed organizations in the world. Members of the guild are

often sent to royal courts and other places of power as informal, benevolent spies, bound by oath not to commit crimes of any sort. They speak to servants, invite courtiers to have drinks, and generally learn more about the private workings of courts and war rooms. If caught in the act, members freely admit to their activities and stop if asked. Most rulers know that the guild has spies in their courts, but most consider them harmless at best and annoying at worst, since the guild does not sell or share its collected information.

## MASTERS OF THE MASH

While some members of the Society are out rubbing elbows with nobles in royal courts or arranging the guild's carefully curated summits, a large portion of the guild is hard at work crafting its flagship beverages and making sure that the business prospers. This part of the guild consists of master brewers, specialized alchemists, and shrewd businesspeople. The Brewers have breweries and drinking halls of their own across the world, which serve as their local and regional headquarters. These breweries and halls are usually open to the public as places of sanctuary where a fine meal and outstanding drinks can be acquired. They also serve as places to gather rumors and secrets from the common folk. Each guild hall also has an exclusive room where influential figures can meet in private.

Some of the signature beverages of the Brewers include the hearty *Blackbark Stout*, which has proven popular among dwarfs and dragonborn, and the delectably delicate *White Moon Mead*, which was specially crafted for elven palates. Although the guild prides itself on creating quality drinks that can satisfy the thirsts of barons and bakers alike, its brewers are known to create more intriguing novelty beverages as well: *Bubblelch Brew* does exactly what it says on the label, *Presence Pale Ale* boosts the charisma and volume of public speakers, and *Rainbow Stout* causes the drinker's hair to randomly flow between different colors over the next hour.

## HELPING HAND

The Brewers wish for all to reap the benefits of peace, and though it may take generations to accomplish, the guild does not believe in shortcuts. Its leaders are bound by a few tenets to ensure that they do not stray too far from the common good, with the first being that "dark seeds bear dark fruit." This means that the Brewers refuse to use assassination, sabotage, blackmail, or other "dirty" tactics to achieve their goals. The second tenet is that "mountains are built of tiny stones," which reminds members that although the powerful may be excellent allies, a ruler's power comes from those they rule, and the common people should benefit from the guild's dealings.

When not engineering new alliances and quelling tensions, the guild uses its considerable resources to aid its allies. They may commission an expedition to find a new silver

## BOLSTER BRONZEBORN

AGE: 151 RACE: Dwarf

GENDER: Male

OCCUPATION: Guild Leader, Peace-maker

SPECIALTY: Oratory, Negotiation, Politics

**B**olster Bronzeborn is a gregarious, boisterous, and charismatic leader, but his extroverted exterior hides a thoughtful, intelligent, and contemplative personality. Bolster's an expert at putting on a friendly face, no matter who he has to converse with, and seems able to make conversation about almost any topic. Despite this, he's also a keen listener and, in fact, would rather be listening than talking, as it enables him to get a better idea about who he's negotiating with.

In many ways, Bolster is similar to a mastermind, but instead of scheming to gain power, he attempts to unravel the complex tapestry of his allies' (and enemies') desires, ambitions, and problems to find clever ways to further the Society's goal of peace, prosperity, and harmony.

Bolster cares deeply about the common people, whom he feels are often overlooked by those in power. He himself comes from a trade background; his family members have been dwarven brewers for generations, and he has seen first-hand how a greed for gold can often result in the common folk being overworked and overlooked.

◆ **THE PERFECT INGREDIENT:** Bolster still has a deep attachment to the art of brewing and wants to ensure that the guild members live up to their vaunted reputation as master craftspeople. He needs someone to travel to the vast *Yorula Forest* and return with a unique variety of hops.

◆ **THE SPICE OF LIFE:** Bolster has heard that *Lady Sheer*, the shrewd but good-hearted ruler of a trade empire that supplies the spice *aberest* to the rest of the world, is being pressured by her advisers to take a more ruthless approach to ruling her kingdom. Bolster would like to have an audience with Lady Sheer to persuade her otherwise.

Bolster has never trained in the art of war, and has no mastery of martial or arcane combat. Instead, the dwarf relies on the gift of gab to get himself out of sticky situations. It helps that he has a gallery of powerful contacts.

◆ **SILVER-TONGUED:** Bolster has such amazing charisma and wit that he can persuade, deceive, and bluff his way out of nearly any situation.

mine to enrich a poor kingdom, find a suitable match for a prince to avoid a war, find a new trading partner to carry food to a desperate city in the midst of a famine, or find a compromise between an expanding city and the local druids to prevent conflict. Mediation, compromise, and peace are the bread and butter of Society members. The guild is also generous with its wealth, and has been known to erase the debts of entire kingdoms who prove their commitment to furthering harmony in the world.

## NOTABLE GUILD MEMBERS

The members of the Society of Benevolent Brewers fall into four categories: mediators, informants, businesspeople, and brewers. While there is a great mix of these individuals across the guild, the most commonly encountered by common folk are the brewers.

### ☀ **SARIEL KOEHLANNA (FEMALE ELF SPOKESPERSON)**

In a past life, Sariel was one of the *Al'tahrni* elf tribe's most vitriolic politicians. She was known and feared throughout the Vastland as a war-inciting tyrant, clutching tightly to her position of power with an iron fist. The *Al'tahrni* elves were a small but bloodthirsty tribe, and one of the last to be unified under the banner of the elf republic that emerged victorious from the bloodshed of the past. When Sariel saw the light of unity and harmony, she gave up her addiction to warfare, and instead took to promoting peace throughout other cultures and realms. Her talents were quickly noticed by the Brewers, and she has become a shining example of how politics can excel when blades are put to rest.

Sariel now works for the guild as a broker of meetings, helping to set up negotiations between warring foes by drawing on her own experience with the *Al'tahrni* elves. It is through this work that she is most likely to come into contact with adventurers who might need her help, or who might be hired to find the leaders of warring nations laying low in their secret hideouts. Sariel delights in this work, and hopes that passing on her skills to the following generations will prevent the dark ages of war, as seen in her culture's past, from occurring again.

### ☀ **KILVAR STRONGFLAGON (MALE DWARF BREWMASTER)**

Thick of arm and brow, Kilvar Strongflagon is one of the Society's most talented master brewers. His proficiency in the craft combines both conventional brewing and alchemical expertise, allowing him to create both mundane drinks and fantastical potions. Rarely is he seen without his brewer's rake and alchemist's supplies, which hang from bandoliers worn around his broad shoulders. Although Kilvar's movements are delicate and precise, his manners are gruff and curt. Despite this, he is the go-to for

custom, unique potions commissioned by non-members. Kilvar is notorious among suppliers and other brewers for having exacting standards, to the point that he'll refuse to work with ingredients delivered even one day late.

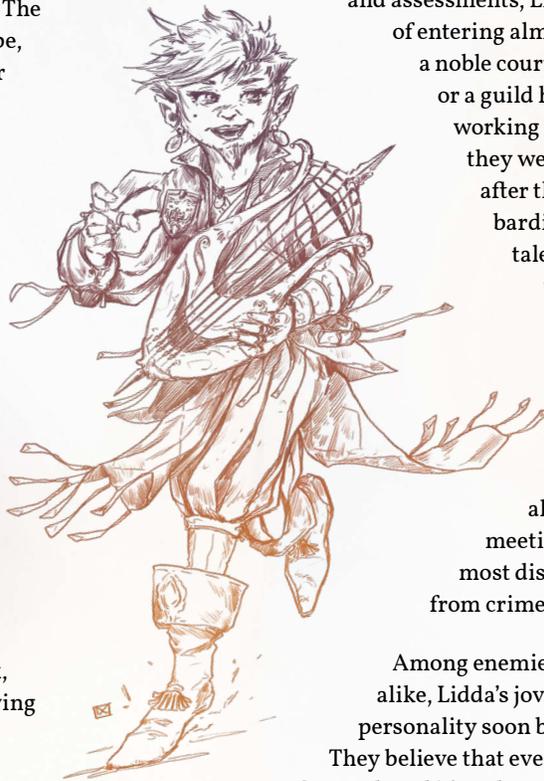
Kilvar demands a respect for the craft of brewing from those he serves, and will brook no bad intentions for the tinctures he creates. He sees the Brewers as the best place for those interested in alchemy and brewing to learn, and encourages ongoing learning in his apprentices. He hopes to continue to create new potions that will earn him a legacy within the guild. He's already created some masterful brews of which he's incredibly proud, such as the Presence Pale Ale and a particularly potent potion of duplication that splits the drinker into no less than five versions of himself, each of which is controlled by the actual drinker, and can work on tasks independently of their "parent."

### ☀ **LIDDA FASTEAVES (NONBINARY HALFLING INFORMANT)**

Cunning and careful in their investigations and assessments, Lidda seems capable of entering almost anywhere, be it a noble court, a temple sanctum, or a guild hall. They have been working for the Brewers since they were young, joining just after they finished their bardic training. Lidda is a talented lyrist who uses their performance abilities to enamor contacts throughout the various layers of society, and this vast array of contacts allows Lidda to set up meetings with even the most disparate of individuals, from crime lords to aristocrats.

Among enemies and friends alike, Lidda's jovial and gregarious personality soon becomes infectious.

They believe that everyone has the capacity for good, and it's only a matter of patience and effort to bring out this noble side. With their skilled playing and clever turns of phrase, they have an uncanny ability to lighten moods, defuse tensions, and turn minds toward thoughts of reconciliation rather than revenge. By using song, they're able to persuade people to do selfless things, finding just the right chords to strike to change the minds of those who might otherwise pursue selfish goals.



## GUILD RANKS

While the Society of Benevolent Brewers has rigid roles within its hierarchy, there's little stigma attached to any of the roles. Those of lower rank are respected just as highly as those of greater rank, though it's accepted that they should be helped with unlocking their full potential.

## SERVICES

While the Society's most obvious service is providing food and drink at its famous drinking halls, it offers more than just refreshment to members and non-members alike.

### ◆ CUSTOM BREWING

In addition to their usual array of delicious drinks, the Brewers can brew unique, custom beverages with positive magical effects, such as enhancing courage, increasing charisma, healing the drinker, or bestowing flight upon the imbiber. These enchanted libations are typically made by either a guild Tapper or alchemist, who is careful to balance magical ingredients against more mundane reagents. The final result is a unique potion whose effects may be tailored to match the requirements of the purchaser. Depending on the exact effects of the concoction, the price for such a service ranges from dozens to thousands of gp. The Brewers refuse to create poisons or harmful potions.

### ◆ BROKERING MEETINGS

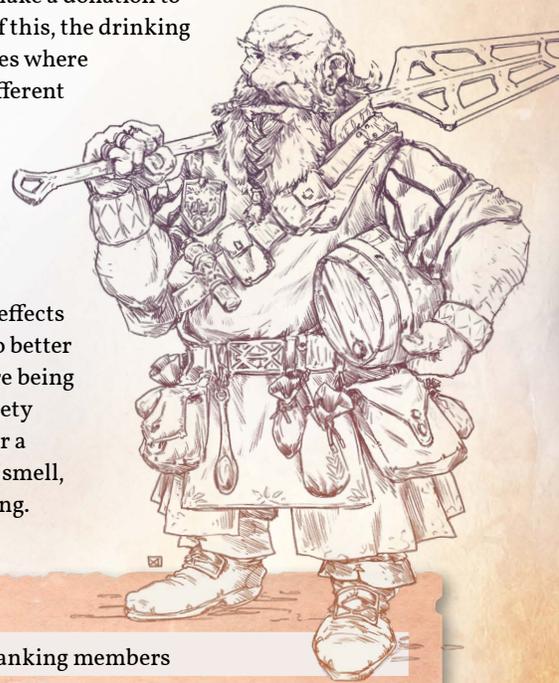
For a reasonable fee, the Brewers can set up a meeting with almost anyone, from politicians to monarchs to scholars. Because of its extensive range of connections, almost no one is out of the guild's sphere of influence. If necessary, the Brewers may also set up meetings with underworld figures like crime bosses and gang leaders, but those are much rarer. In such an instance, the goal of the meeting should always be to promote peace or harmony in some fashion, or else the guild might step in to derail the meeting. Meetings with local politicians can be acquired for a price of around 50 gp, while meetings with more influential figures climb toward the 1,000 or even 5,000 gp mark.

### ◆ TOASTMAKING

For those interested in becoming virtuosos of persuasion and politics themselves, the Brewers offer training in the skills of performance, etiquette, and oratory, especially extemporaneous speaking, persuasive speech, and humorous toasts. This training can be time consuming and rather expensive—sometimes costing thousands of gp—but it can be acquired for free if the student renders a significant service to the guild, such as brokering a meeting, or refers a talented person to the guild's recruiters. Toastmaking is often the first skill mastered by new members of the guild and is one of the signature oratory styles of the Brewers.

### ◆ DRINKING HALLS

The guild maintains numerous drinking halls that can be found throughout the Mortal Realm. Each of these halls has a dedicated Keeper of the Hall, who ensures that the hall remains as a place of good repute, and that it continues to serve fine food and drink to any who seek it. Mundane food and drink in these halls can be acquired for free on a daily basis, but more magical options are available for those who wish to make a donation to the guild. Because of this, the drinking halls tend to be places where individuals from different backgrounds mix freely, creating an air of kinship. Those who indulge in the magical food and drink gain temporary magical effects such as the ability to better discern when lies are being told, decreased anxiety when performing, or a heightened sense of smell, taste, sight, or hearing.



Rank	Responsibilities
Tapper <sup>1</sup>	Learning the craft of brewing and alchemy from higher-ranking members
Boiler <sup>1</sup>	Making contacts and collecting information about powerful individuals and factions
Fermenter <sup>2</sup>	Creating magical potions and beverages to sell, facilitating and educating Brewers
Keeper of the Hall <sup>2</sup>	Managing the business side of the guild, selling products, buying and building guild halls
Master Brewer <sup>3</sup>	Overseeing the brewing of both mundane and magical beverages
Distiller <sup>3</sup>	Managing agents working for the guild and overseeing security for guild summits
Toastmaster <sup>3</sup>	Arranging summits and facilitating meetings between individuals and factions
Bearer of the Paddle <sup>4</sup>	Managing the guild and overseeing the progress of the guild's overall plan for peace

1 - low rank, 2 - medium rank, 3 - high rank, 4 - leader

#### ◆ TRANSPORTATION

Thanks to the guild's trade network, which distributes its brews and beverages across the Mortal Realm, the Society of Benevolent Brewers is incredibly well-connected when it comes to transportation networks. People approved by the guild can be issued transportation papers that allow them to hitch rides on sailing ships, hire horses at discounted rates, and even enjoy free rides on airships. The guild's transportation networks are always faster than traveling on foot.

## WONDROUS WARES

The Society of Benevolent Brewers has items that speak to both sides of the guild's interests. It has alchemical equipment that allows its members to continue to brew amazing potions and drinks, as well as wondrous items that help facilitate diplomacy and deal-making.

#### ◆ BREWER'S PADDLE - 2,500 GP (RARE)

These wooden paddles are around the same length as a spade, and are typically made of wood that is decorated with engravings or inlaid precious stones. A *brewer's paddle* typically has six charges that can be used to turn ordinary vials of water into beverages or potions of common or uncommon rarity, depending on the skill of the user. Once the paddle's charges have been used up, it cannot be used again until the following dawn. Expending the last charge of the paddle runs the risk of turning it into dust. These paddles can also be used as improvised clubs.

#### ◆ EVERFILLED EWER - 250 GP (UNCOMMON)

These jade receptacles are designed to be filled with wine or another non-magical beverage. In addition to purifying the liquid poured into them—thus removing any traces of poison, disease, or contamination—they also amplify the taste of the drink to best show off its characteristic and unique tastes. Furthermore, once a drink has been poured into the ewer, the ewer will not run out of the drink for the next 24 hours. These ewers are often used at guild meetings, where they eliminate the potential for underhanded poisonings or druggings, and can be used to pour drinks for the entire event. Magical liquids with significant effects, such as potions of health or flight, are not affected by the ewer, but many of the guild's signature drinks are.

#### ◆ CAPE OF PACIFICATION - 5,000 GP (RARE)

These flowing silk capes are beautiful to behold and highly prized among guild members. Their threads are imbued with a magical enchantment that promotes peace, as shown in the embroidery that depicts people embracing, shaking hands, and other acts of friendship. The capes are enchanted with the ability to force their wearers to avoid any kind of harmful action against any other living creature while they are being worn, while also making the wearer immune to non-magical damage for a short period of time. This forces the wearer to negotiate with their opponent

rather than fight. Additionally, speaking a command word can turn this enchantment into an aura, affecting those around the wearer and spreading the peaceful spell.

#### ◆ MINIATURE DISTILLERY - 45,000 GP (VERY RARE)

The more advanced brewers in the guild are gifted with a magical carrying case that can be opened up and unfolded to reveal a miniature brewing and distilling apparatus. This spectacular apparatus allows skilled brewers to create alcoholic beverages in just a few hours, instead of the more typical timespan of days, months, or even years. Furthermore, it allows the user to apply one magical effect to the brew. The magical effect must enhance negotiation or oratory skills in some manner, including effects such as "enhances the drinker's wisdom or charisma" or "enhances the drinker's performance skills."

#### ◆ RING OF GIFTS - 500 GP (UNCOMMON)

These rings are made of precious metals and are typically engraved with open hands in a chain around their circumference. The wearer of such a ring can flourish their hands or reach into a pocket and pull out a small gift or trinket worth 50 gp or less that a chosen person would enjoy. The ring magically determines the gift, not the user. This ability can only be used once per day, and the gift cannot be a piece of equipment, a magic item, or any item with significant utility. The ring can't be used to give the user a gift.

#### ◆ QUILL OF PACTS - 250,000 GP (LEGENDARY)

Formed from feathers willingly donated by celestials, these magical quills can be used to create magically binding agreements. Once two or more mortal, sentient creatures have willingly signed an agreement written by the quill, the signers are bound to obey the terms of the contract. If any of the signers breach the contract, the quill reduces the offender's maximum hit points (or equivalent) to one and removes their ability to cast spells or manifest magical effects.



# QUESTS

The guild offers both its members and outsiders an opportunity to use their oratory and persuasive skills to influence the world through wit rather than brawn. Joining or serving with the guild usually entails all-expenses-paid travel to many parts of the world to speak with key figures, which also means visiting new, exotic locations.

## KINGDOM IN CRISIS

After a recent spate of bad rulership, the kingdom of *Cinfair* is in dire straits. The newly crowned *King Remus the Inheritor* has enacted new laws that prevent certain races from owning businesses, walking the streets of major cities at night, and learning magic. Those persecuted by these laws have begun to rebel against King Remus, and the clashes between the rebels and the crown have escalated almost to the point of civil war. In addition, the instability in Cinfair has caused some of its more ruthless neighbors to plan invasions to annex parts of the kingdom. The Society of Benevolent Brewers is looking for agents to help broker a meeting between the rebels and the king, but any attempt at forging peace will have to overcome both sides' mutual mistrust. Upon speaking to both sides, the agents may learn that Remus was pressured into passing the new laws to legitimize his claim to the throne by several powerful nobles, while the rebels are torn between revolution and reconciliation.

## THE FAIREST OF ALL

The newest *Duke of Guennec* has recently come of age, and has attracted a bevy of suitors eager to tie their families to his noble line. While the duke's mother is distracted with running the territory and her advisors are trying hard to keep the rest of the kingdom's ambitious nobles in line, the duke has been left to his own devices to choose whom he would like to court. Thankfully, he has asked for the advice of his closest friend, *Ambrose Sertran*, a member of the Society of Benevolent Brewers. Ambrose needs a group of experienced investigators to examine the duke's suitors and discover which of them may be a good fit for the duke and the realm, and which ones are hiding secret agendas.

Over the course of their inquiries, the investigators might discover that hidden among the ranks of eligible matches are doppelgangers posing as suitors, courtiers seeking to further their own families' goals of conquest, succubi or fey trying to enthrall mortals for their own ends, or even infernal admirers who wish to bear demonic children with noble blood. Whatever the case, the guild asks the investigators to avoid any bloodshed and report back to Ambrose so that he can properly advise the duke.

## GUARDIANS OF THE VASTELM EXPANSE

The mercantile rulers of the city-state *Jartalan* want to cut a road through the nearby *Vastelm Expanse*, an ancient forest filled with flourishing wildlife and ancient monuments. They're hoping that the new road will facilitate trade with the neighboring city of *Visona*,

which is recovering from a foul plague. Currently, all trade must occur by circumnavigating the forest, which takes up to five times as long as cutting right through the Expanse would. Unfortunately, the forest is occupied by a group of owlfolk, who have discovered the city-state's plans for the road and realized that it cuts through the heart of one of their sacred groves. The owlfolk have protested against the plans, but Jartalan's leaders have decided to begin working on the road regardless.

Infuriated by the decision, the owlfolk have taken matters into their own hands. Recently, they captured a group of explorers who were supposed to survey the forest and have announced that they will fight against any builders. Now, the *Burnished Army* of Jartalan has been amassed and is preparing to launch an armed expedition into the Vastelm Expanse to recover the captives.

The Society of Benevolent Brewers is looking to intervene. They'd need to seek out the owlfolk of the Vastelm Expanse, negotiate for the release of the hostages, convince the Burnished Army not to enter the forest, and find a new, alternative path for the road that is acceptable to both Jartalan's rulers and the owlfolk.

## DECRY THE DEMAGOGUE

The Society of Benevolent Brewers has heard rumors that a rebellious demagogue is rallying the citizens of the Cezaro Republic to overthrow the current government in order to install a strong dictatorship that appeals to the more base desires of the populace. The Brewers are sending their own rhetoricians and public speakers to protest peacefully against the demagogue's message and try to spread rationalism and sense throughout the republic, but they need someone specific to face the demagogue himself in a public debate. The outcome of the debate could decide the fate of the republic, since whoever wins over the crowd will have the advantage.

The guild is only willing to send one of its own members on this quest, so it is best suited for parties who already have a high-ranking member of the Society among their number. The chosen speaker will be provided with a range of magical beverages that should increase their public speaking abilities and enhance their confidence.

Unfortunately, when the speaker and the rest of the party arrive, they find that a rebellion is practically already underway. The elected speaker must meet with the demagogue and do what they can to defeat them in a battle of wits and rhetoric, thus convincing the populace to turn away from the populist firebrand. While the debate is taking place, however, some fanatically devoted zealots will seek to assassinate the elected speaker. The other party members must do what they can to thwart the assassination attempt, preferably without revealing the action taking place so that the audience's attention is not distracted from the debate.

# THE COMPANY OF LIVING TALES

Wealth	⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
Resources	💧 💧 💧 💧
Defense	♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥
Authority	⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡
Services	Enhancements, Lore, Performances
Disfavored	Barbarians, Clerics, Wizards
Favored	Bards, Sorcerers, Warlocks

*As the bard played their kora and sang the sagas of old, we could see her—there before our eyes was brave Amara Starheart with her spear of searing light, facing down the beast Shadowmane. We felt the lion's claws rake our chests as she did, and the rush of victory as she struck it down.*

— Negasi Senai, hero of Adansonia

**T**he Company of Living Tales is a traveling band of bards and storytellers that collects stories and draws on their wondrous characters, eternal themes, and epic plots to weave spells, magically bringing these tales to life through music, narration, song, dance, and more. The powers that the Company draws from these stories vary from summoning spectral characters to bestowing the legendary abilities of heroes upon others. The guild's members grant these powers to themselves or to their listeners, allowing them to carry on the valorous legacies of those tales.

The guild believes that all stories told throughout the world are based on a few primordial archetypes, with the most important being the “hero of many masks,” who embodies heroism, self-sacrifice, and bravery. The members of the guild aspire to embody the traits of this quintessential hero, and identify themselves with one of the character's many avatars to perform amazing feats.

The guild mainly operates in rural areas, where they can collect a cornucopia of folklore from many different cultures, especially stories that have never been recorded in scrolls or books. They use the power drawn from these tales to protect common folk, including those who cannot seek safety behind stout walls or castles. However, the guild also travels to cities and large settlements to put on performances, court patrons, and deal with threats, such as wandering monsters or even insidious cults.



While some members of the Company focus primarily on preserving stories and passing on the oral traditions they discover, others see themselves as wandering protectors whose talents are best used to fight against evil. Others see bloodshed and violence as secondary to inspiring those who see their performances and deeds—indeed, instilling the idea that anyone can be a hero in the hearts and minds of common people may prove to be a more powerful force for good than simply killing a vampire or driving off a mischievous fey.

## WANDERING GUARDIANS

Because guild members usually wander from place to place, they use their time on the road to collect rumors and news from other travelers, especially reports of threats or dangers to nearby settlements. Regardless of their preference for inspiring crowds or preserving tales, no member of the guild will hesitate to rush to the aid of a village or outpost. Once they've arrived, guild members use their unique repertoire of stories to help in any way they can: some may use a recitation of the *Miracle of the Unicorn* to heal injuries, while others may take on the fearsome might and heightened senses of the legendary blind swordsman *Zatuan* to face down a predatory drake or a horde of undead.

The way that a guild member evokes their chosen story varies widely: some use spoken words, while

others recite key passages from a song or play a string of notes that form a motif for a certain character. Still others make no sound, and instead perform a dance that evokes the movements of the hero that they're trying to call upon. Some prefer more unorthodox methods—a guild member may carry two swords and clash them together to make a ringing sound, mimicking the sound of battle to call forth a spectral warrior.

## PROTECTING STORIES

As well as protecting people, the Company of Living Tales seeks to protect stories. It aims to preserve oral traditions in all of their forms, and to create living libraries of tales, songs, stories, musical compositions, and poems that will inspire generation after generation. The Company does not discriminate between cultures or content, instead valuing the stories for their own sake. The members of the guild know that if no one remembers a story, its power is lost forever, and this is an especially grave prospect when the guild can use those stories to save lives. The burden of every lost tale is a great weight on guild members, and for this reason, members of the guild continually practice pieces from memory, storing dozens to hundreds of songs and stories in their ingenious minds.

For the guild's members, the process of collecting and protecting stories is one filled with adventure: it involves traveling across the world, or even the realms and planes, in search of those with stories to tell. These might include ageless elves, ancient dwarf lords, cunning fey, or even inscrutable elementals, but what matters most to the guild are the age-old patterns and new twists that link stories to one another in a grand tapestry of myth. Seeking out these stories is often dangerous, but the Company's members are more than willing to risk their lives to make sure they're brought back to the guild.

## POWERFUL PERFORMANCES

The guild doesn't specialize in a single type of performance; instead, members are encouraged to pursue any art that fills them with inspiration and gives them the ability to evoke feelings in others. This includes more common forms of performance such as dance, song, and poetry, but also includes more obscure and exotic arts such as shadow puppetry. When a member of the Company of Living Tales yells a description of a charging tarrasque, their audience sees it manifest before them in a swirling illusion of magical dust. They might even feel the fear of the beast stir up their guts, or find their skin covered in armor just like the tarrasque of the tale.

When a guild musician plucks their mbira and sings the tale of *Akuziem the Wise*, the audience can see the old woman's face in the stars above their heads, and hear her sage advice in their ears. The enchantments bestowed by performances of the stories leave the audience better prepared for what is to come; whatever threat their community faces, the guild's performers know the best tale to help them overcome it. Because all members are

## ENNIA IRANAPHA

AGE: 563 RACE: Elf

GENDER: Female

OCCUPATION: Guild Leader, Bard

SPECIALTY: Magical Companions, Enchantments

**I**dealistic, brave, and bright as a beam of sunshine, Ennia Iranapha has been the Head Chorister of the Company of Living Tales for almost two centuries. Since she joined the Company in her youth, she has spent her time traveling the world and seeking out the far-flung members of the guild to learn from them, as well as adding to her vast collection of stories, many of which feature elven heroines. Beloved by people and animals alike, she has earned the nickname *Lady Goldenrod*.

Despite her bubbly personality, Ennia has serious plans for the Company: she wants every guild member to cultivate an oeuvre of stories that allows them to heal, fight, inspire, and empower. In addition, Ennia wants the guild to take a stronger role in promoting peace and understanding between kingdoms and countries by exchanging tales between them. Ennia strongly believes in the power of folklore and stories to bring people together, and hopes that telling tales from other lands will reveal the hidden depths of those distant peoples to others. Ennia also wants to continue a personal quest—to live up to the heroines of her favorite elven stories and show the world that true heroism doesn't exist only in tales, but within each and every person.

◆ **SUNKEN CITY:** Ennia has uncovered some ancient elven texts that hint at the existence of a society of aquatic elves that lived in the *Taraxian Gulf*. The texts speak of an immense library in the underwater city, and Ennia wants to find it.

◆ **THREATENED TALES:** The *Kad'Jurai* people of the *Aldrave Slopes* have a rich oral tradition that has not yet been studied by the guild. Unfortunately, the *Kad'Jurai* do not trust outsiders, so Ennia wants to find a way to earn their trust. While Ennia prefers to take a diplomatic approach to conflict, she understands that not everything can be solved through words. In battle, she uses enchantment magic to stun or hypnotize her foes, and summons battle companions from her stories.

◆ **CLOAK OF LEGENDS:** The tales that Ennia has collected are magically woven into her cloak. She can use this cloak to summon spectral figures from the tales, and generally favors a powerful unicorn named *Andrenath*.

expected to have a vast mental library of stories, there can be no doubt that they'll find the right tale for the right circumstance; it's no good telling *The Chronicle of Ser Filgrim Against the Underdrake* to a community that is fending off an undead horde—the mournful *Temple's Lament* would be a far better choice. There is no chance of succumbing to fear in the face of giant spiders when the courageous battle cry of *Gi Ho-Sook, Slayer of Wyrms* rings in one's ears. Furthermore, the tales inspire people to overcome troubles themselves, taking up the mantle of hero after hearing one of the guild's songs or stories. These inspired folk may be imbued with magical powers such as supernatural strength, water manipulation, or flight.



the true story of their life. Due to the incredible power of their stories, Weaver does not carry weapons—instead, they rely on the arms and armor evoked through their tales.

### ☀️ **POTS AND PANS (FEMALE TABAXI BARD)**

A Virtuoso percussionist, Pots and Pans (or “Pots,” as she’s known to her friends) is one of the guild’s most talented performers. She can put her paws to any percussion instrument, from the humble bongo to the novel vibraphone.

Pots and Pans has incredible musical talent, and is able to perform magical feats with her thrilling music. However,

Pots and Pans doesn’t have the questing spirit that many other members have.

Instead, she travels from one guild music hall to the next, teaching new recruits the fundamentals of music, or taking on talented magic users who

need tutoring in music to unlock their full potential as bards. Pots and Pans is a severe teacher, and has a bad habit of drumming on anything she can get her hands on, no matter the situation. She’s a highly valued member of the guild, and one of Ennia Iranapha’s oldest friends. Her dream is to train up as many new members as she can, especially in the unique percussion techniques that she has learned by spending time with legendary creatures, such as the chime-playing couatl of the *Jungles of Xeldrathin* and the hammer-wielding efreeti percussionists of the *Theatre of Blazing Bronze* in the Elemental Realm of Fire. She regularly checks in with her old students to see how they’re getting along, and to hone their skills even further.

## NOTABLE GUILD MEMBERS

The Company of Living Tales attracts musicians, storytellers, poets, bards, and performers of all varieties, as well as chroniclers and scholars who record their music, stories, and performances.

### ☀️ **TARTRAN “WEAVER” ELDERWATER (NONBINARY HALFLING STORYTELLER)**

Well-traveled and well-known, Tartran “Weaver” Elderwater is one of the oldest guild members. They know a huge variety of tales from many cultures, but specialize in tales of halfling origin. The small folk are not often thought of as brave, but Weaver wishes to show what they’re really like by collecting tales of halfling heroism. Although Weaver has no musical talent, they are perhaps the best storyteller alive today. Their words are so captivating that one cannot help but fall into the tale, imagination set aflame with inspiration. In addition, Weaver truly manifests the characters in the stories they tell as their appearance changes to reflect the halfling heroes of ancient times. For example, when they become *Elistree Hillbrow*, their hair grows long and their face feminine, and their biceps grow immensely, reflecting Elistree’s immense arm-wrestling strength, which she used to beat *Braggand the Fire Giant* and save her home from volcanic destruction. When Weaver becomes *Aeden Underfurrow*, their eyebrows grow to a bizarre length and their footsteps become silent as they tell the tale of Aeden stealing from the *Halls of the Hell-Spitting Hydra*.

Weaver is enamored with studying the quintessential “hero of many masks,” and believes that they were a real person whose grave must be somewhere in the Mortal Realm. It is their life’s goal to discover the hero’s identity and uncover

### ☀️ **USHGAR THO (MALE HALF-ORC CHRONICLER)**

Ushgar Tho is an aged scholar and chronicler of tales and songs who has worked with the Company since he was a young man. He was once one of the best poets in the land: there wasn’t a soul alive who wouldn’t be moved to tears by his words. Unfortunately, as Ushgar has grown old, his performances have faltered. At one time, Ushgar was capable of reciting a sonnet that would allow anyone who heard it to enter a mythical land of chivalry and noble knights for a short time, or could deliver a haiku so sublime that for a time, listeners would be able to hear the music of nature itself, which granted knowledge of growing things and the cycles of weather. Ushgar fears that rather than old age, something sinister is interfering with his abilities. He suspects some aberrant influence from the Realm of Dreams, as he has recently been plagued by nightmares of a haunting realm of twisting forms. Despite his troubles, Ushgar is a jovial old fellow with a soft smile and gentle eyes. He has not lost any of his eloquence in his old age, and is as devilishly charming now as he was in his youth.

## GUILD RANKS

The Company of Living Tales is a loose-knit organization with little need for, or desire to have, a hierarchy. For ease of reference, members are given different titles depending on which services they provide within the guild.

RANK	RESPONSIBILITIES
Wanderer <sup>1</sup>	Studying and learning tales, recording and bringing new stories to the guild
Trouper <sup>1</sup>	Conducting performances to raise funds for the guild, inspiring common people with tales
Chorister <sup>2</sup>	Teaching Wanderers and Troupers, making instruments, coordinating members
Teller of Tales <sup>2</sup>	Defending settlements, rallying people to causes, raising funds from performances
Chronicler <sup>2</sup>	Archiving tales and songs, studying their history and meaning, passing them on
Songblade <sup>3</sup>	Fighting dangerous enemies, rallying towns or cities, seeking out threats
Virtuoso <sup>3</sup>	Conducting master-level performances to inspire audiences and raise funds for the guild
Living Library <sup>3</sup>	Memorizing hundreds of songs and stories to teach to others, tutoring Virtuosos
Head Chorister <sup>4</sup>	Overseeing the guild's collection of tales, directing the efforts of members, forging alliances with other organizations

1 - low rank, 2 - medium rank, 3 - high rank, 4 - leader

## SERVICES

The Company of Living Tales tends to give its services away for free to those in need, and is thus rather poor in comparison to other guilds. Any money that it does make, including funds from performances, is passed on to guild members to help them pay for their travels, new instruments, and other needs.

### ◆ ENCHANTMENTS

The guild offers powerful, temporary boons from a chosen story in exchange for a fee. The client might already have a story in mind, or perhaps a boon that they wish to receive. In the latter case, the performer themselves can choose a story that they know best fits the bill. These enchantments typically last for several days, and can produce effects like spectral companions,

augmentations such as flight or water breathing, magical abilities such as fire breathing or x-ray vision, or more minor enchantments like resistance to fear or charm.

### ◆ CUSTOM SAGA

For an enormous fee, the guild is willing to create new tales or songs based on the true deeds of heroic characters and adventurers. This is typically a long process that involves interviews, research, and hundreds of hours of practice and performance. At the end of the long, expensive process, the commissioner ends up with a heroic, real-life story in music, poetry, or prose that reflects the subject's amazing deeds in life. Every time the story is repeated by someone else, the commissioner is granted a magical benefit, boon, or enchantment that bolsters their abilities.

### ◆ PERFORMANCES

The most common way for the guild to raise funds is to put on large-scale performances or to hire out performers to do private shows. The fees for these range from donations to thousands of gp for advanced private performances. Higher end performances usually involve bestowing temporary magical boons on the audience, who are likely to never have witnessed such a show in their lives. Performances can range from musical to theatrical, and encompass the wide range of talented performers in the guild.

### ◆ PERFORMER TRAINING

The Company of Living Tales offers training in storytelling, instrumentation, and dancing to outsiders as part of its income streams. This training spans the range of talent from introductory workshops designed for younger individuals to dedicated solo lessons for Virtuosos and budding master performers. The cost of training depends on the level of education required.

### ◆ COSTUMES & INSTRUMENTS

Some guild members can create custom costumes, such as hats, jackets, clothes, masks, boots, and so on for performers who want magical or outlandish outfits. These outfits might merely be brightly colored costumes for audiences to marvel at, but they could also be imbued with enchantments that increase a juggler's dexterity, or help a singer's voice carry across a crowd. Other members of the guild can craft custom instruments, including magical ones. These instruments sell for a high price, as they are some of the finest in the Mortal Realm.



## GLORIOUS GIFTS

Items used by the Company of Living Tales include musical instruments empowered by magical enchantments, the *cloak of chronicles* worn by every member, and other performance-enhancing items that are sure to leave crowds breathless.

### ◆ CLOAK OF CHRONICLES - 5,000 GP (RARE)

Every member of the guild is given a *cloak of chronicles* upon joining. These colorful cloaks are a sight to behold: they are made of silk, which is then woven into visual representations of the stories that their owners know. The owner may call on characters, objects, or themes of those stories to grant different magical effects, such as gaining a phantasmal ally, a magical item, or a temporary resistance. While worn, a performer can't forget a tale or song that they've performed at least three times before. Any spells or magical abilities that are drawn from the stories represented on the cloaks last for at least 24 hours, and can be cast multiple times.

### ◆ INSTRUMENT OF ENRAPTURING - 35,000 GP (VERY RARE)

These magical instruments are typically played by Virtuosos within the guild, but they are also available for purchase or commission from non-members. An *instrument of enrapturing* can have magical effects on those who hear its songs; the greater the number of audience members, the more elaborate and powerful the effect.

It's said that each instrument possesses a magical "muse" that gives it a unique sound and predisposes it toward certain types of magic: a gentle muse may be more adept at healing and protection magic, for example. An instrument's muse may change over time to match the personality and specialties of its wielder, sometimes becoming so strong that it gains its own voice and the ability to play without its wielder.

### ◆ RESONANT DRUM - 380 GP (UNCOMMON)

These hand drums are decorated with lapis lazuli and gold, and are usually worn on a shoulder strap. They usually depict elaborate scenes of heroism on their sides, and the drumhead is often made from the hide of a rare or powerful animal. As an action, the user can tap out a drumbeat using this item, which causes a magical effect that lasts for as long as the user's playing is uninterrupted. Each friendly creature who can hear the beat has their spellcasting enhanced in a manner chosen by the user: spells might double their duration, do extra damage, or affect more creatures.

### ◆ MUSIC BOX - 5,000 GP (RARE)

The guild crafts magical music boxes that can record the voice of its user. They are typically made from finely carved wood that contains a clockwork mechanism. The boxes can also be used to record singing, playing,

performing, or speaking that makes up the vocal portion of a spell. The music box can then play its recording back to mimic the user's voice or cast the vocal component of a spell recorded this way. Casting a spell while the same spell is being "played" by the music box enhances the spell by increasing its effects, targets, or save difficulty. Other components for the spell must still be provided, even if the vocal component is covered by the music box.

### ◆ PERFORMER'S PAVILION - 7,500 GP (VERY RARE)

What first appears to be a brightly-colored cloth disc is, in fact, an entire circus-like tent stored within a magical extradimensional space. The disc can be placed on the ground and a command word spoken to summon the tent from the space, where it rapidly expands to form a pop-up tent that can house up to twenty people. The interior walls of the tent display the background descriptions of a song or story, such as a haunted moor, a giant battle, or an opulent mansion. These backgrounds change as a performer enacts their part, making their performance even more enrapturing, and this gives them the ability to charm the audience inside.

### ◆ MASK OF THE PRIMORDIAL HERO - 100,000 GP (LEGENDARY)

This magical, ancient mask once belonged to an archetypal hero whom the guild holds high as a paragon of heroic action. The mask allows its wearer to fully embody a heroic figure from history, myth, or folklore, including the figure to whom the mask originally belonged. While embodying the heroic individual, the wearer can take on one of four archetypes: the Martyr, the Sage, the Trickster, or the Warrior. Each has its own positive effects on the user and any allies within medium range. The Martyr prevents those creatures from dying, the Sage gives advantage on knowledge checks, the Trickster creates illusory duplicates of each affected creature, and the Warrior boosts each affected creature's combat ability.

## QUESTS

Members of the Company usually undertake missions alone, but will accept help from adventurers. The guild takes on all manner of quests, from heroic deeds worthy of song to long journeys to remote locales threatened by bandits. No matter the issue, if the common folk need help, the guild's members will ride.

## SONGSTEALER

A marauding aberration from the Outer Dark has been summoned by the evil *Cult of the Nine Verses* into the Mortal Realm. This aberration, known as *Ekphrasis the Tongue Taker*, grows in power and presence as more rumors and stories are told about it. Ekphrasis also takes on new forms and abilities based on these

rumors and fears. The cult, which originated in the city of *Meladonia*, summoned the aberration with stories of its ability to steal memories and trap people in their minds. Fortunately, Meladonia also holds the amazing emporium known as the *House of Harmony*, and it was *Mina Forte*, the proprietor, who brought the Company's attention to the cult and its aberrant patron. Now, the guild must work fast to defend the city against the aberration. While Ekphrasis gets stronger by the day, spreading rumors like a living story, the guild must thwart the cult and annihilate the spawn of the entity. Only once the cult has been despatched can the being be taken on—an immense challenge for the guild's members, as they can't be sure that their storytelling magic won't be consumed by Ekphrasis as soon as it is cast.

### TRAPPED TALES

A strange building has been uncovered beneath the *Sands of Despair*: a scrollarium previously lost to time and now haunted by specters and shadows. The great desert is an inhospitable place, but the buried library is sure to be a goldmine of tales and stories from eons past. The Company is looking for willing adventurers to escort its members to the Sands of Despair, help them recover as many sagas from the scrollarium as possible, and ensure that they make it out alive.

The Bazaar of Markoon is the best place to find a guide, but several gangs and arcane cabals are also searching for the scrollarium. A notorious criminal ring called the *Gallowcutters* believes that the place is filled with treasure, and is trying to murder or intimidate anyone seeking it. Meanwhile, *The Arcane Order of Crimson Souls* has a detachment of dangerous mages already en route. They hope to uncover lost magic within the scrollarium, and won't give up anything from the place without a fight. The adventurers must avoid the Gallowcutters, overcome the mages of the Crimson Souls, and then sneak or fight their way past the undead lingering in the scrollarium if they are to be successful.

### THE HORDE ADVANCES

A demonic horde straight from the depths of the Abyssal Realm is sweeping its way across the wilderness toward major hubs of civilization. While the large cities should be able to defend themselves from the demons with

their immense armies and store enough provisions to see them through a years-long siege, the smaller communities in rural locales seem to have been forgotten by the nation's rulers. Three settlements, *Ironholme*, *Greenmeadow*, and *Finestral*, are particularly under threat.

The guild will be spread too thin if it tries to defend all three settlements at once with its available members, so some members have set out to find new demon-slaying stories with which to empower the residents against the scions of the abyss. This might involve visiting ancient temples to uncover sagas of old demon slayers, making pacts with celestials for heavenly odes to demonic destruction, or delving into other realms of existence in search of forgotten tales of defeating demons. Once half a dozen or so of these stories and songs have been amassed, the guild members can ride out to the threatened settlements in time to bolster their populaces with performances, and then stay to help them fight off the demonic hordes.

### SHATTERED LEGEND

After discovering that the hero of a certain tale does not properly manifest when called upon, the Company feels that it must investigate. The story from which the hero emerges is one that depicts a clash between a tyrant and a rebel. The guild has long believed that the rebel is the true hero of the story, but due to the failing manifestation, there are doubts about the tale's authenticity. In order to uncover the truth of this well-known tale, members of the guild must undertake historical detective work, such as visiting the key sites of the tale, inspecting key items (like weapons and altars) held in vaults or museums, and speaking to the descendants of the individuals involved in the tale. Through this historical research, it is revealed that the supposed villain was not evil at all, but was painted as such by the supposed "hero" of the tale—in truth, the rebel was the real villain.



In order to confirm this for certain, the party is given the opportunity to travel into the Mythosphere, a plane of myth and legend where stories and tales can play out before the eyes of mortals. While in the Mythosphere, the party members will be fully immersed in the story, which means that they run the risk of being injured there just as they would in the Mortal Realm. It is then up to the party to decide who is the true hero of the story.

# THE DRACONIC SMITHS

Wealth	⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
Resources	● ● ● ● ●
Defense	● ● ● ● ●
Authority	⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡
Services	Magic Item Crafting, Enchanting
Disfavored	Rogues, Dragonslayers, Druids
Favored	Artificers, Paladins, Fighters, Dwarves, Dragonborn



*Anyone who has felt the searing heat of a dragon's fire knows the magical power of these ancient wyrms. Contained within them is untapped potential for creation. Instead of fighting dragons, we work together with them to create glorious items whose worth is measured not in gold, but in greatness.*

— Ungrok, Master Smith

**F**or centuries, the Draconic Smiths have worked with dragons to craft masterworks of magic and might, whether they're weapons that can split the sky or suits of armor fit for battle against world-ending titans. The Smiths lend these wondrous artifacts to heroes, but only if those heroes can first prove themselves worthy. Today, the Smiths continue to search for new dragons to bring into the fold, and to recover their lost masterpieces from the battlefields where their wielders made the ultimate sacrifice.

The guild's crafting mastery comes from lifetimes of experience passed down by its members, as well as secret techniques taught by the dragons themselves; even the guild's greatest artisans acknowledge that dragons understand fire better than any mortal. On the other hand, members of the Smiths are some of the few mortals that dragons treat with respect, trust, and even reverence. This is partly because members of the Smiths are among the only mortals brave, wise, and patient enough to become the dragons' peers, but also due to the Smiths' willingness to lay down their lives to defend their draconic guildmates. According to legend, the Smiths' true genesis came when *Dulzon the Enduring*, a Dwarven lord, was exiled from his kingdom due to his oath of friendship with the dragon *Altarnas, Lord of Firewyrms*.

Each of the Smiths' guild halls has a dragon in residence to provide magical flames for its forges, known as wyrmforges, as well as anvils and exotic tools used to sculpt metal, stone, and even gems. The guild's halls are always outfitted with an elaborate vault, where the mythical items that they create can be safely stored. Members are fiercely protective of their resident dragon and their vault, and will fight to the death to keep them from falling into the wrong hands. However, despite being a guild composed mainly of craftspeople, the Smiths boast a sizable number of warriors and explorers. These members are sent on quests to retrieve lost items created by the Smiths, recruit new dragons to the guild, and protect their draconic guild members from threats... or corrupting influences.

## ANCIENT ALLIES

Since the ancient beginnings of the Draconic Smiths, the guild's members have worked hand in hand to create mythical works with the power to change the course of history. The first members of the guild sought out dragons to learn from them, but both sides soon realized that they were stronger together: the guild could craft works of power whose like had never been seen before, and the dragons could rely on their new allies when threatened by dire enemies, such as rival dragons, abominations from beyond the stars, or powerful warriors who lusted after their treasure. Since then, the collaboration between the

guild and its dragons has been as strong as steel: some dragons might pledge themselves to a particular forge, where they serve for as many years as they desire. Other times, the Smiths' explorers seek out young dragons to convince them to join the guild, promising fellowship, protection, and even treasure to add to their hoard.

Although the dragons that have joined the Smiths have come to share the guild's desire to protect the world from cataclysmic threats, there are some outside the guild who feel uncomfortable with the Smiths' association with these powerful creatures. Many still suffer under the cruelty of wild dragons, and there are some who believe that the guild has betrayed their humanoid kin in exchange for unbridled power.

## MYTHIC MASTERWORKS

Items forged in the heat of a dragon's fire take on remarkable new properties that are truly mythic. Any master smith or enchanter can create a flaming sword, but only the Draconic Smiths know how to create a blade that burns hot enough to sear the flesh of devils or melt through the side of a mountain. Of course, not all of the items that the guild creates are fiery—the guild can make staves that draw in lightning strikes and unleash them on their foes in immense crackling arcs, or armor that can withstand a meteor strike.

These magic items are never sold or given away. Instead, they are loaned out to heroes in order to prevent cataclysmic events, such as demonic invasions or the rise of a dark god. In order to be bestowed the honor of wielding one of these items, a hero must show themselves to be working for the forces of good in the world, be in possession of an incorruptible soul, and be unlikely to ever be tempted by power or dominion over others. The humanoid members of the guild are not the only judges of these qualities—the dragon who helped forge the item may also be called on to assess a potential hero's worth, and their standards may be even more exacting. Once the danger has passed, the guild calls on the hero to return the item.

## AGENTS OF THE SMITHS

Although many members of the Draconic Smiths are craftspeople, the guild also employs explorers and warriors. These members undertake two main tasks, the first of which is to recover items created by the guild that have been lost. These might lie with their fallen wielders in darkened ruins, or sit in the ritual chamber of a lich who now uses it for their own ends. Naturally, these warriors and explorers might have to undertake enormous journeys across the realms, or even planes, to recover such items, which can be the work of a lifetime. Sometimes, however, the guild's warriors must reclaim their items from living wielders who have misused them, or who refuse to return them after their work is done. The wrath of the Smiths toward these tainted heroes is fearsome indeed, and may involve sending a flight of dragons to retrieve these items.

## BARAGAD FLAMESTRIKE, DRAGON SMITH

AGE: 224 RACE: Dwarf

GENDER: Nonbinary

OCCUPATION: Guild Leader, Master Smith

SPECIALTY: Magic Item Crafting, Draconic Lore

It was clear during Baragad's teenage years that they would be a superb smith, likely to rival their mentor within a few decades. However, one day, their dwarven hold was attacked by a warband of mountain trolls seeking treasure. Desperate to save their home, Baragad plunged their hand into a pool of searing lava, where they gripped a magical warhammer that they had been imbuing with the power of flame. After single-handedly driving off the trolls, they dropped the hammer only to find their arm burned beyond repair. Soon after, a member of the Draconic Smiths came to Baragad to offer them a deal: if they joined the guild, then their arm would be restored.

Baragad is stoic and slow to anger, two traits that have endeared them to wise, centuries-old dragons and allows them to deal with even the most stubborn and prideful drakes. Baragad forged an enduring friendship with the young Asperix, now one of the oldest and wisest living dragons. After years of adventure and deep conversations, Baragad became Asperix's trusted friend and ally, which caused the dragon to encourage other dragons to join the guild. That generation of dragons is now retiring or finding new paths, leading Baragad to seek out new drakes to carry on the guild's legacy.

◆ **DESTRUCTIVE DECOMMISSION:** Recently, Baragad created a magic item of such power that they feel it cannot be granted to mortals. Baragad seeks to entrust the item to loyal guild members who can find a way to destroy the item in secret.

◆ **HEFT OF THE HAMMER:** Although Baragad strives to find peaceful resolutions to most conflicts, they are a stout and tireless warrior whose skill with a battlehammer is truly fearsome—they can knock even towering enemies prone and stun those of lesser stature.

◆ **WYRMSEEKERS:** Baragad knows of a young white dragon named *Frostfear* who has been growing more and more wild and destructive as it ages. Baragad fears that the dragon might become truly cruel and dangerous if left to its own devices, and wants to persuade it to join the guild to save it from that fate.

✦ **MASTER OF THE FORGE:** Baragad is unrivalled among the Smiths. They have the ability to create magical items that are terrifyingly powerful or uniquely wondrous, though the more complicated or mighty the item, the longer it takes for them to craft it.

The second function of these members is to recruit new dragons and protect those who have joined the Smiths. Because they are often called upon to persuade dragons to leave their own lairs and defend others from all manner of threats, these members are usually clever orators and veteran warriors, as well as Wyrmspeakers of the guild. Some potential draconic recruits ask these guild members to provide gifts or undertake quests to prove their selflessness and valor, and it is these acts of friendship and loyalty that have made the Smiths stalwart allies of dragonkind.

## NOTABLE GUILD MEMBERS

The Draconic Smiths have a wide variety of members, ranging from artificers and forge-workers to noble warriors and seasoned explorers. In addition to its humanoid members, the guild also has draconic members who keep the guild's forges lit.

### ☀ **ASPERIX (MALE ADULT BRASS DRAGON)**

Asperix is a solemn dragon of immense age. He often takes the guise of a dwarf when walking the guild halls of the Draconic Smiths, though his fiery eyes and the lingering smell of smoke give him away. Like his dear friend Baragad, Asperix has been a member of the Draconic Smiths for over one hundred years. Asperix has been a resident of the *Cloudspear Mountain* guildhouse for decades, but also traveled across most of the known world in his youth. More recently, Asperix has made many journeys into the wilds to recruit other dragons, as well as trips into cities to convince their leaders to allow the guild to establish new chapters.

Asperix has a close relationship with Baragad, with whom his past is intertwined. The two regularly turn to one another for advice, and Asperix's knowledge of dragonkind has proven fundamental in bringing new wyrms into the fold. Despite his generally codgerly personality, Asperix has a wry sense of humor; he enjoys blasting new mortal members with a plume of hot smoke as an "initiation ceremony" to prepare them to work alongside his kin.

### ☀ **TIRRIE SOUNDBARROW (FEMALE HALFLING MASTER SMITH)**

Tirrie is considered by most to be the second most talented craftsperson in the Draconic Smiths, after Baragad. Despite her prowess, Tirrie is hard on herself about her skills, constantly reworking items again and again until they are

perfect. Some of the dragons that she works with find this trait tiresome, but luckily, Tirrie is a master of riddles, which these dragons love. She spends much of her spare time devising new riddles and researching old ones to keep the dragons she works with entertained. Because of her perfectionism, Tirrie can be quite dismissive if she's interrupted during her work, but is always keen to talk shop or swap riddles when she's not at the anvil.

Tirrie is short, as most halflings are, but is far stockier than others of her race. She's covered in scars and burns from working in the forge, and has opted to shave her head rather than continually end up burning off her hair. She normally wears a heavy apron when working, along with custom-made gauntlets and a forging helmet to protect her face. Tirrie also has numerous wooden facial piercings—metal ones would get too hot while she works.

### ☀ **EBER (FEMALE DRAGONBORN PALADIN)**

A long-serving member of the guild, Eber is a silver dragonborn of formidable size and strength. She is the guild's lead *Deep Delver*, responsible for planning and undertaking missions to recover missing or lost items that once belonged to the guild. Most guild members are in awe of Eber, whose tales of adventure and exploration never seem to run dry. Her favorite story is one from several decades ago—she and a party of adventurers were trying to recover *Amethyst's Fang*, a gemstone longsword capable of cutting through stone, from the hall of a sky giant when suddenly, the magic keeping the castle afloat failed. Her party had to race through the hall, find the magic sword, steal griffon mounts from the stable, and fly to freedom before the castle came crashing to the ground.

Eber can be stern and humorless with outsiders, especially adventurers who might also be after the item she's searching for. Because she's the guild's lead *Deep Delver*, adventurers are likely to come in contact with Eber if they are exploring dungeons or traveling through ancient battlefields. Despite her immense stature and imposing figure, Eber is kind-hearted and has a soft spot for small, cuddly creatures.



## GUILD RANKS

Ranking up in the Draconic Smiths can only be achieved through hard work and dedication, and by forming a close bond with a particular dragon. Apprentices of low rank are trained by higher-ranking members until they're skilled enough to strike out on their own.

Rank	Responsibilities
Metallurge <sup>1</sup>	Learning basic smithing techniques from a Hammerhand
Wyrmtongue <sup>1</sup>	Learning from and assisting Wyrmspeakers in their communication with dragons
Loresseeker <sup>1</sup>	Delving into the history of the guild to uncover lost items in need of recovery, as well as their locations
Scaleguard <sup>2</sup>	Protecting dragons from threats
Hammerhand <sup>2</sup>	Creating items for the guild, training Metallurges
Deep Delver <sup>2</sup>	Seeking out missing or lost magic items that belong to the guild
Wyrmspeaker <sup>3</sup>	Negotiating with draconic allies, recruiting new dragons into the guild
Master Flamesmith <sup>3</sup>	Creating magic items for the guild, assessing worthiness of heroes
Dragon Smith <sup>4</sup>	Creating truly mythical magic items for the guild, directing guild business and goals

1 - low rank, 2 - medium rank, 3 - high rank, 4 - leader

## SERVICES

Those who seek the fabled items of the Draconic Smiths must first prove themselves worthy of wielding such epic items. The work of the guild is revered across the realms, and is not available to most run-of-the-mill adventurers.

### ◆ ITEM LOANS

Often, the Draconic Smiths are approached by adventurers, knights, and other warriors who wish to borrow some of the incredible weapons and items made in the wyrmforges. Only the worthy are allowed to use these items, however, and an applicant must pass two tests. First, the warrior must prove their ability in battle by fighting with one of the guild's most dangerous dragons in non-lethal combat. If the dragon deems them skilled enough, then the warrior must declare, in writing, why they need the item, and what they aim to use it for. This written declaration is magically checked for truthfulness before being sealed with dragonfire into a magical pact that, if broken, has a dire impact on the reneging party.

### ◆ SMITH TRAINING

When it comes to blacksmithing, the Draconic Smiths leave all others in the dust. Many of the most skilled smiths from across the realms, including the renowned *Horgrim Fellhammer* of *Thunderspire Forge*, received their training from the Smiths. The training is rigorous and exhausting, and the guild only trains candidates who show remarkable talent and dedication. Those who complete the guild's training are given a *blazescale brooch*, an ever-glowing ember encased in iron that confirms their prowess. However, many of the guild's secret techniques and special tools are reserved solely for full-fledged members.

### ◆ FORGING & REPAIRS

Despite the demand for it, the guild does not take commission requests, instead preferring to allow their smiths to follow their inspiration and create what they find most worthy of their talents. However, lower-ranking smiths do sell their own creations, which are more akin to uncommon or rare magic items. The smiths are careful about who they sell to though, as they don't want their items in the hands of ruffians or evildoers. On rare occasions, the smiths give these lesser items as gifts to those who they think are pure of heart. The lower-ranking smiths might also help repair broken magic items by restoring them in the elemental tempest of a wyrmforge.

### ◆ DRAGONTONGUE TRAINING

Many individuals keen to learn of the magic of dragons seek out the guild to be taught Draconic. The language of dragons is not easy to master; even grasping the basics can take months of tutoring and practice. Initiates take lessons from the smiths themselves, but those seeking to truly become fluent can pay more and invest more time into their education to learn directly from a dragon.

### ◆ HISTORY & LORE

The oldest members of the guild and the most ancient dragons allied with the faction are truly wells of knowledge. They have seen eons pass and lives spring forth, blossom, and fade. Individuals looking to uncover lost or forgotten history and lore can do a lot worse than to make an appointment with the Draconic Smiths, as their members' memories of centuries past can prove incredibly fruitful. Most dragons are capable of living for over one thousand years, and some linger for even longer, sometimes surpassing their two thousandth birthday!



## CUSTOM CREATIONS

The creations of the Draconic Smiths are revered throughout the realms. Tales of their most epic creations are sung about in the halls of kings, and passed down from generation to generation.

### ◆ PAULDRONS OF SHIMMERING DAWN - LOAN ONLY (LEGENDARY)

These shining shoulder plates must be affixed to a suit of heavy armor. Etched into their surface and inlaid with liquid pearl is a sun rising over the horizon, its beams glowing with magical light. The wearer of the pauldrons is immune to radiant damage, and can cause magical light to spread out from them in a large radius, dispelling natural and magical darkness. Furthermore, the user gains a large bonus to their armor class, especially against ranged projectiles, which are deflected by the sunlit aura. The pauldrons also imbue the wearer's attacks with searing sunlight, causing them to deal additional radiant damage.

### ◆ WINGS OF THE EMERALD WYRM - LOAN ONLY (LEGENDARY)

These adamantine and emerald wings are worn like a cloak. They change size depending on the wearer, fitting them perfectly. They provide a bonus to armor and a rapid flying speed. The wearer can activate the wings in one of three ways. The first allows them to create a whirlwind, pushing away and bludgeoning nearby creatures. The second causes the wings to spread wide and the wearer to spin, slashing nearby foes with razor-sharp metal scales. The final activation causes the wearer to transform into a dragon for a short period, gaining its breath weapon and other features.

### ◆ MAGMABLADE - LOAN ONLY (VERY RARE)

This enormous blade is larger than a greatsword, and is made of molten metal. Despite its size, it's lighter than most shortswords. As soon as the wielder gains the loyalty of the sword, which has its own mind, they become immune to fire and resistant to the effects of heat. The *Magmablade* sheds dim light and deals severe fire damage on a hit. It can cut through solid stone, metal, and glass as it melts the material, and incinerates wood in seconds. It deals additional damage against constructs.

### ◆ HORIZON BOW - LOAN ONLY (VERY RARE)

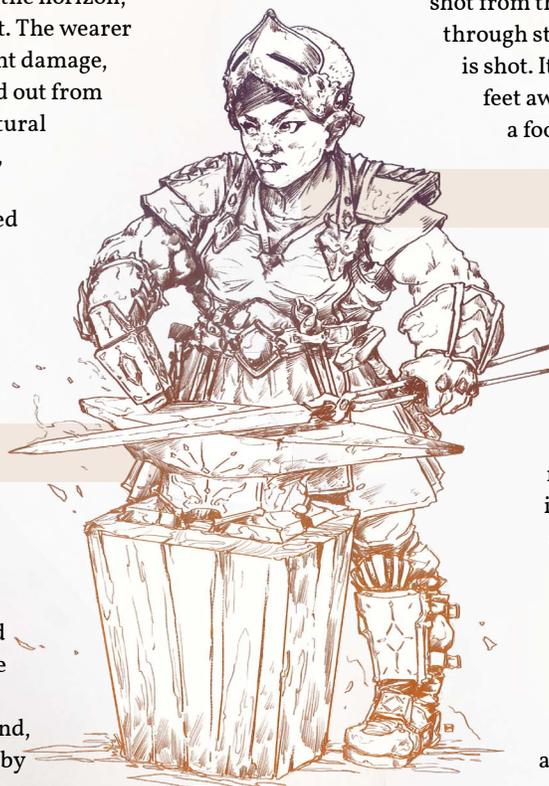
Forged from steel and rare woods, this longbow is a unique creation of the guild. The bow is decorated with images of dragons in flight, soaring over the horizon. This bow can shoot as far as its wielder can see no matter the distance, making it particularly lethal for creatures with the high ground—though, of course, they first must be an accurate shot to hit something so far in the distance. Furthermore, once the bow has loosed an arrow, the arrow gathers magical power during its flight: each arrow shot from the bow has the ability to pierce through stronger materials the farther it is shot. It can pierce steel if shot from 30 feet away, but can puncture through a foot of stone from 60 feet away.

### ◆ SHIELD OF SPELLBREAKING - LOAN ONLY (LEGENDARY)

Constructed of lightweight crystal with a platinum-colored, star-shaped boss, arcane runes glow and flare across the shield's surface, glittering with magical hues. The shield can be used as a regular shield, but it also gives its wielder the ability to deflect spells if they're able to interpose themselves between the caster and the target. If the spell cast has but a single target, it is reflected back at the caster. If the spell targets multiple creatures, instead of being reflected back at the caster, the shield absorbs a portion of the spell, negating its effects against the creature wielding the shield.

### ◆ MIMIC STAFF - LOAN ONLY (LEGENDARY)

This staff of copper and bronze is polished to a mirror finish, and the top splits into two to make a fork. Between the prongs of this fork, the air shimmers a little, and slightly reflects that which is before it. Once per day, the staff can be used by its wielder to summon a duplicate of themselves. The duplicate is controlled by the wielder, and has their same stats and characteristics. The duplicate also has the same equipment as the initial character, except for the *Mimic Staff* itself. While the duplicate is summoned, the wielder's health is split evenly between the two, and both the user's and the duplicate's attacks and spells only deal half of the usual amount of damage. The duplicate disappears after 8 hours, or if it drops to zero hit points.



## QUESTS

Quests assigned by the Draconic Smiths are often given to outsiders who hope to get their hands on some of the masterworks that the guild creates. Typically, they involve interactions with dragons or the recovery of lost or stolen guild works.

### THE PINNACLE OF FIRE

Word has come from the *Mount Uzgaloth* guild hall that *Brazzam*, the adult red dragon in residence there, has been found butchered. The dragon was killed while it was hunting in the upper reaches of the mountain by infernal iron-tipped crossbow bolts, and the guild is looking for seasoned adventurers to track down their origins, as well as those of the assailants. After conducting some research, the bolts can be traced back to the *Brotherhood of Tegar*, a cult of bloodthirsty warriors infused with demonic vigor. The Brotherhood of Tegar slaughtered *Brazzam* as part of a blasphemous ritual to wake the dormant Mount Uzgaloth and transform it back into a volcano. Not long after the dragon's murder, this ritual comes to pass as the mountain's peak erupts in lava and ash. Rising from the crater is an archdevil, summoned by the Brotherhood to serve as their new leader. The Smiths are willing to equip adventurers with the magic items needed to fight the archdevil, limit the damage from the volcano, and gain vengeance for the death of their fallen dragon.

### LEGACY OF THE WYRMHIDE

One of the Draconic Smiths' explorers has heard rumors that a wyrmforge in a lost guild hall has been lit again. According to the guild's records, the hall, located in the heart of a mountain, was purposefully collapsed by its resident dragon after it was overrun by duergar, who wished to raid the vault. The dragon was killed, and the hall was buried under fallen stone. However, there have been recent sightings of duergar carrying weapons and armor bearing the mark of the guild, as well as whispers of a dracolich lurking in the bowels of the mountain.

The guild's warriors have been stretched thin, so they are searching for outsiders who can aid a small band of Deep Delvers in investigating the rumors and potentially infiltrating the lost hall. Upon discovering a hidden entrance to the hall bored by the duergar, the party encounters *Ivarix Gravelan*, a duergar that has restored

the forge with infernal magic in order to create twisted weapons of war, as well as the zombified remains of the hall's resident dragon, now bound to *Ivarix's* will.

### SEARCH FOR THE SOULSCYTHE

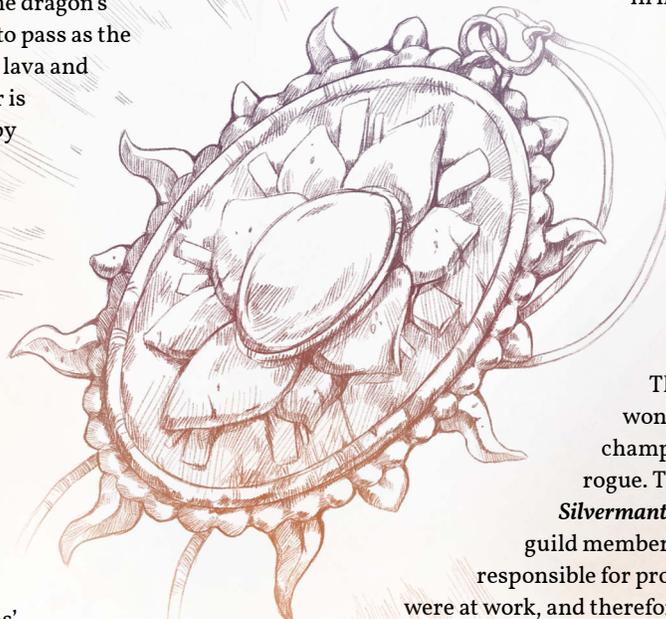
One of the guild's most notorious and maligned weapons, the *Soulscythe*, has fallen into the hands of a cruel and cunning blue dragon named *Scarratox Thunderbane*. The Soulscythe was originally crafted to free trapped souls from the grip of necromancers, but is now being used by *Scarratox* as a tool to collect enough souls to become a blue dracolich. The guild wants the scythe to be recovered, but *Scarratox* cannot be killed in the process, lest her transformation into a dracolich be completed.

In order to retrieve the weapon from *Scarratox* without killing her, the party must convince the dragon's children, who have been forced to raid nearby human settlements and even other dragons' roosts to bring in new souls, to turn against their mother and assist the Draconic Smiths. Depending on how many of *Scarratox's* children are turned against her, the guild delegation may be able to retrieve the scythe via a heist, drive *Scarratox* from her lair, or even overthrow her entirely.

### CHAMPION OF THE SUN

The guild needs to reclaim a wondrous item from a former champion of its ranks who has gone rogue. The item was once used by *Sorgia Silvermantle*, a valiant paladin and dedicated guild member who served as a Scaleguard, responsible for protecting the dragons while they were at work, and therefore more vulnerable. The item stolen by *Sorgia* is the *Daybreak Talisman*, an amulet that contains trapped sunlight. It emits an aura of daylight around it, enhancing the radiant powers of its wearer. Furthermore, the amulet makes its wearer invincible as long as they remain in direct sunlight. *Sorgia* is currently traveling north to the arctic, where the sun never sets, to ensure that she'll never be vulnerable again. The party must find a way to kill her and reclaim the item.

When the party arrives to fight *Sorgia*, they discover that she is not the half-elf she appeared to be. Rather, she is a white dragon who took the form of a half-elf in order to infiltrate the guild and claim the *Daybreak Talisman* for herself. This makes the party's job much harder, as the dragon can fly around anything that might otherwise blot out the sun.



# THE SCHOLARS OF ANTIQUITY

Wealth	⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
Resources	● ● ● ● ●
Defense	♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥
Authority	⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡
Services	Dungeoneering, Custom Crafting, Lorefinding
Disfavored	Fighters, Barbarians, Treasure Hunters
Favored	Rogues, Rangers, Bards, Wizards, Gnomes

*I have to be honest—I only really signed up because I wanted my family to get some compensation if I got incinerated by a fireball trap. I was hoping to make some decent scratch selling whatever I could pull up from the old ruins, but the Scholars aren't like that. They're not plunderers; they actually care about what's in these ruins, and make sure it's all returned to its proper place. I admire that.*

— Anne Harbor, Veteran Dungeon Delver

**T**he Scholars of Antiquity are a group of explorers, inventors, artificers, and historians dedicated to bringing the forgotten past to light. The guild has made a name for itself by not only revolutionizing the practice of dungeoneering with its members' brilliant inventions, but also by making world-changing discoveries, such as ancient power sources, lost forms of magic, and forgotten empires. The Scholars' work is split between researching ancient locations and artifacts, training Dungeon Delvers, heading out on expeditions, and pioneering new magical and mechanical technologies.

Rather than keeping knowledge in a dusty library or selling it to the highest bidder, the Scholars of Antiquity are committed to sharing their finds with everyone. The guild has pioneered new forms of transportation, such as steam barges and ornithopters; new types of tools, such as the *translator's glass* and the *gauntlet of metallurgy*; and even new power sources, like the *chthonian crystal* and *star oil*. These inventions have ushered in a new age, one where magical study and mechanical skill work hand in hand. The guild also ensures that lost pieces of history are returned to their inheritors.

Though the guild's explorers are famous for their swashbuckling exploits and ingenious gadgets, they



also carry a solemn responsibility: when faced with dangerous artifacts, slumbering horrors, or ancient evils, they are sworn to either destroy them or ensure that no one removes them from their resting places. This puts the guild in conflict with tomb raiders, dark scholars, and ancient cults, but the guild's combination of savvy training, experimental technology, and flexible magic gives its dungeoneers a fighting chance.

## THREE DEPARTMENTS

The Scholars of Antiquity are split into three departments, each with its own specialized members. The *Department of Lore* consists of researchers and historians, whose primary role is to conduct academic investigation into ancient sites, ruins, and historical records, as well as to study any artifacts or lore brought back from expeditions. The *Department of Invention* is devoted to creating both magical and mechanical equipment to aid in exploration, as well as adapting the guild's discoveries into new inventions that will benefit society. This department is made up of artificers, wizards, inventors, and other artisans. The last division is the *Department of Exploration*, which consists of rangers, rogues, and other dungeon delvers who plan and coordinate expeditions, transport items of value or interest back from dungeons, and explore the ruins and sites located by the *Department of Lore*.

While there's not much movement between the departments in terms of individuals—members tend to specialize early on and stick with their chosen path for life—the level of collaboration between the departments is truly phenomenal. The entire guild works together like a well-oiled machine, with each individual department serving as a cog that informs and supports the others. Oftentimes, a new invention from the guild will credit not only the artificer who created it, but the exploration team who found the ancient technology that inspired it, as well as the researchers who prepared the team for the expedition.

## REWARDS OF EXPLORATION

Though its commitment to history, knowledge, and aiding society takes precedence over the drive for profit, the Scholars of Antiquity are still immensely wealthy. The Department of Invention is always working on a steady stream of experimental projects, which range from *spider-climb gauntlets* to *trap-spotting gemstone eyes*, to *automatic clockwork lockpicks*. This equipment is sold to adventurers of all stripes, while more domestic inventions are sold to the public at large.

The guild also uses the discoveries it makes to craft technology that improves life for everyone, such as magical batteries that use previously obscure power sources, healing panaceas based on ancient texts, and steam-powered barges whose designs are based on ships of antiquity. The guild provides the designs for these inventions free of charge to anyone who wishes to copy them. Some of the guild's more ambitious projects include a bathysphere-like submarine to explore sunken sites and a large, magical glass cube that temporarily de-ages items placed inside it. The guild also sells volumes of collected knowledge from the ruins, tombs, and other sites that its members visit, which have proven invaluable for scholars at large.

Nearly as profitable as these items are the services that the guild provides: experts in dungeoneering train non-members, and guild historians take commissions from scholars to locate historical items, sites, or tombs. These commissioned expeditions have led the guild to make legendary discoveries, and the new generation of dungeoneers has proven to be much less destructive than the previous ones.

## THE EXPLORER'S CODE

Those who join the Scholars of Antiquity must accept the Explorer's Code, which includes vowing to treat remnants of the past with respect, to destroy any evil they find, and to never be tempted by the lure of wealth over knowledge. Furthermore, the code sets out rules by which any treasure found in ruins of old must be returned to those who lay the greatest claim to it. There's even a sub-department of the Scholars dedicated to the repatriation of these treasures and art pieces, which is filled with some of the best historians and emissaries in the realms.

## BARTHOLOMEW "BOLT" BARTOLIUS

AGE: 224 RACE: Gnome

GENDER: Male

OCCUPATION: Guild Leader, Explorer

SPECIALTY: Flight, Dungeoneering, Invention

**B**artholomew Bartolius, better known as "Bolt," is energetic, humorous, and a walking encyclopedia of history. Despite attaining the guild's highest office, Bolt has eschewed a life of safe, quiet administration and research in favor of the more dangerous, exciting option of field testing the guild's creations. In addition, he personally examines new invention proposals and advises members on plans for upcoming expeditions. He even accompanies dungeoneers on high-profile delves, lending his years of expertise and experimental gadgets to the mission, including the P.L.O.B., the Personal Lamp-Operated Balloon.

Bolt is committed to helping the Scholars of Antiquity rebuild the tapestry of history that has been obscured or lost over time, and seeks to create a grand, unified history of the realms that traces all of the world's peoples back as far as written records began. Although few doubt Bolt's commitment to scholarship, some feel that he is more concerned with the excitement of discovery than planning for the guild's future or dealing with the dramatic changes brought about by the guild's technological creations. Already, the guild's inventions have stirred resentment and mistrust from the crafts and tradespeople that they've made obsolete, but Bolt doesn't believe in slowing innovation.

◆ **UNTESTED EQUIPMENT:** Building on the technology of the P.L.O.B., Bolt has come up with an enlarged version powered by a fire elemental sealed in a brass cage that can carry a dozen individuals. The new vehicle needs to be operated by a group of four to six, but Bolt doesn't want to risk the lives of his guild members.

◆ **STOLEN PAST:** *Eongrinder*, a chronomancer dragon, has made a lair in the ruins of *Archipolis*, an ancient metropolis containing a wealth of history for many humanoid cultures. Bolt wants to gain an audience with *Eongrinder*, but to reach the dragon, he'll need to enter the ruins and clear out the monsters that *Eongrinder* has summoned from the past. Bolt typically uses his wit to avoid combat, but when forced into a fight, he relies heavily upon his inventions, often using his P.L.O.B. to get to higher ground or escape unscathed.

◆ **ARC GAUNTLET:** One of Bolt's signature creations, this gauntlet has a blue, sphere-shaped gem embedded in it. Once activated, it shoots out a focused bolt of lightning to blast away rocks or several long, powerful arcs that can stun up to six adjacent creatures.

The guild's code emphasizes knowledge over wealth, a heroic aim that is borne out in the actions of the guild's members. They are willing to sacrifice themselves to seal away ancient evils that they might uncover in the treacherous ruins that they delve into, but also to push themselves to the limit to retrieve knowledge that has been lost, and to uncover history that ought to be known by the world at large. If the Scholars' discoveries or inventions are deemed too dangerous, corrupting, or chaotic when weighed against their usefulness, then the guild will voluntarily destroy them.

## NOTABLE GUILD MEMBERS

The members of the Scholars of Antiquity fall into one of the guild's three departments: Lore, Invention, and Exploration. Because of the guild's varied work, its members range from specialized scholars and innovative artisans to seasoned adventurers.

### ☼ **PYNTLE FOLKOR (MALE GNOME HISTORIAN)**

Pyntle is the Department of Lore's central librarian and one of the Scholars' Lead Historians. He has thin, sharp features and a shrill voice, and he's always wearing a set of lenses or spectacles of some variety, which he typically keeps strapped to his head in a complex arrangement of wire frames and glinting glass. This frame is held in place by a leather harness that is strapped to the gnome's face, but also by his thick, curly hair—dyed green for flair—that looks somewhat akin to a bird's nest.

Pyntle is fascinated with the *Azgul Empire* and the beings they worshipped, called the *stellar children*. His research has led him to believe that these stellar children, who are supposedly neutral celestial agents from the Realm of Stars, have the power to see the history of anyone or anything simply by touching it. Pyntle knows that this would help the guild construct a true, unbroken account of history, and feels that the guild should try to uncover as much information and history about the *Azgul Empire* as it can in order to summon a stellar child itself.

### ☼ **GOMORY "METTLE" IDRIS (FEMALE TIEFLING DUNGEONEER)**

Gomory, or "Mettle" as she's more often called, is a force to be reckoned with. She is one of the Scholars' master inventors and dungeoneers, and has produced numerous ingenious creations for use on dungeon-delving missions. Mettle has the highest number of successful expeditions under her belt in the entire guild. Unfortunately, her career was marred by a fateful expedition to the *Tomb of Whispers*, where one of her guildmates was corrupted by a devious magical relic that turned them against the rest of the crew. Mettle was forced to kill them

before they endangered the whole mission, and has been somewhat jaded since. However, she still heads out on field missions, and is deadly serious while on the job.

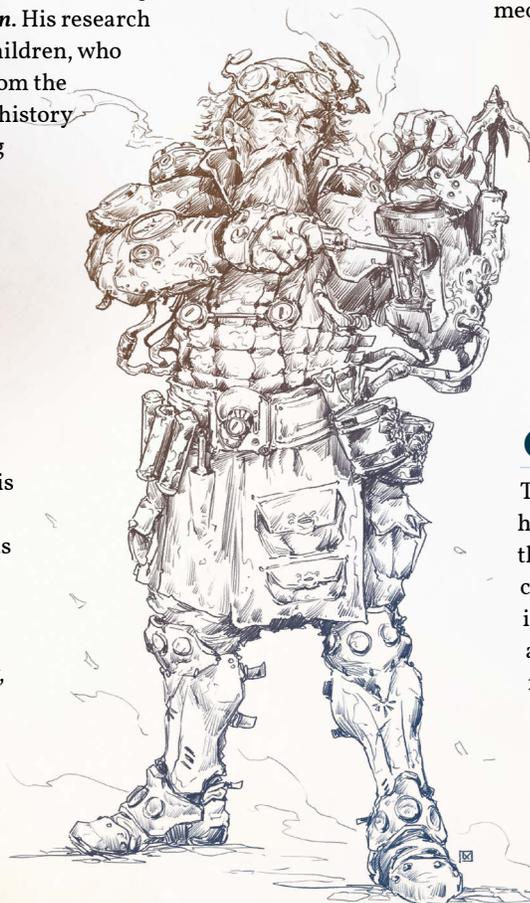
Mettle has recently come to learn that the *Tomb of Whispers* was created as a vault for hideously evil relics by a depraved being called *Blackstar*. Since then, she has dedicated herself to finding the other hiding places of these awful artifacts, and puts her life on the line to destroy the relics. She's never seen without her trusty whip, which accompanies her on all excursions and explorations, and she tends to wear a custom mechanical dungeoneering suit while working in the field, which functions akin to a suit of armor.

### ☼ **RYOTA SAKAI (MALE HUMAN INVENTOR)**

A true genius of mechanical and magical engineering, Ryota is a renowned Craft Inventor within the guild whose creations, such as the *automotive grappling hook*, have revolutionized dungeoneering. Ryota is completely immersed in his workshop for most of his waking hours, constantly tinkering away with this invention or that piece of equipment, and pushing the boundaries of technology and science.

His genius comes from his somewhat unhinged perspective on magic and mechanical work—he believes that there are semi-sentient particles of magic floating throughout the world that can be harnessed to work for those capable of commanding the arcane, and that once they've been

harnessed, they can be "trapped" within mechanical systems, where they continue to work in an endless cycle. Ryota's eccentric genius sometimes gets him into trouble with other guild members as he wanders through their working spaces with enormous nets of magical energy, trying to capture more of the arcane particles that he believes are floating there.



## GUILD RANKS

The Scholars of Antiquity have an academic hierarchy that, while part of the guild's constitution, is frequently ignored or used only for administrative purposes. In reality, many of the guild's members are polymaths and work as historians one day, then as inventors the next.

RANK	RESPONSIBILITIES
Loreseeker <sup>1</sup>	Studying existing lore and history, learning from Lead Historians
Craft Apprentice <sup>1</sup>	Creating basic dungeoneering equipment, training under Craft Artisans
Apprentice Dungeoneer <sup>1</sup>	Recovering items from less lethal dungeons and transporting them back to the guild
Lead Historian <sup>2</sup>	Performing in-depth research into newly uncovered artifacts and lore, doing commissioned research
Craft Artisan <sup>2</sup>	Creating commissioned dungeoneering gear and magical or mechanical items
Dungeon Delver <sup>2</sup>	Exploring ruins, ancient sites, and dungeons, recovering artifacts and lore
Craft Inventor <sup>3</sup>	Utilizing newly uncovered artifacts and lore to craft new items and technology
Master Dungeoneer <sup>3</sup>	Delving into dangerous dungeon environments, seeking and destroying sources of evil magic
Head Conservator <sup>4</sup>	Managing the guild, approving new expeditions and new technology/items to be released

1 - low rank, 2 - medium rank, 3 - high rank, 4 - leader

## SERVICES

The services that the Scholars of Antiquity provide are renowned across the world, and are one of the main ways in which the guild makes a profit. The prices for their work are understandably high given the quality and the skill of the guild members involved.

### ◆ LOREFINDING

The guild sells books on the histories, cultures, and lore of past civilizations, ancient figures, and significant events. These books range from broad overviews to incredibly specific folios on a niche topic like the storied history of the *Halo of Artemis Boldstrider* or the fall of the *Ryzada* culture. Furthermore, if the guild doesn't have any existing manuscripts on a topic, they're more than willing to take commissions to delve into it. These commissioned investigations often lead the Scholars to undertake an expedition to a previously undiscovered archeological site or dungeon. While their published books and folios can range from 5 gp to 100 gp, a research commission into a new area of study can range from 200 gp to 50,000 gp.



### ◆ DUNGEONEERING ITEMS

The guild has a wondrous selection of items specially crafted for dungeoneering available for sale, along with staples like crowbars, climbing kits, lanterns, and the like. More unusual items include roc feather paragliders, ziplines of woven adamantine, miniature dirigibles, and mechanical dungeoneering suits that mix armor and equipment into a single piece.

The Scholars' inventors have also created new tools like the self-climbing rope, which coils, uncoils, knots, and propels itself as its owner commands; semi-sentient door finders, which are clockwork insects that scour walls, floors, and ceilings for secret doors; and indelible ink, for when the user needs to make absolutely sure that they can find their way out of a labyrinthine ruin.

### ◆ CUSTOM CRAFTING

For a high price, the inventors and artisans of the Scholars of Antiquity can create custom magical, mechanical, and mundane items. The items are generally required to be related to dungeoneering in some form, and absolutely cannot have a weaponized property. The sort of items that the guild sanctions are helmets that allow their wearers to see through walls, lanterns that reveal secret doors, and automatic lockpicks that don't require the attention of the user. The exact cost of the custom item depends on the perceived "rarity" of the creation, and can be as little as 100 gp or up to the 50,000 gp mark. While the Scholars typically take a "function over form" approach to design, they're also willing to make aesthetic customizations to new or existing items.

### ◆ REVERSE ENGINEERING

The Scholars can take a magical or mechanical item and use their knowledge of construction to figure out how it works and how it was initially manufactured or enchanted. They can then use this information to create a blueprint for how to make more of the item. The guild refuses to perform this service on patented items or those trademarked by other guilds, as well as those that seem, to them at least, to be purely destructive or otherwise inherently evil. There are, of course, some items that are of an unattainable level of complexity, prohibiting any attempts to copy them by even the most proficient guild members. These items are beyond the Scholars' ability to reverse engineer.

## INGENIOUS INVENTIONS

The Scholars' items are typically inventions created by the guild members to assist with dungeoneering activities. These can often be borrowed by members for a deposit, or loaned to non-members for a deposit and a fee.

### ◆ CLOCKWORK LOCKPICK - 3,200 GP (RARE)

These clockwork contraptions, which run on bottled lightning and require recharging, can automatically pick difficult and dangerous locks ranging from truly antique to impressively modern. Unfortunately, the lockpicks take twice as long as a skilled lockpicker might, and expend one use each time. Additionally, these lockpicks cannot detect the presence of traps while working, and may thus trigger a dangerous mechanism. Furthermore, the bottled lightning used to fuel a *clockwork lockpick* can be dangerous if, for example, it is dropped or inadvertently smashed.

### ◆ AUTOMOTIVE GRAPPLING HOOK - 500 GP (UNCOMMON)

This intricate apparatus includes a compressed air powered launcher, a four-pronged hook that can automatically find a safe and sturdy hold once fired, a length of iron-spun rope that combines the flexibility of hemp with the durability of iron, and a set of pulleys and shackles. The hook is also loaded with a winder, which causes the rope to be drawn up into it. This allows up to three medium-sized creatures to ascend the rope, or to lift items collectively weighing 600 pounds or less.

### ◆ DUNGEONEERING SUIT - 46,000 GP (VERY RARE)

These items are worn like suits of armor, and serve as both armor and equipment fused into a single form. The tough metallic shells protect their wearer from most mundane hazards like poisoned darts and thrusting spears, and the tools incorporated into it include a filter mask for breathing underwater and mitigating the effects of toxic gasses, a slow-fall enchantment that lessens damage from falling, and pneumatic boosters that temporarily increase one's strength to allow dungeon walls and locked doors to be obliterated.

### ◆ BORING MACHINE - 150,000 GP (LEGENDARY)

Capable of carrying up to six medium-sized creatures at a time, this enormous vehicle looks something like a cross between a mole and a narwhal. It has four mechanical limbs ending in spade-like scoops that propel it through the earth, and a conical drill at its front end

that whirrs and spins at immense speeds. This drill is the machine's most important feature. The drillbit is augmented with diamond, enabling it to cut through even the toughest of materials. The Scholars use this machine to transport their explorers down into subterranean locations that would otherwise be impossible to reach.

### ◆ SCOUTING AUTOMATON - 25,000 GP (VERY RARE)

These spider-like automatons are about the size and weight of a small dog. They're constructed primarily of steel bars bound together by fluid metal joints and tendons, which are all controlled by a central clockwork unit. They can be controlled by amulets that must be worn when used. These automatons can reassemble themselves after

being broken (though they cannot recover from being liquidized, vaporized, disintegrated, or petrified). The primary use of the automatons is as scouts who are able to head into dungeons or wilderness areas, then return to report what they find through a series of basic, robotic sentences of limited vocabulary. The automatons have a very limited combat capability, with attacks that are no more effective than a dagger.



## QUESTS

The missions on which the guild send their members or hired hands vary widely thanks to the broad activities of the guild. Typically, each department issues missions independently of each other, unless a quest is so pressing or important that it unifies them.

### LEGACY OF VASTBURG

One of the Scholars' Lead Historians, *Andren Morrig*, is struggling with an artifact recently recovered from a dismal, festering tomb on the edge of the *Greybone Mire*. The item in question is the *Ivory Spear of Vastburg*—a spear made entirely of unicorn ivory that belonged to the *Bolastrin Empire*, which once stretched across much of the known world. Vastburg was the central hub of the empire, and is still the ancestral home of the Bolastrin people to this day. Unfortunately for the guild, Vastburg is now situated atop a mountain surrounded by a dense and dangerous jungle. The city was magically transported there when the empire fell; without the spear, which was used by the city's champions to defeat any enemies that beset the city, the place has been slowly deteriorating due to monster attacks.

It's clear that the Ivory Spear must be returned to Vastburg's Bolastrin inhabitants so that they can once more defend their metropolis, and perhaps even return the city to its previous location using the spear's magic, but reaching Vastburg is not easy. The journey through the treacherous jungle is made all the worse by warring factions of the Bolastrin people, who each want to claim the spear for their own vengeful use.

## DEEP TROUBLE

The already-grumpy Craft Artisan *Kait Al-Rahma* has been even more ornery of late because their fellow guildmates have begun refusing to test out Kait's crazy inventions. They feel that Kait has been neglectful of their safety in the past, and aren't willing to be test subjects anymore. So, in response, Kait is hiring non-members to test their new invention, a bathysphere-like submersible that should allow terrestrial humanoid to navigate the bottom of the ocean with ease. Kait's paying highly for test pilots to head down into the *Earthgut Trench*, a submerged fissure that has never been explored before, and report back on the prototype's performance. However, Kait won't pay if the submersible is heavily damaged or destroyed.

The submersible operates well to begin with, but the deeper it goes, the harder it is to pilot. However, the trench is filled with giant oysters whose massive pearls would be worth thousands of gold apiece if they could be retrieved using the submersible's pneumatic arms. What the testers don't know is that the oysters are farmed by grindylows, who quickly become obsessed with the shiny submersible and try to take it apart from the outside.

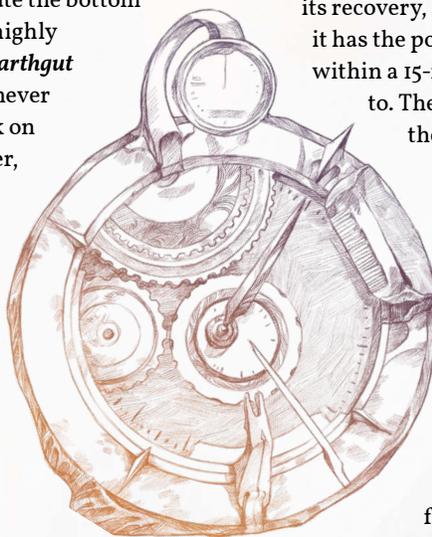
## RELIC OF THE STELLAR CHILDREN

The Department of Exploration requires assistance. Pyntle Folkor, the Department of Lore's central librarian, claims to have made a breakthrough in his research into the stellar children. He believes that he has uncovered a place where the stellar children still walk the Mortal Realm: a region on the edge of the map of the known world called the *Starry Isles*. Here, it is said that the night sky merges with the water and constellations form spectral islands on which mortals are able to tread. Pyntle believes that making contact with a stellar child will allow the guild to commune with the items they find, allowing historians to learn their entire histories in a matter of hours rather than requiring years of research. The guild wants to pursue this opportunity, but realizes that the mission will be an incredibly dangerous one as it involves heading into previously uncharted territory. The guild is thus looking to hire others, including non-members, to assist with the mission.

When the party arrives at the Starry Isles, they manage to discover the last vestige of a stellar child trapped within a 6-foot-tall shard of crystal that glows with starlight. The child, who speaks telepathically to those around it, was trapped eons ago by the Azgul Empire, and wants to be set free to join its siblings in the Realm of Stars. The party must then choose whether to free the being or take it back for the guild to work with.

## A TICKING CLOCK

A guild expedition has been attacked while excavating an ancient site. The site was thought to hold a magical device with incredible power-generating abilities that is much sought-after by the Scholars. The attackers, a party of shady excavators and purported graverobbers, have stolen the device and are taking it to a nearby city to sell on the black market. Unfortunately, the device was damaged during its recovery, and if it's not obtained and repaired in time, it has the potential to rupture and wipe out everything within a 15-mile radius, including the city it's being taken to. The party members are sent to the location of the robbery, where they can rapidly interview members of the Scholars of Antiquity about the identity of the thieves. They can then pursue the criminals toward the city. As they get close to catching up with the group, a chase ensues as the thieves split up in order to conceal which of them has the item. The party must act fast to stop the thieves from disappearing into the city streets with a potentially lethal item. To do so, the party might be able to catch up with the thieves, neutralize them from afar, or convince them that the item is dangerous. Hopefully, they're able to achieve this before time runs out and the item detonates.



## WEAPONS OF WAR

The Scholars have discovered that a workshop in a distant land is using stolen guild schematics and tools to build weapons of war, including destructive vehicles like siege engines and flying bombers. The guild has asked the workshop not to abuse the technology that they've unlocked, but to no avail. Because of this, the guild has asked a group of adventurers to sabotage the workshop or its products so that it goes out of business. If possible, the Scholars would like their plans to be recovered from the workshop too, so that they don't end up falling into the wrong hands again. The Scholars also need assistance in working out how the plans were stolen. As the party members work to take down the workshop, they also begin to amass clues about the initial theft. Using this information, they can track down the member of the guild who betrayed them. This individual was an apprentice who failed to progress in their craft and, bereft of an opportunity to make some extra money, decided to steal and sell the guild's blueprints to the workshop.

# THE FRONTIER GREENMOUNTS

Wealth	⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
Resources	💧 💧 💧 💧
Defense	♥ ♥ ♥ ♥
Authority	⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡
Services	Special Mounts, Wilderness Guides
Disfavored	Bards, Nobles, Poachers
Favored	Rangers, Barbarians, Druids, Fighters

*I will say this about the Greenmounts: they smell of dung, they have no respect for boundaries or authority, and they give more thought to four-legged things than two-legged ones. But despite all that... they've saved the citizens of this realm countless times, and I'm always glad to ride alongside them.*

— Ornia Adwar, Captain of the Guard

**T**he Frontier Greenmounts is a guild of outlanders and hunters that have mastered exploration and survival, as well as the taming and breeding of wild beasts. They use their unmatched wilderness tracking skills to hunt down animals that pose threats to civilization and capture them, often turning these deadly creatures into new allies. The guild is famous for their exotic and powerful mounts, as well as their knowledge of the untamed parts of the world.

While the Greenmounts are best known for calming raging mammoths and wrestling manticores, their true goal is striking a balance between civilization and the natural world. Perhaps their loftiest pursuit is to prevent rare species from going extinct; to this end, they launch daring quests of immense danger to recover and protect such creatures. In addition, they protect settlements and cities from the wrath of nature, whether it be a swarm of wolf locusts ravaging a kingdom's crops or a **green bullworm** battering down the walls of a city. Whenever possible, the guild strives to keep both beasts and humanoid from coming to harm.

When not ranging across the wilds or keeping settlements safe, the Greenmounts carefully breed their stock of rare animals to replenish their strength and numbers. The guild also breeds and trains more powerful animals as mounts and companions to aid its members in their missions, including **obsidian panthers** and **everdusk owls**.



The guild sells some of its creatures to outsiders as companions, though it will only ever do so with the assent of the beast in question, which may require gaining its respect. Many wealthy collectors have found themselves disappointed after seeking out the guild for a new “pet.”

The Greenmounts are loved by the common folk, whose lives and homes are protected by the guild members, and are grudgingly respected by nobles and knights, who have come to regard the guild's mounts as the pinnacle of power and prestige. Despite this, the guild's members mostly keep to the wilds, where they can keep watch over the precarious balance of nature.

## FOLK OF THE WILD

The members of the Greenmounts are at home in the trackless wilderness, where they spend most of their time watching the growth, migration, and population patterns of different animal populations. All of this knowledge is

reported to their leaders, who are tasked with keeping the beasts strong, healthy, and safe, whether they are mischievous *bolt squirrels* or vicious *bough stalkers*. The Greenmounts prize tracking and hunting skills, but a strong knowledge of local flora is also essential.

Because the Greenmounts are dispersed across the realms, individual branches of the guild deal with different animals and ecosystems. While the Greenmounts of the *Ebony Swamp* seek out hydras and stop them from leaving the wetlands on hunting expeditions, those in the *Skypiercer Mountains* try to protect roc nests and keep trespassers from straying too close. Because of their wild nature, the Greenmounts are sometimes met with suspicion by aristocrats, merchants, and scholars, who see the guild's members as barbaric and uncivilized. This mistrust is deepened by the Greenmounts' casual disregard for the borders of kingdoms and nations—they travel as they please, even in times of war.

## PEERLESS HUNTERS

The Greenmounts have animal messengers and sentries everywhere, especially on the borders of frontier settlements. These messengers are the ones who alert the guild when a town or outpost comes under attack by wild beasts or roaming monsters. Most guild members take joy in matching wits with these creatures, and will not harm them unless there is no other option. They usually try to lead creatures away from where they can do harm, but the Greenmounts have been known to fight pitched battles in the middle of settlements, all while keeping their foe's attention on them and away from defenseless residents. If the threat is especially dangerous, a band of Greenmounts may be sent, or—more rarely—the members of an entire ranch.

The Greenmounts are equipped with the best gear that money can buy (and in some cases, can't). The guild's members know that killing any animal—whether it's a beast, monster, or other creature—can have devastating long-term effects on the ecosystem at large, and thus they use non-lethal methods of capturing and releasing dangerous animals whenever they can. These methods include invisible nets that they string up between trees to capture rampaging young dragons, paralysis poisons loaded onto crossbow bolts fired at charging mastodons, and using spells to speak with animals in an attempt to calm them down. They might even use redirection tactics, such as creating walls of flame to redirect a stampeding herd of catoblepas, for example. When the Greenmounts are forced to use lethal tactics, such as when humanoid lives are in dire danger, they use super-heavy crossbows attached to their mounts, deadly poisons harvested from wyverns and purple worms, flying mounts that can keep up with aerial predators, and magical whips that cause vines to grow around and restrain targets.

## YESKA SAPPHIREFROND

AGE: 76 RACE: Half-Elf

GENDER: Female

OCCUPATION: Guild Leader, Beast Tamer

SPECIALTY: Tracking, Taming, Hunting

Yeska is truly a legend among explorers and wildfolk, especially barbarians and druids. Her steel will and knowledge of animal handling and tracking means she can calm the most ferocious of beasts with a cold look, and take out the most menacing behemoths with a single crossbow bolt fired from her fearsome crossbow *Bonebane*. Yeska has a close bond with a pantherion named Anglare, who serves as her mount. The two can communicate through a series of growls and hisses, and even telepathically share emotions and commands. Like all pantherions,

Anglare is capable of changing the coloration and patterns of its fur to camouflage itself, but can also petrify creatures with a glare like a basilisk's: a feature unique to Anglare. Yeska has little patience for dealing with "civilized" leaders or nobles, preferring to work directly with the people she protects. Because of this, she has a somewhat poor reputation among the leaders of cities and metropolises, but is beloved by the common folk.

◆ **ANGLARE'S SON:** Two decades ago, Anglare had a child with another pantherion. The cub was left with Anglare's partner, but should be an adult by now. However, Anglare feels that there is something amiss with their son. They should have a strong telepathic connection with the other beast, but it is unusually weak.

◆ **TRAPPING DIREMAW:** A chromatic dragon named *Diremaw* has been corrupted by a draconic plague that causes the infected creature to be consumed by uncontrollable rage. Yeska has battled with the dragon in the past, and now needs assistance to track it down, capture it, and hopefully cure it of its disease.

Yeska typically attacks in conjunction with Anglare by using her mount's incredible climbing ability to reach vantage points from which she can hit her foes' weak points.

◆ **SCALE AND SHOOT:** Anglare can break into a burst of speed to climb near-sheer surfaces, including up the side of enormous creatures, and get into position for Yeska to shoot. Yeska can then fire her crossbow, gaining an advantage because of her positioning.

## GREEN RANCHES

The strongholds of the Greenmounts are called ranches, and are normally named after a shade of green; the Viridian Ranch and Emerald Ranch are notable examples. Ranches are often built in difficult-to-reach places, such as high in the treetops or in deep canyons, and tailored to the creatures kept there: a ranch meant to primarily accommodate flying creatures may have its own aeries and roosting places, for example. Though much of the space in these strongholds is designed to hold animals, all of them include meeting halls and training grounds. The guild's method for taming creatures is closely guarded. It usually involves using spellcasting to calm the creature or allow the Handlers to speak with the beast, followed by a period of rapport-building, which can take the form of hunting together or finding a mate for the creature. Once a beast trusts the Handlers, its training may begin. After a creature has been tamed and trained to their satisfaction, the Handlers may decide to pair it with a guild member, sell it to a trustworthy companion, or simply set it free. In the latter case, freed creatures may be called upon by the guild for later cooperation.

## NOTABLE GUILD MEMBERS

The Greenmounts take great pride in having some of the most talented hunters, survivalists, and animal trainers in the world among their ranks. While many of the guild's members work alone or in small groups, they all come together at the ranches a few times per year.

### ☉ HARRYN "DEADEYE" GRENC (FEMALE HALF-ELF HUNTER)

Capable of splitting a hair at a hundred yards (or so the rumors say), *Harryn "Deadeye" Grench* is an adventurous, energetic young half-elf who joined the Greenmounts as a youth. Her parents met at the Emerald Ranch, and thus, she was practically trained since birth in survivalism, hunting, and conservation. Now, Harryn is the Greenmounts' greatest hunter and markswoman. Armed with her magical crossbow *Ladyfinger*, she can pick off a young wyvern through the brush from almost a mile away and guide a bolt into a crack in the rocky hide of a sand thrasher after just a glance.

Harryn conducts some of the most dangerous missions for the Greenmounts, especially those that involve exotic or magical creatures, such as cockatrices or behemoths. Although she is young, even by half-elf standards, she's given significant freedom to handle

these threats, even if the guild's leaders don't always agree with the risks she takes. Harryn knows that she's the best shot around, but her bravado hasn't made her arrogant—she relishes competition with worthy opponents. If a particularly talented archer or ranged combatant can prove their worth in a contest with Harryn, she'll likely give them some mentorship, and maybe even ask them to accompany her on a mission.

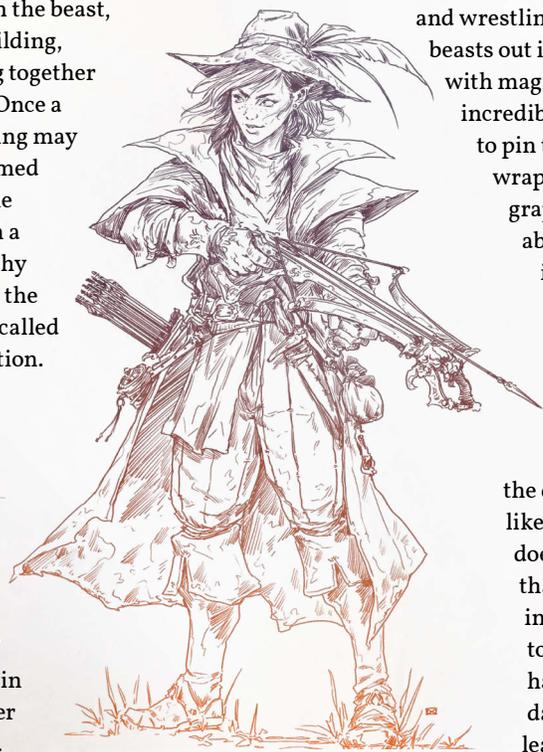
### ☉ NASH WESTERMERE (MALE DWARF DRUID)

If there's a beast to be wrangled, *Nash Westermere* is the dwarf for the job. Nash is responsible for capturing rampaging monsters that might otherwise do serious damage or harm. A brawny sort of fellow with a heart as soft as butter, Nash is well known for his grappling and wrestling, and has many tales of besting beasts out in the wilds. The dwarf is covered with magical tattoos that empower his already incredible natural strength, allowing him to pin the wings of flying creatures, or wrap the legs of charging beasts. Nash's grappling abilities are enhanced by his ability to commune with the stone itself, turning his arms into lumps of solid granite. He's also a talented beastspeaker, and can calm most ornery beasts with a soft word.

Nash relishes in his reputation as a bit of a wildman. Stories about the dwarf are passed around the guild like coin around a market, and Nash does nothing but stoke them. Some say that Nash once rode a purple worm into the depths of a mountain, only to bring the worm back to the surface half a dozen days later in a complete daze. Others claim that he once leapt from the peak of *Mount Angrav* to land atop and redirect a soaring red dragon that was about to ravage a local herding village.

### ☉ OLD ARN (MALE HOBGOBLIN GROOM)

Before *Old Arn* joined the Greenmounts, he belonged to a goblinoid host called *The Wild-Paws*. In the host, his job was to train and look after the worgs, dire wolves, and giant rats that the goblinoids rode into battle. After decades in the job, Old Arn became more and more tired of the way the animals were treated, and was eventually exiled from the host after he set all the mounts free. For a time, Old Arn wandered the wilderness before he encountered *Nash Westermere* grappling with one of the dire wolves that Arn kept as a traveling companion. When Old Arn ran to confront the dwarf, he got into a fight himself, which only ended when Nash convinced Arn that it wasn't his intention to hurt the creature, only to calm it. It wasn't long before the old hobgoblin joined the Greenmounts with Nash as his mentor.



Arn is responsible for looking after the animals of the Viridian Ranch, and is known for his soft touch with the animals. He can often be found speaking calmly to beasts that only moments ago were in fits of rage. This ability to calm even the most dangerous creatures has earned Arn a lot of respect in the guild. Old Arn is rarely seen without his pet badger, Onyx, who serves as both a bestial sentry and a lovable mascot for the ranch. Save for Onyx, Arn's favorite creature is a many-legged behir named Bonebreaker.

## GUILD RANKS

The Greenmounts don't have a hierarchy as such, but the guild encourages its members to take on the roles that they feel fit them best. Any member can attempt to reach the Master rank, which simply requires them to prove their mettle against a formidable beast.

Rank	Responsibilities
Stablehand <sup>1</sup>	Caring for less dangerous animals in captivity, learning from Handlers
Outlander <sup>1</sup>	Accompanying Rangers on missions, preparing gear for expeditions
Ranger <sup>2</sup>	Undertaking missions to capture, fend off, or kill wild beasts
Handler <sup>2</sup>	Caring for beasts, training beasts, animal husbandry
Groom <sup>2</sup>	Selling mounts and pets and transporting beasts
Master Ranger <sup>3</sup>	Hunting and capturing beasts, monitoring the growth and migration of creatures
Master Handler <sup>3</sup>	Taming beasts, overseeing the training and care of creatures
Master Hunter <sup>3</sup>	Hunting down and killing the most dangerous beasts
Wild Ranger <sup>4</sup>	Managing the guild, assigning missions to recover, breed, or hunt down beasts

1 - low rank, 2 - medium rank, 3 - high rank, 4 - leader



## SERVICES

Despite living off the land and eschewing civilization, the guild still needs gold to keep up its mission, and garners that coin through the sale of mounts, pets, hunting equipment, and guide services.

### ◆ TRAINED MOUNTS & PETS

For high prices, the Greenmounts will sell their trained beasts as companions or mounts. While a mastiff or warhorse might be bought in almost any major city, the Greenmounts are the only ones with access to magnificently trained rocs and sabertooth tigers. Of course, the Greenmounts only sell these beasts to those judged worthy by both their own members and the beast itself. The guild can supply the equipment necessary to properly look after the beasts. Beasts trained by the Greenmounts are much sought after by adventurers, warriors, and explorers, and many are highly intelligent.

### ◆ WILDERNESS GUIDES

The Greenmounts offer highly trained and experienced guides to lead clients through dangerous wildernesses. These guides can also teach those less familiar with the wilds about how to survive, including how to hunt, trap, forage, track, make shelters, and more. Often, the Greenmounts use these paid expeditions as tests for potential new recruits, who are oath-bound to see their clients safely through their journey. While the Greenmounts are happy to provide guides, they do not sell maps, because they fear these might be used by poachers and industrialists who would threaten the natural world.

### ◆ HUNTING EXPEDITIONS

When populations of especially dangerous or destructive creatures, such as rhinoceroses, hippopotamuses, or big cats, become too large, the Greenmounts will sometimes undertake or sanction hunting expeditions whose sole aim is to keep the animals' populations in check so that they are prevented from upsetting the delicate balance of the ecosystem. Outsiders may join and take parts of the hunted beasts, such as bones, flesh, or feathers, as a trophy or to use in alchemical studies and the like. These hunts are often the only opportunity to gain rare ingredients, like basilisk teeth or wyrm tongues.

### ◆ WILD LORE

The Greenmounts can offer knowledge of beasts, plants and herbs, and other wild places and phenomena. Their knowledge encompasses wisdom relating to dangerous environments and denizens of a given ecosystem, and the range of their understanding covers almost every known habitat in the Mortal Realm. This knowledge can be invaluable for those searching for rare ingredients or planning to travel through a wild area, such as a desert or canyon. Of course, the guild only gives this knowledge to those who would use it for good, rather than to exploit a natural resource or damage a thriving ecosystem.

## GALLANT GEAR

Items created by the Greenmounts most often revolve around hunting, tracking, and taming beasts, or at least surviving out in the wilds. A small handful of the guild's crafters are responsible for their creation and enchantment, as well as the crafting of masterwork bows and ammunition.

### ◆ ENSNARING NET - 45,000 GP (VERY RARE)

These enchanted nets make it easier to catch, restrain, and calm wild beasts. They can be transformed with a word between two forms: a weighted cast net big enough for a large-sized creature, or a 120-foot lasso that can be used on a beast of any size. A creature caught in the net is immediately restrained, and if they succumb to the enchantment, begin to calm down. The net can also be used on non-beast creatures, though they are more resistant to the enchantment. Escaping these nets is extremely difficult, since they close in tighter the more a captured creature struggles. This means that subsequent attempts to escape the net become progressively harder.



### ◆ CAPE OF CAPTIVATION - 1,200 GP (RARE)

These brilliant capes are typically made of thin brown leather on the outside and lined with a vibrant emerald silk on the inside. The cape has the same amount of defense as leather armor, and grants the user additional stealth when moving through forested areas. Any beast that lays eyes upon the interior of the cape must try to resist the cape's magical enchantment. If it cannot resist the magic, then it becomes captivated by the cape. If the beast was hostile before being captivated, then it only targets the wearer of the cape. If not, then it treats the wearer of the cape as a friendly creature.

### ◆ BIRDBEAK BOLTS - 50 GP (UNCOMMON)

These lightweight crossbow bolts are typically made of bone or bamboo. Their tips are carved to resemble incredibly sharp, thin bird heads. In addition to their enhanced accuracy and armor-piercing abilities, these bolts can also be fired into the air. If a command word is spoken, they will fly around their targets, making whistling noises to cause a distraction. Furthermore, the bolts can be loaded with different poisons and other fluids so that direct hits deliver stunning toxins or slowing venom. Beasts are particularly affected by these bolts' distracting noises, though they work on any creature.

Name	Size	Rarity	Price	Perk/Ability
Everdusk Owl	Tiny	Uncommon	400 gp	Can create a magical aura of darkness that can hide an ally or blind a foe.
Bolt Squirrel	Tiny	Uncommon	200 gp	Can shock a foe with the force of a lightning bolt after a short charge time.
Bough Stalker	Medium	Uncommon	800 gp	Can become invisible as long as it is under the shadows of trees, and can attack with needle-like spines.
Obsidian Panther	Medium	Rare	1,000 gp	Can resist damage from non-magical weapons, and its bite may turn foes to stone.
Huntress Eagle	Large	Rare	2,500 gp	Can carry two passengers and summon icy winds that slow enemies and inflict cold damage.
Sand Thrasher	Large	Rare	3,000 gp	Can burrow through soil and sand at high speeds, and can create earthquakes or fissures.
Green Bullworm	Huge	Rare	15,000 gp	Can spit corrosive acid that does double damage against buildings. Can carry up to twelve creatures.

#### ◆ WANDERER'S COMPASS - 3,500 GP (RARE)

These magical compasses are often set into staves, amulets, and other items that can be easily accessed at all times while on an individual's person. The magic activates when the compass's user names a location that they have previously visited. The compass needle ceases to point north, and instead swings toward the direction of the named location. Following the needle allows the user to reach the named location by the most direct route, but doesn't account for difficult terrain that might be between the user and the named location. These compasses can also be "pre-loaded" with locations that the user has never visited, and can be used to direct a user to those locations, provided that the creator of the compass has been to that location at least once in their lifetime.

#### ◆ SHIFTER'S CLOAK - 350,000 GP (LEGENDARY)

This large, enchanted animal pelt is worn as a cape or a robe, and allows its wearer to transform into the animal to which the pelt once belonged. While in animal form, the wearer can speak to other animals (regardless of type) and attempt to command them by using charisma or an equivalent check. These cloaks are incredibly rare, and are only bestowed to the most worthy guild members who can be trusted with the responsibility of commanding the animal kingdom. The Greenmounts continuously seek to avoid unnecessary harm to animals, and thus these cloaks are worn with great reverence.

## QUESTS

The Greenmounts' quests typically involve a dangerous beast of some description—often one that is incredibly rare or even unique. Wherever possible, the guild prefers to avoid harming these monsters during the course of the mission, but acknowledges that in some cases, there is no choice.

### CALL TO ARMS

The Greenmounts need a group of intrepid adventurers to head out into the *Astarock Desert* in search of *Abok-Tandri*, a highly intelligent, many-headed, god-like beast of a dozen aspects that used to protect the desert and surrounding plains. *Abok-Tandri* retreated into the depths of the desert when it became aware that local humanoids were mining beneath the plains, causing serious geological damage and draining essential water from the ecosystem. Now that *Abok-Tandri* has gone, the mining has only gotten worse, and the desert is spreading into the plains thanks to the lack of water there. Worse still, the mining operation has disturbed the sands at the desert's edge, unearthing an ancient tomb filled with undead beings, who now gorge themselves on the wildlife of the plains. Once the adventurers find *Abok-Tandri*, they must encourage the god-beast to resume their guardianship of the desert. This will likely involve persuading the miners to cease their digging, or finding a way to get them to abandon

their operations. Worryingly, *Abok-Tandri* reveals that if the mining continues, their ancient rival will emerge from its tomb beneath the sands—the horrific *Ygal-Za*, a giant poisonous serpent that brings drought. Explaining this to the miners is not enough to convince them to leave—they believe that the stories of *Ygal-Za* are made up to keep others from mining the rich ore of the desert and plains.

### RUNNING WILD

A recent glacial collapse near the *Juniper Ranch* in the *Frozen Wastes* has caused serious damage to the meeting hall and, worse still, the paddocks and enclosures for the guild's most dangerous animals. Many of these deadly animals have escaped into the wilderness, and could be heading toward humanoid settlements. The Greenmounts are scrambling desperately to repair the ranch, while more experienced members have been sent out to recapture the animals. While most are trained and should return with little persuasion, there are several remorhaz that have proved to be harder to tame, as well as a pair of particularly ornery arctic trolls that are incredibly rare and dangerous; one scratch from the monstrosities is enough to turn a creature to ice. To make matters worse, a nomadic group of ice fishers is currently moving through the region. While they could handle a polar bear or walrus without trouble, the more exotic animals that have escaped from the *Juniper Ranch* are likely to be a serious danger to them. The guild is looking for local adventurers who can reach the nomads and protect them from the escaped creatures without killing them, as well as re-capture the missing monsters before they disappear into the *Wastes*.

### THE BLACKTHROAT HUNTERS

In the northern reaches of the world is a vast frozen tundra that is home to many creatures both majestic and magnificent. Here in the frozen wastelands, many clans of half-giants live nomadic lives hunting and foraging for natural resources. One such clan, the *Tarranok Kin*, has been watching over a herd of *Omimammoths* for several generations. The half-giants rely on these enormous animals for food, furs, milk, and many other resources, but their numbers are dwindling thanks to the difficulty in finding suitable grazing lands for the beasts. To make matters worse, the notorious *Blackthroat Hunters* have managed to evade the clan's watch, and began poaching the mammoths and selling their ivory—prized for its alchemical and magical uses—to interested parties in big cities.

The high demand for this newly prized omimammoth ivory is threatening the entire population of the beasts, not just this herd, and will drive the species to extinction unless it can be curtailed. The Greenmounts want to destroy the *Blackthroat Hunters'* operation by locating their base, killing their key members, and destroying their stock of ivory. If possible, the guild would like to capture or kill their leader too, thus sending a warning to all other poachers targeting the omimammoths.

# ORDER OF THE SERENE FIST

raining

Wealth 

Resources 

Defence 

Authority 

Services Training, Animal Boons,  
Enchanted Items

Disfavored Wizards, Warlocks, Murderers

Favored Monks, Fighters, Paladins

*I thought I was doomed. The gang had already beaten back a detachment of the Royal Guard, so I figured there was no hope. Then, a few nights after the Guard failed, I heard a commotion outside the main cavern. Within moments, a whirlwind of feathers burst into the chamber. They'd disarmed half the gang before I even realized they were human. They had the speed of a crow and the ferocity of a leopard, and had incredible plumage sprouting from their arms. They didn't draw a single drop of blood, but the gang fled in seconds.*

— Hillen Far, gang captive

**D**ressed in their signature white outfits and adorned with horns, tails, or scales, the warriors of the Order of the Serene Fist are regarded as legendary, even among famed champions and duelists. Trained in open-hand styles as well as secret techniques passed down by the guild's mystical masters, a single guild member is often enough to force a band of marauders to flee in terror. Yet, the guild forbids its members from killing their enemies—instead, they seek to persuade their foes to join them on the path of redemption.

The guild is a monastic order of wandering warriors who have pledged to protect the innocent from criminals, especially highwaymen, gangs, and raiders. Many of the members are former criminals themselves, but years of study, training, and traveling have transformed them, often in more ways than one. Each member trains under one of the Order's Hidden Masters, a group of magical beings who often take the form of animals. Upon completing their training, a member is granted an aspect of their master's animal form, signifying their mastery.

Though members of the Order refuse to kill their foes, stories about the Order's abilities have become the stuff of myths: some members are adept shapeshifters



with inhuman senses and reflexes who are capable of fluidly changing between human and animal form in the heat of battle. Others can run on air, punch through castle walls, or split lightning bolts in half with a single stroke of a finger. However, each member's true mastery is shown in the clever and unique ways that they incapacitate their foes, bringing fights to a quick, merciful, yet not always painless end.

## SPIRITUAL LEADERS

The Order of the Serene Fist is led by the Hidden Masters, a collective of twelve magical beings that each inhabit temples spread across the Mortal Realm and instruct the guild's members in their own unique type of martial arts. Their personalities and powers vary greatly, but each Hidden Master has multiple forms ranging from abstract ones, such as a cyclone carrying hundreds of lotus flowers, to humanoid ones, such as a hunched old woman. The most famous forms, however, are each Hidden Master's animal forms, namely the Spider, Fox, Ox, Salamander, Bear, Crow, Leopard, Squid, Wolf, Turtle, Stag, and Cobra.

Each Hidden Master has their own approach to combat, including which weapons they prefer, and

the most accomplished members of the Order have traveled to several temples to master multiple styles. Some styles are uniquely suited to one specialty, such as dealing with armored opponents, large groups, or stealth, but all styles emphasize preserving the life of the opponent. Most members are taught how to use a simple wooden or iron club similar to a *kanabō*, though members may also be taught how to use more unusual weapons, such as scythes and tridents.

## REHABILITATION & PACIFISM

The guild's refusal to kill anyone, no matter how destructive or evil, comes from the desire to demonstrate that mercy, benevolence, and compassion can triumph over raw power. In doing so, the Order of the Serene Fist hopes to lead by example and change the Mortal Realm for the better.

After subduing a group of criminals, the guild's members usually try to persuade their foes to abandon their lives of crime or bloodshed and instead join the Order. In the guild's temples, members are not only taught the art of combat; they are also instructed in many practical and artisanal skills, such as cooking, weaving, crafting pottery, making shoes and clothes, glassblowing, and many more. These skills are meant to help guild members support themselves while on their journeys, or give them new professions to pursue if they decide to retire from the life of a wandering warrior.

In this way, reformed criminals are given the skills and community to turn over a new leaf, becoming both defenders of the common man and productive members of society. Those who are hesitant to join the guild are given a token, such as a metal coin or an iron ring stamped with the Order of the Serene Fist's symbol, that allows them to join the guild at any of its temples should they later change their minds.

## PEACEFUL PUNISHMENT

Sometimes, the Order defeats a foe that both refuses to join the guild and refuses to cease harming others. No matter how many times they lose to the guild's warriors, they retreat and begin the cycle of suffering and destruction once again. In cases like these, guild members consult with the Hidden Masters, who may issue an order to capture the evildoer and bring them back to one of the guild's temples. Here, these evildoers' strength and magical powers are stripped away, and they are confined to the grounds, where they are accompanied by a senior guild member who tries to persuade them to change their ways.

Some beings' malice and corrupting influence make this peaceful approach impossible, however. In these cases, the being may be transformed into a harmless animal and kept on the temple grounds for decades or even centuries. The transformed creature is treated with respect and kindness, and is given back its original form every few years to judge whether its malevolence has subsided.

## LAGAZI THE SWIFT

AGE: 56 RACE: Orc

GENDER: Female

OCCUPATION: Guild Leader, Monk

SPECIALTY: Unarmed Combat, Transformation

Lagazi was once a marauder and a bandit who took to a life of crime because she worshipped a bloodthirsty god. Despite law enforcement's numerous assaults on the warband that she led, Lagazi refused to cease their raids. Eventually, the Order of the Serene Fist was forced to intervene, and they captured Lagazi, hoping that removing the warband's leader would be enough to cause it to disband. After an encounter with one of the guild's Hidden Masters, Lagazi decided to give up the cycle of bloodshed and greed that defined her life. She decided to learn Ox Style, but although she is physically strong, she uses an aikido-like technique that allows her to use her opponent's own force against them.

Since giving up her worship of the bloodthirsty god, she has learned patience, empathy, and kindness, but she can be stern and stubborn, too. Over time, her mastery of martial arts and her ability to understand the guild's aims (having been there first-hand) earned her the respect of other members, and eventually she was chosen as the guild's leader. Privately, Lagazi fears that one day she will be forced to choose between upholding the guild's creed of pacifism and saving innocents by killing a deadly foe.

◆ **BLOODTHIRSTY AVATAR:** Since Lagazi left her life as a zealous marauder, the members of her old warband have gone their separate ways. Unfortunately, one of the members, *Orgaz Brut*, has become a fanatic of the same bloodthirsty god that Lagazi once worshipped. She would like him to renounce the god and join the Order.

◆ **DANGEROUS THREATS:** Recently, Lagazi has been receiving death threats from *Strike von Blitz*, an organized crime boss. Lagazi spearheaded an attack against an arm of their gang, converting many criminals to her cause. Since the threats began, Lagazi has been trying to track Strike down.

Lagazi is a monk who specializes in martial arts. Thanks to her Ox Style, she's become resistant to non-magical damage and uses her ki to shake off attacks that would otherwise knock her unconscious.

✦ **REDIRECT FORCE:** Lagazi has mastered a technique that allows her to use her opponents' force against them. She can use her ki to redirect the attacks of her foes back at them, knocking foes prone or even enhancing her own strikes.

## NOTABLE GUILD MEMBERS

Members of the Order of the Serene Fist are drawn from all corners of society, but many are converted criminals who seek to undo the wrongs of their past lives. Others are consummate warriors who wish to perfect their art or idealistic youths driven to live up to the legendary stories of the Order.

### ☀ **SOOKI (FEMALE HUMAN BARBARIAN)**

Sooki is a natural warrior whose immense strength and rippling muscles belie her good humor and gentle nature, as well as her astounding grace in combat. She has learned more of the Hidden Masters' styles than any other living member, and takes joy in merging and experimenting with them in unexpected ways; for example, she sometimes uses Spider Style to walk on ceilings and body slam her foes from above. Sooki's wide smile is beloved among her friends, but to her enemies, her eager grin usually means that they're seconds away from pain.

On her own initiative, Sooki has formed a small group of veteran guild members to seek out and dismantle criminal organizations, especially street syndicates. She has gained a reputation for taking on entire gangs at once, using her magical regeneration abilities granted to her by her Bear aspect to shrug off blows and even regrow lost limbs. Sooki is always looking for new allies in her ongoing battle against gangs, and has been known to work with unaffiliated adventurers during particularly dangerous missions, though the guild frowns upon working with mercenaries.

### ☀ **MASEI FOUNDFELLOW (FEMALE HALFLING SPY)**

Always surrounded by a cloud of finches, Masei is somewhat of an enigma within the Order. She once belonged to a dangerous halfling crime family called the Hillshadow Bōryokudan that was eventually torn apart by feuds. Seeing her family fall apart and devolve into petty crime and poverty, Masei vowed to find a new way of life. She searched for over a decade before she discovered the Order of the Serene Fist, and she has not turned back since.



Masei has devoted herself to the teachings of the Crow, and serves as a warden for that temple. She has also gained the ability to transform into a giant crow and to speak with all birds. She elected to follow the Crow Style as she felt it best epitomized her dedication to teamwork, and this style allows her to use her birds' intelligence alongside their martial prowess. Her abilities have allowed her to serve as a spy of sorts by sending out her flock of birds to seek out trouble so that warriors can be dispatched to pacify the perpetrators. Masei has personally renounced all forms of violence, and refuses to use her martial techniques outside of sparring.

### ☀ **OGRUN "SILENT" FALGRIN (MALE HALF-ORC ARTISAN)**

After a long life filled with adventure and service to the Order of the Serene Fist, Ogrun has settled down to a life of peace and harmony with the natural world.

Known as a Resting Leopard, and usually called by his nickname, "Silent," Ogrun weaves tapestries in the Temple of the Leopard. Silent got his nickname from his years as a Will of the Leopard, where he mastered the art of stealth to such a degree that his temple-mates believed that his footsteps truly made no noise. During his adventuring years, Silent was a master at infiltrating dangerous hideouts and surprising their denizens. He still contributes much to the Order by weaving magnificent tapestries that sell for high prices, and by keeping an eye on new recruits who might stray back to their old ways.

Silent is always keen to make new friends, and likes to weave small tapestries for his closest companions as a mark of kinship. If he judges a guild member worthy, he may pass on some of the secrets of his legendary stealth, though he prefers demonstrating his techniques rather than describing them. Although he often lapses into a meditative state while weaving, he's typically an energetic, spritely old man.



## GUILD RANKS

Members of the Order of the Serene Fist often take their rank names from the Hidden Master that they follow. Any instance of "Animal" should be replaced by a specific spirit, such as *Child of the Ox*, *Resting Spider*, or *Fist of the Squid*.

RANK	RESPONSIBILITIES
Child of the Animal <sup>1</sup>	Training in artisanal crafts and martial arts
Temple Attendee <sup>1</sup>	Looking after temples and their residents
Resting Animal <sup>2</sup>	A retired warrior responsible for teaching or crafting
Fist of the Animal <sup>2</sup>	Undertaking missions, traveling to different settlements
Tutor <sup>2</sup>	Teaching martial arts or crafting skills
Artisan <sup>2</sup>	Crafting items to support the temple, especially magical and rare items
Will of the Animal <sup>3</sup>	Undertaking special missions assigned directly by a temple's Hidden Master
Grace of the Animal <sup>3</sup>	Supervising one of the twelve temples, assigning missions, overseeing training and crafting
Serene Fist <sup>4</sup>	Coordinating missions that involve multiple temples, representing the guild to outsiders, undertaking important missions

1 - low rank, 2 - medium rank, 3 - high rank, 4 - leader

## SERVICES

The services provided by the guild vary from tutoring in weapons, martial arts, or skills to magical offerings such as animal boons and enchanted items. While anyone is free to partake in the Order's services, the magical boons and enchantments are revoked instantly if used to cause the death or destruction of another creature.

### ◆ LESSONS OFFERED

Guild members will teach outsiders numerous trade skills such as glassblowing, leather-working, weaving, and woodcarving, as well as more specialized skills such as calligraphy and potion-making. Outsiders who prove themselves worthy to the guild can also be taught open-hand martial arts and weapon skills, though the most powerful techniques are reserved for members of the Order. These martial arts focus on non-lethal ways of subduing foes, and the weapon types taught are always of the bludgeoning type to reduce the likelihood of deadly blows.

### ◆ ANIMAL BOONS

Members of the guild can give outsiders or other members temporary boons that bestow animal features or traits upon them, or even transform them into animals. Members who reach the higher levels of the Order's martial arts training are granted access to these boons as permanent features. The boons are usually associated with one of the Hidden Masters' forms (such as a leopard's ability to leap great distances, an ox's immense strength, or a cobra's incredible speed). Importantly, members who receive these boons permanently take on physical aspects of their own affiliated Hidden Master, such as a wolf's eyes, a salamander's tail, or the legs of a crow, while others may be able to temporarily transform into that animal at will.

### ◆ PEACEFUL ITEMS

One of the most advanced skills that the Hidden Masters teach to their devotees is the creation of magically enchanted items, which can range from 100 to 10,000 gp in value. The enchantments are always non-violent by nature, but nonetheless have powerful effects, including robes that protect their wearer from the cold, bracelets that make their wearer immovable, or bowls that summon nutritious food once per day when filled with moonlight. If the user of the item finds some method of using the item in a non-pacifistic way, then the enchantment immediately disappears, and the now-mundane item crumbles to dust within minutes.

### ◆ BODYGUARDS

Clients can hire bodyguards from the Order of the Serene Fist to protect them during dangerous situations. These bodyguards will not kill any enemies, and will not allow others to kill people in their presence due to the code of pacifism that they adhere to as part of the guild's tenets. If a client engages in any illegal or unnecessarily violent activity while a bodyguard is present, the bodyguard will attempt to stop the wrongdoing and perhaps even detain the client, depending on the severity of the activity.

### ◆ UNDERWORLD INFO

Due to their past connections and current missions, members of the Order of the Serene Fist are intimately familiar with the criminal underworld. Between them, they have an encyclopedic understanding that includes knowledge of hidden locations, such as safe houses and storehouses; details about specific figures, such as who leads which gangs and what their strengths and weaknesses are; what criminal rackets are in place, in which areas, and what their specific practices are; the meanings of specific underworld symbols; and many more pieces of esoteric knowledge. The guild is willing to pass this knowledge on to outsiders that they deem worthy, and whose aims seem wholesome and legal.

## RIGHTEOUS RELICS

Items provided by the guild are always attached to one of the Hidden Masters in some way. That doesn't mean that only those who worship a particular spirit can use them; rather, they're given to those who need them most.

### ◆ GUST OF THE CROW - 25,500 GP (RARE)

This iron fan is typically the size of a normal fan, but can be extended into a large tessen as a free action. While in its enlarged form, the fan, painted with a crow flying on high gusts, can be used to summon a vortex of wind around its wielder. This wind repels projectiles and silences those within it. The tessen can also be used as a bludgeoning weapon that has the force of a greatclub. Finally, the fan can be used as a glider, allowing its user to jump to an immense height and soar.

### ◆ CHARGE OF THE OX - 2,200 GP (RARE)

This length of chain has two iron weights, forged to look like ox heads, attached to each end in the style of a kusari-fundo. This weapon can be used to strike a foe, as well as disarm or restrain them using the coils of the chain. The chain is long enough to reach foes at the same distance as a spear or a similar weapon. The weapon is enchanted by the Ox Hidden Master to have the same stunning force as its namesake's charge: a creature hit by this weapon must steel themselves or become stunned and take force damage.

### ◆ FEET OF THE SPIDER - 450 GP (UNCOMMON)

These black sandals are made of an unusual material covered in tiny hairs. They are extremely comfortable to wear and can adhere to surfaces, but not stick, leaving a slight webby residue that disappears after a few seconds once the foot is lifted. A creature that is wearing the sandals can move up, down, and across vertical surfaces and upside down along ceilings, while leaving their hands free. The wearer gains a climbing speed equal to their walking speed. Furthermore, the wearer cannot be pushed or pulled against their will, and cannot be knocked prone.

### ◆ SCROLL OF BESTIAL SEALING - 35,000 GP (VERY RARE)

These enormous scrolls are formed of thick parchment wrapped around a bamboo pole, capped at each end with a bronze seal, and sheathed in an ivory tube. The seals on either end of the scroll case depict a certain animal, which is related to the scroll's magical ability. A creature can read the scroll to enact a ritual that takes 10 minutes to complete. The reader designates a target for the ritual. Upon the completion of the ritual, the target creature becomes transformed into a tiny, small, or medium-sized

animal until the caster dispels the effect. The animal form that the spell creates matches that depiction on the bronze seals of the scroll case. An unwilling target can make a very difficult willpower save against the transformative magic.

### ◆ SKIN OF THE SALAMANDER - 22,000 GP (VERY RARE)

While wearing this robe, which feels strangely rubbery and is a yellow-spotted brown, the user's constitution is boosted, they can breathe underwater, and they gain a fast swimming speed. While underwater, the user has advantage on checks made to hide. In addition, once per day when the user is dying while wearing this robe, they immediately stabilize as their wounds knit back together. If the user loses a limb while wearing this robe, it magically grows back over the course of 1 week. Until the limb is fully regrown, that limb isn't usable.

### ◆ JADE BAGUA - 75,000 GP (LEGENDARY)

This circular jade charm is engraved with the eight trigrams of the heavenly bagua, which are cosmological symbols that represent the fundamental principles of reality. While wearing the charm, the wearer takes half damage from fire, ice, lightning, earth, and air-based magical attacks, as well as blades, bludgeoning weapons, arrows, and piercing weapons. These charms are typically carried as talismans or worn as amulets by the most dedicated members of the Order of the Serene Fist.



## QUESTS

The Order of the Serene Fist's quests typically involve seeking out criminals and bringing them to justice. Their preference is for non-violent methods, including persuasion and intimidation, but they understand that in some cases a fight is unavoidable. They do not tolerate murder in their name, and will not work with those who kill freely.

### CAPTIVES OF THE IRON DEMON

Several days ago, a group of paladins was sent to *Wyvernskull Valley* to arrest a band of raiders that had set up camp there, called the *Disciples of Iron*. According to rumors, the raiders carry a mysterious palanquin that holds a demonic being made of astral iron, though some claim that it's only an idol. Whatever the case, the paladins were overcome by the raiders, who have announced that they will kill the captive warriors unless they are paid an outrageous sum of gold. The magistrate that sent the paladins has approached the guild to ask for help. Now, Sooki is putting together an elite group of stealthy individuals who can sneak into the gang's headquarters and free the warriors.

The Disciples of Iron's camp is a fortified ruin, protected on one side by the steep edge of the valley. The raiders practice an eldritch rite in which their bones are replaced with astral iron from the Far Realm, giving them inhuman endurance and resistance to non-magical weapons. Freeing the captives requires flawless stealth, as there's a risk that they'll be killed if the raiders detect any intruders. Upon infiltrating the camp, however, it's discovered that the captives are being held in a chamber with the gang's demonic "idol," which is actually a monstrous being from the Far Realm.

## FOX'S DILEMMA

A great *Will of the Fox* recently died of illness in the temple. While they were alive, they were well-known for capturing and transforming several powerful, destructive mages into animals, who then roamed the *Temple of the Fox*. Unfortunately, upon their death, these animal enchantments have been broken, causing chaos at the temple. One of these destructive mages, *Huarin Yarox*, is a cunning necromancer who mastered the art of siphoning the life force of those around him. He managed to escape to a bustling city and has since evaded capture by guild members by threatening to cause a "death bloom," a burst of necrotic magic that grows larger and more destructive with the more lives it consumes.

Huarin refuses to negotiate with guild members, but cannot escape the city without abandoning his only bargaining chip: threatening the lives of those around him. The guild is seeking outsiders to approach Huarin and figure out the terms of his surrender, or at least persuade him to leave the city. The clock is ticking, however—rumors have spread that the necromancer is hiding in the city, and the local guard has begun searching for him. If the guards discover Huarin before the Order can get him to leave, the results may be catastrophic.

## THE RIGHTFUL DEAD

Recently, a dangerous criminal organization called the *Rightful Dead* has been undertaking a recruitment drive in the slums of *New Estrapoa*. As of yet, their motives for increasing the ranks of the gang are unclear, but they can't be good. The poor youths of the slums have little hope of securing stable jobs for themselves, and have been eagerly joining the gang thanks to a promise of shelter and food in return for their "work." The Order of the Serene Fist wants to persuade the new members to leave the gang,

and stop the recruitment drive. The fact that the gang is targeting youths makes it all the more imperative that violence is avoided at all costs, and should only be used as a last resort in response to life-threatening situations.

In order to stop the recruitment in its tracks, the player characters will have to travel to the slums and integrate themselves into the local community in order to discover which youths have joined up, and what they're being asked to do. Once they've discovered who's been initiated, they'll need to do whatever they can to peacefully persuade them to leave the gang and to expose who the recruiters are. Once the player characters know this, they can arrange a meeting with the Rightful Dead in the gang's headquarters. If the meeting goes well, the gang will stop its recruitment drive in the area. If not, the player characters might be forced to fight their way out, or rescue captive youths who are being held in the headquarters.

## THE HOUSE OF SHADOWED LEAVES

A temple that was founded and maintained by the Order of the Serene Fist has been captured by a vindictive organization of criminal mages—*The Crooked Wands*—who have displaced the resident master and students. Their magical prowess is a force to be reckoned with, and they used their arcana to force the Order's members to flee for their lives. Specifically, The Crooked Wands are masters of illusion magic, which they used to terrify the members of the Order. The Crooked Wands have since used this magic to turn the temple into a labyrinth of illusions, which has foiled attempts to reclaim it. The guild is now looking to hire mercenaries who

would be willing to enter the temple and take down the mage cabal. However, the guild wants to ensure that not a single member of the rival faction is killed, lest the temple be desecrated by such an act of wanton violence.

If the player characters accept the quest and enter the temple, they will find themselves walking through illusory mazes that are filled with genuine magical traps, disguised by further illusions. Meanwhile, the mages use hit-and-run tactics to try and force the intruders to turn back. The player characters must keep their wits about them if they're to avoid the traps, find the hidden path through the maze (which is shrouded by false terrain), and capture the members of The Crooked Wands without killing a single individual.



# THE BUREAU OF MYSTERIES

Wealth	⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
Resources	💧 💧 💧 💧
Defence	♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥
Authority	⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡
Services	Investigation, Information, Training
Disfavored	Criminals, Warlocks, Aristocrats
Favored	Monks, Fighters, Paladins, Sorcerers, Rogues

*I'll tell you this much: most folk around here would trade in ten of the town guard for a single one of them. They're clever, relentless, incorruptible, and even ruthless at times. If you think you can pull the wool over their eyes, think again. They're already one step ahead of you. Hell, they were more than one ahead of me.*

— Amis Oakrun, imprisoned crime lord

Those familiar with the Bureau of Mysteries know that the guild walks on the edge of a razor. Committed to justice and truth, its members will investigate any crime and uncover any secret, no matter the danger to their lives. This, of course, means that the guild makes enemies of the most ruthless, deadly, and influential people in the world—corrupt nobles, merciless crime lords, cunning spies, and sometimes worse. Assassinations, kidnappings, heists, and bribery are all investigated by the guild, usually after being commissioned to do so by a patron. However, it's rumored that the guild's agents will open their own investigations if no one else is willing to dig up the truth...

Most members of the guild have access to incredible psionic powers, giving them the ability to read thoughts, enter people's memories, spot lies, and protect themselves against intimidation, charm, enchantments, and mind control. These psionic disciplines are referred to as "the Iron Mind," which gives its practitioners a cold and emotionless affect. In addition to these psionic abilities, most members of the Bureau are masters of disguise, code-breaking, and interrogation.

Members of the Bureau employ these skills to solve crimes ranging from murder to corruption, but the



guild's most famous cases have to do with fighting crime syndicates and gangs. Built on years of quiet research, the Bureau has clandestine files on nearly every major player in the criminal underworld and beyond. Though the Bureau is relatively small, its agents have learned to strike criminals where it hurts the most: they'll break into vaults to empty a syndicate's coffers, scry gang leaders during secret meetings, and even infiltrate a prince's entourage to gain access to his private dungeons, where prisoners may rot for decades without justice.

The Bureau has become the premier guild for rooting out spies, uncovering plots and coups, and even incriminating nobles for crimes against their subjects, but the guild's reputation for being comprised of elite investigators is built on its work for the common people. Mysterious serial murders, bizarre disappearances, and insidious cults have all been uncovered by the guild, as well as ruthless crime lords and far-reaching criminal organizations.

## CALL FOR THE WHITECOATS

The Bureau of Mysteries is an elite crime-fighting force of trained investigators far above the run-of-the-mill town guard or even most royal spies. The members of the Bureau gained the moniker of Whitecoats because, as one might expect, each wears a long white duster or trench coat emblazoned with a golden insignia to

mark themselves as a member of the Bureau. Each team has at least one skilled psionic adept with it, as well as a broad range of skills on both the investigation and the interrogation side of the guild's business. The guild takes on cases from normal folk, such as laborers, crafters, merchants, and the like, as well as nobles and higher-ranking members of society. Though the guild uses traditional methods to solve crimes, like inspecting crime scenes and interviewing witnesses, its members' psionic powers allow them to see things that others would miss: guild members may be able to mentally reconstruct the night of a murder, or pick up on subtle tics that reveal that a witness knows more than what they're saying. Once they have leads, they may call on their fellow guild members to track down suspects or interrogate those involved. Rumors swirl that the agents of the Bureau "break" the minds of those they interview in order to inspect their memories or reprogram them into being informants, but these stories are false—investigators never force their powers on unwilling innocents. Upon finding the culprits of a crime, the guild turns over the perpetrator to the courts, along with files of evidence.

## THE STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE

The primary goal of the Bureau of Mysteries is to see justice done, whether that means imprisoning a corrupt magistrate or returning stolen funds to a caravan merchant. Some members of the guild believe that punishing criminals is enough, but others see protecting and aiding the innocent as being more important than securing retribution. This divide has led some members to use vigilantism to solve cases, especially in places where the courts or government are rife with corruption, while others issue ultimatums to crime bosses in order to discourage crime in the first place. Though the guild does not seek to replace town or city guards, it recognizes that sometimes its members are the only ones left who uphold the law. When the guild sees crime run rampant and there is no one brave or wealthy enough to commission it, then the Bureau will sometimes undertake secret missions using its elite agents to root out the corruption at its source.

Many politicians, crime lords, and nobles have spread rumors that the Bureau is made up of unnatural, inhuman beings whose minds have been warped by their training, making it hard for the guild to get support from some cities and settlements. Indeed, some common people look upon the Whitecoats with fear and mistrust, privately fearing that their own thoughts and indiscretions can be read by a guild member with a single glance. In reality, guild members obey strict rules against using their powers against the innocent, and the dark rumors spread about the guild are meant to discredit the Bureau's work and dissuade people from hiring, trusting, or cooperating with its agents.

## JAMILLA LAMPGLOW

AGE: 38 RACE: Human

GENDER: Female

OCCUPATION: Guild Leader, Investigator

SPECIALTY: Investigation, Psionic Abilities, Stealth

**S**olving mysteries: she has a seemingly supernatural ability to collate evidence and reconstruct crime scenes in her mind, as well as sense the motives of others. On top of this, she is also a shrewd diplomat and guild leader whose cunning and subtlety allows her to navigate the Bureau's dangerous position of seeking the truth, which often pits its members against the powerful and the ruthless.

Jamilla joined the Bureau of Mysteries at a turbulent time in her life. She had just discovered that her own aunt was the boss of a notorious criminal family responsible for smuggling illicit substances into the city, the same substances that killed Jamilla's childhood best friend. Shaken by the revelation that her aunt was so heavily involved, she fled her home and found sanctuary with the Bureau. The guild initially taught her the techniques of the Iron Mind to help her deal with the sorrow she faced, but Jamilla has since risen to lead not only investigations, but the Bureau as a whole.

◆ **FAMILY FEUD:** When Jamilla's aunt died, her sister took up the mantle of running the crime syndicate. A recent kidnapping by the criminal organization provides an opportunity for the Bureau to dig up some leads, and more importantly, save a life.

◆ **THEY WALK AMONG US:** When the local guard refuses to investigate a series of murders that everyone can tell are linked, the Bureau steps in to take a look. It's clear that all of the murders were committed by the same depraved individual, but Jamilla wants to learn why the guard refuses to look into it.

Jamilla is more of an investigator than a fighter, though she's just as sharp with a fencing foil as she is with her wit. Her psionic powers also allow her to fight an opponent mentally.

✦ **PSIONIC STUDY:** If Jamilla has the opportunity to study her foe for a few minutes before engaging in combat, her psionic abilities make it easy for her to read her opponent's mind. She can then rapidly construct their possible moves and come up with effective counters.

## BEYOND THE IRON MIND

Some members of the Bureau have perfected their psionic capabilities to such an extent that, as well as the usual benefits of the Iron Mind, they also have telekinetic, telepathic, or other pseudo-magical abilities. While every individual in the Bureau has some training in the Iron Mind, these psionic savants possess more potent skills, such as the ability to wipe memories, warp others' perceptions, and even enter the minds of targets through astral projection. These savants are usually paired with other, less adept members to offer support and training, but few possess the talent, discipline, and mental fortitude to truly master their psionic powers.

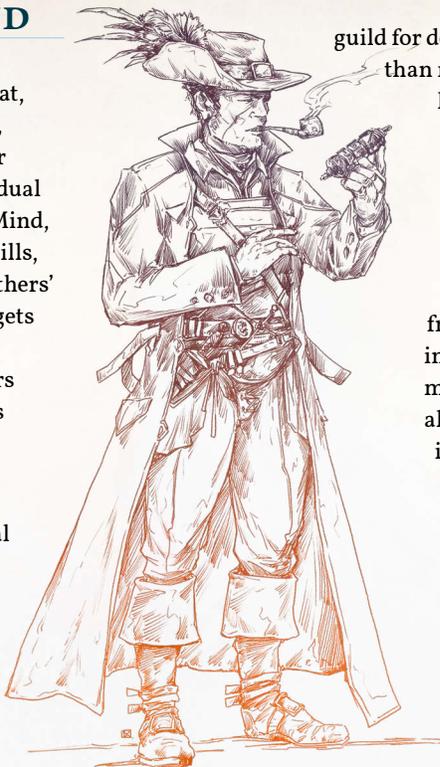
Of course, a guild that deals with the criminal underworld needs to protect its members. These protections range from creating illusory decoys to fool tails following guild members to using pseudonyms and fake identities for investigators. There's even a special subdivision of the guild that deals with clandestinely surveilling enemies to uncover plots against the guild and planting undercover guild members in dangerous areas to ensure that investigators always have an ally nearby. In some cases, powerful psions might be permitted to tap into the noosphere (the combined consciousness of an entire settlement) to sense looming threats by sifting through the conscious and unconscious thoughts of residents. The guild also has an extensive network of informants and moles within the criminal underworld who can be called upon to yield secret information on organized crime. All of these assets help dissuade and defuse threats to the guild before they can cause harm.

## NOTABLE GUILD MEMBERS

Members of the Bureau are dedicated to justice and fairness. They must be mentally stoic and trained in both investigation and combat. Typically, new guild members are scouted from other professions by existing guild members. Some choose to conceal their identities when they join the Whitecoats.

### ☀ **MENTIS (MALE DRAGONBORN INSPECTOR)**

Mentis is one of the Bureau's most highly skilled psionic investigators, and has earned a place at the top of multiple crime lords' hit lists. He's been working for the



guild for decades, and has solved more cases than most town guards combined. He has mastered the Iron Mind to such an extent that he has the ability to read people's thoughts, step into their memories, and deliver powerful psychic "spikes" that stun targets for a short period. He holds the rank of Inspector, and frequently takes the lead on missions in addition to training high-level guild members in the Iron Mind. Mentis always wears his white coat while out in public, but also dons a loose, sheer cloth head covering with swirling patterns that obscures his identity.

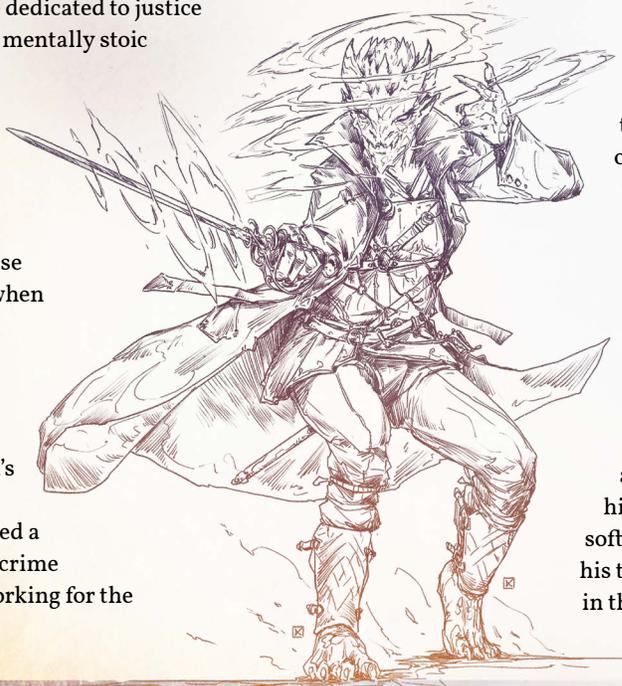
Rumors about Mentis' true identity abound. Some believe that he's the long-lost child of a psychic dragon who turned evil and destroyed the city of *Bradán*, while others claim

Mentis is an avatar of the deity of secrets. Many assassins have attempted to infiltrate the guild and collect the bounty on Mentis' head, leaving the dragonborn wary of newcomers and mistrustful of anyone who attempts to get too close to him. Despite all this, those who train with Mentis learn that he has a grim sense of humor and a deep curiosity toward the hidden depths of the mind.

### ☀ **RICKARD HANNIGAN (MALE HUMAN INTERROGATOR)**

With the ability to exude an aura of calm that stifles emotions and an array of subtly persuasive psionic enhancements, Rickard is the head

Interrogator for the Bureau. He prides himself on being able to get the truth out of anyone without ever engaging in scare tactics or torture of any sort. Rickard himself used to be on the wrong side of the law out of desperation, and understands that most criminals are just people trying to make ends meet, forced by society into committing crimes. Luckily for Rickard, the Whitecoats gave him a way out, but he tries to extend the grace that the Bureau showed him to others from the criminal underworld. Rickard is a personable, middle-aged man who is rarely seen without his feathered cap and the end of a softly smoking pipe clamped between his thin lips. As he's rarely active out in the field, his white coat is spotless.



Rickard is probably best known within the guild as the agent who brought down *Amis Oakrun*, a notorious half-elf crime boss who was in charge of a corrupt circle of druids in *Shadereach Forest*. The druids nourished their groves by burying the bodies of their enemies under the roots. Rickard managed to turn Amis' right-hand man against him, causing others to break their oaths of silence and reveal how the *Oakrun Cartel* was behind hundreds of disappearances. Though Amis is in prison, his daughter *Emry Oakrun* is rumored to still be hunting Rickard.

### ☀ **FARAL THERIATIS (FEMALE HALF-ELF INSPECTOR)**

Faral is a former elite city guard who gave up on her career as an officer of the law after her husband was brutally murdered and the investigation into his death was quietly quashed, leaving her bereft and heartbroken. She left the guard that day, and joined the Whitecoats within a week. In addition to her polished investigative talents, Faral also developed keen senses through the Iron Mind techniques she learned, which give her the ability to sense minds through walls, eavesdrop on a single voice in a noisy room, and spot someone pushing through a crowd from across a packed town square. Although she's somewhat brusque and battered, Faral is one of the Whitecoats' most talented Investigators thanks to her uncanny ability to spot even the most minor of clues. Unfortunately for Faral and the Bureau, she has some less than desirable family ties. Her grandmother, *Iria Theriatis*, is the head of the *Bloodbrand Cartel*, a racist gang of elves who run several districts in the city of *New Galantis*. Although Faral and her mother have managed to break away from the cartel, Iria has never forgiven them, and Faral suspects that the death of her husband was meant to serve as a warning: if Faral or the Bureau ever decide to come after the cartel, Iria will make sure that the investigation is as painful as possible for the guild.

## GUILD RANKS

Much like other paramilitary or police forces, the ranks of the Bureau are strict. The only way to advance through the ranks is to gain a promotion, which must be given by a higher-up. This is typically dependent on a performance review.

Rank	Responsibilities
Constable <sup>1</sup>	Accompanying other members as backup, guarding witnesses, conducting surveillance
Examiner <sup>1</sup>	Examining crime scenes, collecting clues, interviewing witnesses
Visor <sup>2</sup>	Assigning cases, advising Sentinels and Examiners, overseeing investigations
Mentalist <sup>2</sup>	Psions only. Using powers to reconstruct crime scenes, interviewing persons of interest
Interrogator <sup>2</sup>	Interrogating witnesses, accomplices, and criminals, usually aided by psionic talents
Inspector <sup>3</sup>	Psions only. Leading small teams to investigate complex and dangerous cases
Sentinel <sup>3</sup>	Protecting witnesses and other Whitecoats, maintaining safe houses
Inquisitor <sup>3</sup>	Organizing high-level investigations and surveillance operations
Lamp-Bearer <sup>4</sup>	Managing threats to the guild, negotiating with allies, overseeing major operations

1 - low rank, 2 - medium rank, 3 - high rank, 4 - leader

## SERVICES

The Bureau of Mysteries' main service is investigation into crimes and disappearances. This service is offered to anyone who needs it, and can sometimes be acquired pro bono if the affected individuals are in dire need. The guild also sells information on criminals and crime organizations, as well as training to select candidates.

### ◆ PRIVATE INVESTIGATION

The guild often takes commissions from private citizens for a fee ranging from 100 gp to 10,000 gp, depending on the expected complexity and danger of the case. The Bureau can be hired to undertake investigations for many different purposes, but there must be some suspicion of wrongdoing or foul play—the guild's agents are not spies or mercenaries for hire, and won't continue their investigation if they discover that their client is trying to dupe them into doing dirty work. The Bureau is split into dozens of smaller teams that work independently of each other on cases, but if an investigation requires more minds working on it, then they can collaborate for no extra cost.

### ◆ CRIMINAL INFORMATION

The headquarters of the Bureau, known as the *Chalk Institute*, has an enormous library that contains extensive dossiers and folios on members of the criminal underworld, including crime lords, gang bosses, and other shady folk involved in suspicious activity across the Mortal Realm. For a steep price, individuals can buy this information from the guild. As part of this process, the guild runs background checks on the purchasers, which might involve them being secretly tailed by a member of the guild to ensure that they're honest individuals who won't use the information for blackmail or in other inappropriate ways.

#### ◆ INVESTIGATOR TRAINING

For those who prove themselves to the guild, the Bureau of Mysteries offers training in disguises, mental fortitude, and other investigative skills that aid in crime fighting. The skills offered even include medical expertise such as dissection and forensic techniques. The Bureau will not teach outsiders the techniques of the Iron Mind, as these are fundamental to the guild itself and are not to be given out freely. Training from the Bureau is expensive and time-consuming, as the skills are advanced and require much study.

#### ◆ PSIONIC WARDS

The Bureau of Mysteries can be hired to place magical wards on clients and locations. These wards can have a variety of effects, including ensuring that an individual's mind cannot be read; preventing scrying spells from viewing an individual, a location, or determining a target's location; preventing effects such as fear, charm, and mind control from influencing a creature; and allowing a creature to remain undetected by certain kinds of magical sensors. These wards are temporary and typically last anywhere between 24 hours and 10 days.

#### ◆ BODYGUARDS

Clients can hire junior members of the Bureau to keep them safe from criminals. These junior members use the opportunity to train their skills in vigilance, protection, intimidation, and persuasion. Credible evidence must be provided to show that the client is in danger from a criminal or crime organization, rather than hiring the bodyguards to protect them while they conduct illegal or questionable activity. The guild maintains the right to terminate the mission at any time if it feels that the client is behaving inappropriately, or deliberately putting guild agents at risk.

## EXCEPTIONAL EQUIPMENT

Items offered by the Bureau of Mysteries typically assist their users in investigation or subterfuge of some kind. The more common items are given out to members as a reward for ranking up, while the rare and legendary items are reserved for special investigations only.

#### ◆ HALFRICK'S HIDING HAT - 5,000 GP (RARE)

These hats have wide brims and are typically white, matching the uniform of the Whitecloaks. As well as protecting the wearer from the lashing rain, these hats

allow the wearer to disguise themselves using stored psionic power. These disguises don't hold up to physical inspection, but are otherwise incredibly realistic. Furthermore, should the wearer wish it, any creature that sees the wearer while the hat is on instantly forgets about them as soon as the wearer leaves their line of sight. This ability technically removes the memory from the mind of the viewer, but can be resisted by those with strong enough willpower.

#### ◆ LENSES OF SCRUTABILITY - 2,750 GP (RARE)

These thick, orange-tinted lenses are typically worked into wire spectacles, monocles, pince-nez, or similar items. They might also be adorned with gemstones or intricately engraved. They are imbued with psionic energy that makes it possible to spot minute clues and sense minds through walls, which appear as glowing, white balls of light. Furthermore, while wearing the spectacles, the wearer cannot be blinded or have their sight impeded by magical means, and can see through darkness (both magical and non-magical) as if it were dim light.

#### ◆ MINDSLICER RAPIER - 5,000 GP (RARE)

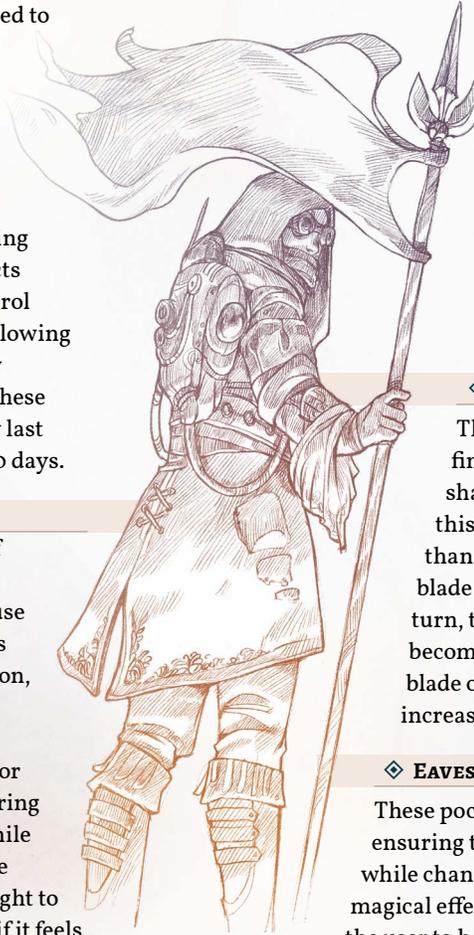
This magical rapier looks like a regular, finely-crafted rapier, save for the brain-shaped amethyst in the pommel. However, this keen blade deals psychic damage rather than physical damage. Additionally, if the blade hits a creature more than once per turn, there is a chance that the creature will become stunned. Subsequent hits with the blade on the same creature during the same turn increase the chance that they'll be stunned.

#### ◆ EAVESDROPPER POCKET WATCH - 1,500 GP (RARE)

These pocket watches are powered by psionic energy, ensuring that they always display the correct time while changing to adjust for regional, geographical, and magical effects. Furthermore, the pocket watch allows the user to hear the thoughts of up to five creatures within 30 feet of the item. For each target whose mind is simultaneously read beyond the first, a check must be made to be able to keep the user from being overwhelmed by the influx of thoughts and stunned for a short period.

#### ◆ WANDERING SCRYBALL - 750 GP (RARE)

These enchanted glass balls are around the size of a medium-sized humanoid's eyeball, but might have a variety of different patterns on their surfaces. A scryball can be remotely controlled by its user from up to a mile away. While the ball is being controlled, the user can see through the scryball as if they were physically at that location. The scryball has both normal vision and darkvision up to a range of 30 feet.



## QUESTS

Cases assigned by the Bureau of Mysteries are normally given to the guild's own members rather than to outsiders. Despite this, non-guild agents might be called upon if they are specialists or if they've made ties with guild members.

### DISTURBING TASTE

The Bureau has hit a brick wall with an ongoing case, and is hiring other investigators to lend a fresh pair of eyes to the inquiry. Over the past six months, children have been going missing from the city of *Methos*. After the sixth child went missing, parents have been keeping their children under close watch and the streets are empty at night. The Bureau thinks that the disappearances have something to do with a crime syndicate known as *The Fallen Triarchy*—skilled thieves-for-hire who have a not-so-secret headquarters in one of the city's rougher districts. Unfortunately, the Bureau's attempts to pin down its members and question them have so far failed due to the thieves' newfound ability to turn invisible at a moment's notice. Hired investigators must lay a trap for a member of The Fallen Triarchy, catch them, and interrogate them. If they succeed, the member may reveal the location of the syndicate's headquarters and a discreet way of getting in, but appears to be under a magical spell that prevents them from revealing anything else. Upon traveling to the headquarters, the investigators discover that the organization's new leader is a hag that hungers for the flesh of children, and has granted the group's members their invisibility.

### SANGUINE CELEBRATION

An opulent party at *Vinson Manor* has recently ended with the murder of *Duke Norius*, a wealthy nobleman with supposed ties to the black market. No one has been allowed to leave the manor since the murder, and *Lord Vinson* has called upon the Whitecoats to identify the murderer before the infamously corrupt city guard gets involved. However, the first guild investigator sent to the manor has also turned up dead. Now, the guild is looking for trustworthy people to back up the new investigator and ensure that they find the killer. Over the course of the investigation, it's discovered that the duke was killed by an invisible air elemental, who strangled him while he was in a private room speaking to several other nobles about a proposition involving his criminal connections. One of the nobles in that meeting commanded the air elemental using an enchanted ring, which was left at the crime scene, but no one can remember (or is willing to reveal) who the original owner of the ring was. Understanding the duke's dark dealings and the motivations of the killer reveal that the murderer was looking to take control of the duke's illicit business, which consists of smuggling forbidden artifacts.

## HEADS OF STATE

The *Republic of Or'dale* is in crisis: several members of the republic's high council have gone missing, and the entire country is falling into conspiracy and paranoia as various factions, including ambitious politicians, rebel groups, and raiders, try to capitalize on the confusion. A number of powerful senators have enlisted the Whitecoats to investigate the disappearances, but the guild is struggling to make any progress on the case. The main issue is with the *Gilt Wardens*, the elite guards responsible for the high council's safety, who claim that the Bureau's agents are being paid to sabotage the search and ensure that any clues are destroyed. The Wardens insist that their own investigation team will find the missing council members, and have issued an ultimatum: anyone who interferes with the Wardens will be killed.

The Bureau is looking for outside agents who can infiltrate Or'dale and help the guild collect some clues about what's really going on. If the agents are successful, then they may discover that the council guards are in fact responsible for the disappearances. Some of the guards have been bribed to turn a blind eye, but others have been corrupted by an insidious organization called *Ordo Umbris* that wishes to replace the council members with carefully trained impostors in order to seize control of Or'dale.

### ERSATZ EMPLOYER

The guild has been hired by a wealthy scholar named *Agatha Everdown* to reclaim some rare texts that were stolen from her personal library. The texts contained lore on an ancient necropolis that holds remnants of a culture that openly practiced necromancy in its cities, and used undead as slave labor. The Bureau must track down the thief, who horribly tortured and disfigured two members of the scholar's household in order to gain the key to the library while Agatha herself was out at the local college conducting historic research. Worse still, they murdered a member of her staff, whose body was dragged away. Agatha is terrified that the thief will come back for more of her texts, as her personal library is filled with tomes containing lore about ancient cultures.

The investigators can get to work by interviewing the unfortunate members of the household staff who were attacked, and by examining the crime scene. Using this information and the guild's contacts, the party should be able to track down the thief. However, upon finding and interrogating the thief, it's revealed that they are in fact Agatha's supposedly murdered servant. They claim that the Agatha that the investigators talked to is an imposter who murdered the real scholar in an attempt to gain the texts, which are filled with blasphemous necromantic spells. The servant claims that they escaped with the texts to keep them out of the hands of the imposter.

# THE HERMETIC UNIVERSITY

Wealth	⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
Resources	● ● ● ● ●
Defense	♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥
Authority	⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡
Services	Spellcasting, Spellcraft, Tutoring
Disfavored	Barbarians, Rogues, Necromancers
Favored	Wizards, Sorcerers, Warlocks

*They understand the secret language of magic. To their sages, “fire” is a word for creation and destruction, and “casting” means to breathe life into the cosmos. Other mages have forgotten that spells are alive, but the University remembers.*

— Galiba Sandstep, desert guide



spread throughout the Mortal Realm and into the planes beyond, the Hermetic University is an institution where elemental magic has been perfected, opening the doors to even stranger and more wondrous forms of arcana. The guild is made up of four colleges, each devoted to one of the four elements, while the University’s headquarters, the Grand Madrasa, is dedicated to the study of the mysterious fifth element. Once a member has proven themselves in one of the four colleges, they are then permitted entrance to the Madrasa, where the deepest secrets of magic are revealed.

Gaining admission to the University is difficult and rigorous, and usually involves following a hidden, interplanar trail of puzzles that tests the applicant’s mind and magical skills. Upon being granted entry to the University, a new initiate must choose which of its colleges they wish to study at—the College of Water, Earth, Fire, or Air. No matter their choice, every student is taught the intricacies of metamagic, the practice of altering spells and unlocking the hidden aspects of the elements, and the secret art of commanding “living spells,” which are animated currents of magic that hint at the mysterious fifth element.

The University’s colleges are scattered across the Mortal Realm, while its headquarters, the Grand Madrasa, is hidden in its own pocket dimension, made accessible



only to the most accomplished scholars. The University is renowned for its secrecy, but its students and masters are known for being interplanar travelers whose bodies gradually come to resemble their chosen element. There are rumors that those who reach the pinnacle of the University’s training and master the fifth element shed their mortal forms entirely, and become living beings of magic. These rumored sages are immensely powerful, and are said to watch over the balance of the world itself...

## ARCANE ASCENSION

The four colleges that make up the body of the guild are the College of Air, which floats in a glass castle above the kingdom of *Al’hazra*; the College of Fire, which rests in a fort of bronze and brass in the searing *Naria Desert*; the College of Water, which is scattered throughout a collection of buildings both above and below the waves of the *Um-Falik Archipelago*; and the College of Earth, which is buried deep in the heart of the snow-capped *Jalid Mountains*.

The goal of the students of the Hermetic University is to gain mastery over the fifth element, arcana. By truly understanding the nature of arcana, they should be able to merge with magic itself, becoming a being beyond most mortals’ comprehension. To reach this stage of enlightenment and ascension, the students of the Grand Madrasa engage in esoteric, alchemical studies that center on the four planar elements, each of which has a symbolic meaning: fire is seen as the element of destruction

and transformation, water is the element of healing and purification, air is the element of perception and willpower, and earth is the element of life and death. Only by mastering these four can a scholar hope to understand arcana, the fifth element, and rise to the rank of Arch Sage.

## METAMAGIC & LIVING SPELLS

The two most important aspects of studying in one of the Hermetic University's colleges is the manipulation of spells—called metamagic—and the animation of spells into semi-sentient forms, which are known as living spells. The study of metamagic allows students to evoke the hidden nature of their elemental magic, such as creating fireballs that transmute metal into stone, or summoning storms whose lightning strikes can grant a creature the ability to see beyond the Material Plane. It also allows students to shape spells in more nuanced ways, such as creating hurricanes from water and wind, or sending the power of an earthquake through the foundations of a city to destroy a particular building.

The study of living spells is another form of magic that distinguishes the University from other magic schools. After gaining an understanding of their chosen element, students are taught how to commune with the element by connecting their souls to it. This allows the students to gain new spells without the need for incantations or formulae. These living spells have their own wills and voices, and may grant the students deeper insight into the nature of magic. Each living spell represents a different aspect of its element, and may change and grow over time.

## MASTERWORKS OF MAGIC

In order to graduate from their respective colleges, the University's advanced students undertake Great Works, which demonstrate their mastery of their element and usually involve creating a new spell or a type of spellcasting. These students and their Great Works are then tested in times of crisis. The University sees the world as a tenuous balance between destruction and creation, light and darkness, and the five elements, so when the Equilibri of the guild sense that the world is out of balance, they may send advanced students to correct that balance with the help of their nascent Great Works.

If they are successful, the students are brought before the Allamah, the leader of the Grand Madrasa and the University itself. After a harrowing final trial, the students may be admitted to study the fifth element, arcana. Upon mastering it, a process that entails years of study, journeys into the outside world, and the student's transcendence from their mortal form, the mage is then recognized as a Sage. These Sages then wander the world, using their unparalleled mastery of magic to protect the balance of all things.

## AMIR HAKIMI

AGE: 73 RACE: Human

GENDER: Male

OCCUPATION: Guild Leader, Allamah

SPECIALTY: Water Magic, Alchemy

**A**mir Hakimi is a powerful mage who has chosen to stay in mortal form in order to lead the University. Amir can freely control water in all of its forms and has completed the highest, most esoteric teachings of the University. Most of these are hidden from all but the Archsages, but they are, of course, the subject of much rumor among the lower-ranking students. This mastery allows him to forge palaces of ice from clouds of steam, and even create colossal water elementals to protect the University from threats.

Amir is relaxed, wise, patient, and benevolent, but his watch over the balance of the world has made him melancholy—he understands the pain of suffering and chaos, and knows that he cannot solve these problems himself. His ultimate goal is similar to that of previous Allamahs—to ensure that the world does not descend into chaos or cataclysm under his watch. In addition, he wishes to free warlocks from their service to malevolent or chaotic elemental patrons and prevent those patrons from tempting people into serving them.

◆ **ANGERED APPRENTICE:** The Allamah is looking for trusted individuals who can hunt down his former apprentice, who has run away from the University and has begun abusing their power. Amir wants someone to persuade them to return to the University without hurting them.

◆ **ACADEMIC RIVALRY:** The University has come under attack by a cult called the *Seers*, who resent the University's prestige as the Mortal Realm's foremost magical learning institution and the University's claim that it understands the deeper mysteries of reality. The cult has kidnapped the Dean of the College of Earth, and the Allamah needs someone to rescue them.

The Allamah rarely fights his foes directly. Rather, he uses divination magic to predict and thwart his foes and his elemental magic to create defenses and elementals that can protect the University on his behalf.

◆ **MASTER OF WATER:** Amir has absolute control over water in all of its forms, and can use its affinity for secrets to read minds, scry across long distances, and even glimpse the future. In combat, his body can become liquid water, mist, or hardened ice. He also has a chance to negate all magic cast at him, and is resistant to magic cast against him.

## NOTABLE GUILD MEMBERS

The Hermetic University is a diverse and inclusive institution, welcoming beings from across the planes of existence. While most of its staff and students are humanoids, there are some exceptions.

### ☀ **EMBRAL BLATT (NONBINARY HOBGOBLIN ILLUSIONIST)**

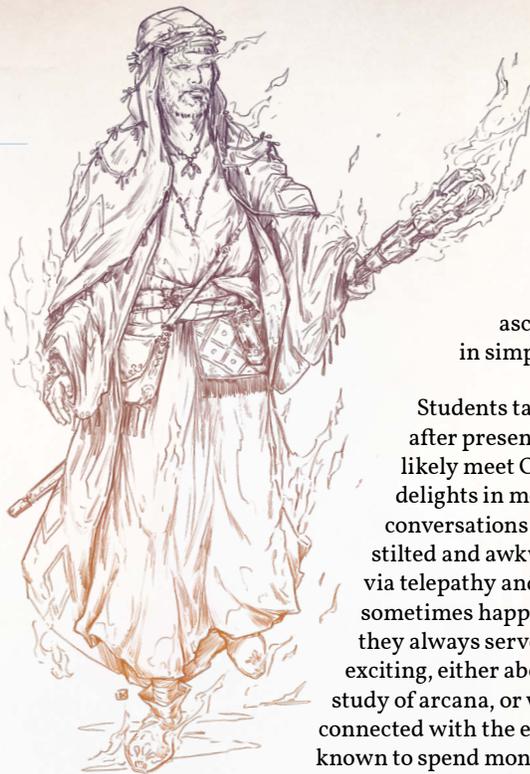
When students arrive for their first term of study at the Hermetic University, it is Embral who oversees their matriculation ceremony. This grand affair is one of Embral's favorites while working within the University, as they take this opportunity to keep an eye on potential talent. They have a keen sense for who is likely to do well at the University, and they typically take these students under their wing, especially those who are from less privileged backgrounds.

Embral themselves struggled as a student, and wants to ensure that others can fulfill their potential. Embral's lessons are typically focused on unlocking elements of metamagic that influence humanoids' perception, as they themselves are a master illusionist. They constantly shroud themselves in illusory features so that the students never know their true appearance, making the students question whether outside appearances really matter. This is one of the many deeper lessons that Embral tries to communicate through their teachings. They often play tricks on their favorite students, as these are meant to open their eyes and help them learn. This style of illusory magic is linked to the element of air, and Embral's permanent residence is within the glass castle of the College of Air.

### ☀ **OMNIAH (FEMALE ASCENDANT ARCHSAGE)**

Omniah takes the form of a humanoid assemblage of sand and stone that swirls like a dust devil in continuous motion and whose head is an enormous sage green gemstone. Each facet of the gem depicts a different face that vaguely resembles the one Omniah had before she ascended. Omniah is one of the thirteen Archsages who reside within the Grand Madrasa, but unlike some of the other Archsages, she prefers sharing the company of mortals.

Omniah embodies the elements of earth and air, and her chief interests are the cycles of life and death, the nature of reality and illusion, and the limits of the body and mind. Before she



ascended, she was known as a brilliant researcher, but her true genius lay in spellcrafting. While other mages likened crafting a spell to mathematics or painting, Omniah approached it as music. Even in her ascended form, Omniah finds joy in simple songs or complex fugues.

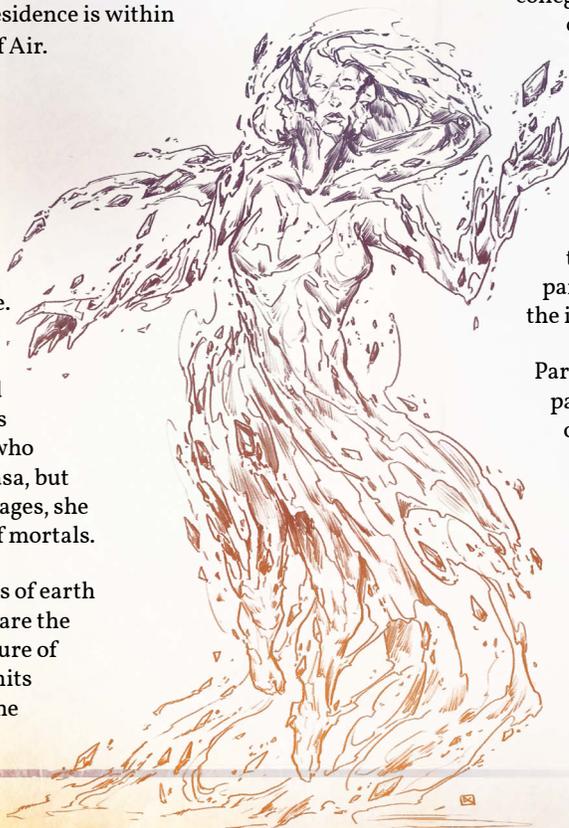
Students talented enough to graduate after presenting their Great Work will likely meet Omniah at some point, as she delights in meeting new graduates. Although conversations with her can sometimes be stilted and awkward due to being conducted via telepathy and having strange pacing—sometimes happening over the course of days—they always serve to reveal something new and exciting, either about the Grand Madrasa, the study of arcana, or what it's like to be so deeply connected with the elements. Omniah has been known to spend months musing on the subtle shifting of continents and the patterns of the wind.

### ☀ **PARVIZ SHAPUR SOLTANI (MALE HUMAN DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF FIRE)**

Full of energy and a burning desire to help those in need, Parviz is the best-known Dean of the Hermetic University. Unlike the other Deans, Parviz believes that magic is best learned outside of a classroom, especially when it's used to improve the world and help its people. Though this "hands-on" approach is often messy and dangerous, Parviz is famed for his ability to reshape students' failed spells and turn magical chaos into brilliant harmony.

Parviz has particularly made a name for himself and his college in the Naria Desert, where the college stands. Though the location was initially chosen for its barren seclusion and sweltering heat, the college's grounds have become an oasis for travelers and a vital part of the fragile network of settlements spread across the desert. Parviz has helped cultivate this community and keep it safe, partly as a lesson to his students about the interconnectedness of people.

Parviz is easily recognized thanks to his pair of eccentric eyebrows, which move of their own accord like the flickering flames of candles. His orange eyes are always bright, but positively glow when he's doing something that he's passionate about. Despite his rank within the guild, the Dean typically wears traveler's clothes so that he can leave the college and travel at a moment's notice.



## GUILD RANKS

The only way to ascend through the ranks of the Hermetic University is to study and to prove one's understanding through practical examination, the most important of which is the Great Work. Ascending to Archsage is an extremely difficult process, which requires its own rituals and preparations.

RANK	RESPONSIBILITIES
Seeker <sup>1</sup>	Studying one of the four elements in a college
Tutor <sup>2</sup>	Mentoring Seekers and assisting Sages with their work, studying to become an Aspirant
Aspirant <sup>2</sup>	Focusing on preparing a Great Work (Reached upon completing a Seeker's education)
Thaumaturge <sup>2</sup>	Studying arcana, the fifth element, at the Grand Madrasa
Equilibrius <sup>3</sup>	Assessing the balance of the world, sending Aspirants, Sages, or Archsages to deal with crises
Sage <sup>3</sup>	Teaching Thaumaturges about the fifth element, working magic to correct imbalances in the world
Dean <sup>3</sup>	Overseeing one of the four colleges, judging Seekers and Tutors for advancement, advising the Allamah
Archsage <sup>5</sup>	Protecting the colleges and the balance of the world, advising the Allamah
Allamah <sup>4</sup>	Overseeing the colleges, directing the Equilibri, determining the University's curricula

1 - low rank, 2 - medium rank, 3 - high rank, 4 - leader

## SERVICES

Though its students and instructors closely guard the University's secrets, the guild does have some contact with outsiders, and may even offer some of its services to those who prove themselves worthy.

### ◆ ELEMENTAL SPELLCASTING

The most commonly sought-after service provided by the University is spellcasting. Though the University detests performing magic in exchange for something as mundane as money, its colleges are known to aid the people and communities around them, such as altering the weather to grant much-needed rain or quelling destructive earthquakes. Those who wish to engage the

services of a student (or, in rare cases, an instructor or Sage) must speak to a Dean, who will judge whether the petitioner's request is worthy of being fulfilled. Though the University holds many powerful secrets, no magic or knowledge that can unbalance the world will be granted.

A large part of the spellcasting service offered by the guild is meant to grant experience to students, who are expected to find their own place in the world after graduation. These assignments are also meant to show how their magic can impact the world, and might even inform their Great Work.

### ◆ ARCANE TUTORING

While only enrolled students have access to the colleges' full breadth of magical knowledge, outsiders who prove themselves worthy are sometimes offered the chance to conduct research and study there. The University offers classes on deciphering ancient scripts, assessing gemstone purity, identification of rare and dangerous spells, and a panoply of other subjects. While a basic understanding of many of these skills can be acquired through the use of a college's library, high-level training requires private tutorship from instructors. This tutoring cannot be bought with gold—instead, the University asks those that they teach to repay their tutelage by conducting research on the guild's behalf.

### ◆ ESOTERIC SPELLCRAFTING

For advanced spellcasters, the allure of the University is in its unparalleled ability to craft new, custom spells as a smith would a blade. New spells sometimes take years to perfect, but the University's mastery of metamagic can shorten the process to weeks or even days. A combination of alchemical and arcane practices are brought to bear on the process of spellcraft, resulting in a method that more closely resembles sculpture or painting than experimentation. This service is only provided if the beneficiary of the new spell agrees to cast it in some way for the University's benefit, such as helping them to accomplish one of their goals.

### ◆ ALCHEMICAL CONCOCTIONS

The Hermetic University will offer rare and exotic concoctions to outsiders that have wondrous properties. These concoctions can take the form of potions or powders, and grant one-use effects, such as dissolving any metal, immediately starting a fire, evaporating all water it touches, cracking stone (no matter how hard or thick), and so on. The alchemical concoctions are typically made to order, a process that could take days or even weeks depending on how powerful the effect is and the rarity of the ingredients needed to create it. The University does keep some alchemical concoctions "in stock," though they tend to be more conventional potions and powders such as potions of flight and powders of disappearance.

## ARCANE AIDS

Items from the Hermetic University are often created to help aspiring mages with their study and work. These items are typically only given to guild members, and only to assist their progression within the colleges. Other powerful items might be given to those working for the University.

### ◆ ELEMENTAL WONDERS - 4,500 GP (RARE)

Advanced students within the various elemental colleges of the Hermetic University can infuse various items with wondrous elemental magic. These items cannot hold the elemental energy within them for long, and unless used within a few weeks of creation, they lose their energy, which either dissipates harmlessly into the atmosphere or erupts in a violent burst. Similarly, once the items have been used, they lose their magic. There is no way of regaining or retrapping the elemental energy once it has been expended. Despite their single-use drawback, these items are incredibly powerful. They include things like an amulet of incineration that can destroy any non-magical material it touches, a vial of purification that can restore anybody that consumes it (including regenerating limbs and curing diseases), or a geomorphic hammer that can be smashed into the earth to cause a pillar of stone to shoot up into the sky.

### ◆ SEEKER'S FOCUS - 700 GP (UNCOMMON)

These arcane foci are created by students during their first year at the University to help them master a specific elemental discipline. They can take the form of almost anything, though typically students choose wands, rings, amulets, rods, orbs, or staves. Through an esoteric and complicated ritual, these foci can be attuned to a specific elemental realm, giving them the ability to tap into elemental magic when they're used to cast certain spells. Rather than channeling the elements directly, they instead amplify the hidden aspects of that element: fire foci enhance destructive and transformative spells, water foci empower healing and purification spells, air foci assist with divination and illusion spells, and earth foci amplify spells that deal with the cycle of life and death.

### ◆ REALMSHIFT ORB - 5,000 GP (RARE)

Filled with swirling elemental essence, these orbs are lightweight, delicate, and around the size of a dinner plate. They allow their users to travel across the realms of existence, though most tend to be connected to a particular elemental realm. When activated, an orb will allow a group of up to ten individuals to travel to another realm, provided that the user of the orb can keep an image of

that realm held in their mind's eye. The orbs also allow the user to travel back to the Mortal Realm, but usually take 24 hours to regain their power after being activated.

### ◆ MORTAR & PESTLE - 100 GP (UNCOMMON)

These magical *mortars and pestles* are often made from carved crystal that glitters with magical sparks when used. Certain rare ingredients acquired by the user can be ground up to form powder that, when thrown over a target, will imbue it with a magical enchantment. The nature of the enchantment depends on the ingredients of the powder, but can include effects such as flight, heating metal, dissolving stone, or transforming a substance into a "higher" metal, such as silver or gold.

### ◆ MASTER'S CRUCIBLE - 250 GP (UNCOMMON)

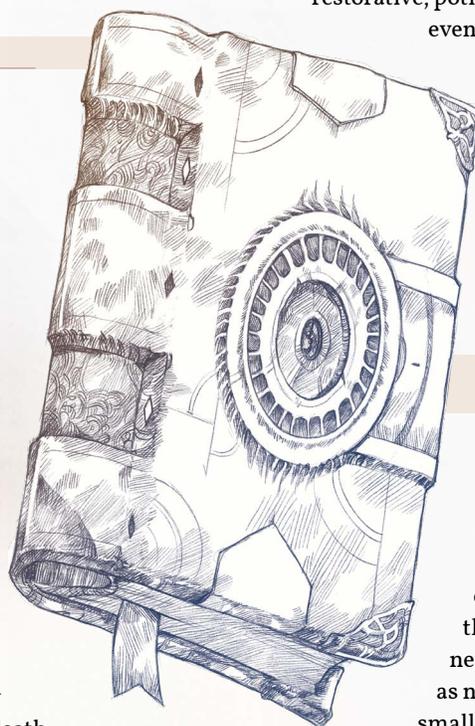
This black iron crucible comes with a magical flame that can be controlled by the user with a word. The crucible itself can hold one flask's worth of liquid. Any magical liquid (or any other liquid that has some kind of effect, such as poisons) that is poured into the crucible and heated by the magical flame within increases in potency. Poisons become deadlier, healing potions become more

restorative, potions of strength make their drinker even stronger, and potions of bravery last longer than they otherwise would.

The longer that a liquid is heated within the crucible, the more potent it becomes. However, keeping control of the liquid's temperature is essential; if the crucible gets too hot, then the liquid will evaporate entirely.

### ◆ SCHOLAR'S TOME - 500 GP (UNCOMMON)

Each *scholar's tome* is a wonderfully decorated and bound book filled with blank pages—at least to begin with. Whenever a spell targets the user of the tome, the user can choose to place the tome between themselves and the caster. This does not negate the spell and its effects still apply as normal, but the book also absorbs a small portion of the spell, which is then recorded on one of the pages as a series of magical inscriptions. A spell transcribed into the book in this manner can be learned by the tome's user after 1 hour of study. The user can then cast the spell as if it were from a scroll. Once a spell is cast in this way, it disappears from the book, leaving a blank page once more. The book can hold up to one hundred spells at a time.



# QUESTS

## STOLEN STUDENTS

An entire class of first-year students has been stolen from the College of Air while they were on a field trip in the *Whirling Vortex*, an area of the Elemental Realm of Air famed for its magical auroras. The trip was led by a Sage named *Astrid Adri*, who was also kidnapped along with the students. The University needs experienced adventurers to travel to the Whirling Vortex and uncover any clues there about the location of the stolen students, then proceed to recover them from their captors. The University is happy to provide amulets of wind walking, feather fall tokens, flying carpets, or whatever else the hired hands might need while in the Elemental Realm of Air. Searching for clues in the Whirling Vortex leads the adventurers to discover that the students and their instructor were kidnapped by agents of the *Gargoyle Empire*, who are constantly on the lookout for mage-slaves who can create new gargoyles. In order to free them, the adventurers must track the captives to the *Floating Church of Creation*. Here, numerous gargoyles watch over their slaves, who work night and day to forge new gargoyles from lumps of stone.

## THE ELEMENTS OF INITIATION

Mages who wish to gain admission to the University must complete a series of puzzles and trials that test their magical prowess, intellect, and dedication. The first puzzle is etched into giant monoliths scattered across the world: it is a cipher that, when decoded, bids an aspiring student to gather four precious materials, though these materials are described in a cryptic, symbolic language that requires extensive research to understand. Upon discovering the hidden meanings of the text, the aspiring student learns that they need to collect four rare reagents: crushed gemgravel, bottled vortexes, dragon turtle bile, and everflame chits.

Crushed gemgravel is best acquired from the Elemental Realm of Earth, where stone giant sculptors use the material to create their statues. Statues made with crushed gemgravel have the ability to animate whenever commanded to do so by their makers, so stealth is a priority. Bottled vortexes are commonly used by the Gargoyle Empire in the Elemental Realm of Air, and thus the best place to find them is in one of the empire's floating siege towers. The gargoyles are constantly at war, so accessing a siege tower will likely mean entering an aerial battlefield. The dragon turtle's bile can only be harvested from the gallbladder of a dead dragon turtle, found in the Elemental Realm of Water. Asking the pirate captains of the realm leads to a sunken turtle corpse surrounded by giant, ravenous sharks. Everflame chits are small brass tokens imbued with elemental flame that are used as betting currency by the efreeti. The best place to find these are in the efreetis' fighting pits.

## ELEMENTAL TUTORS

In order to truly master an elemental discipline, many students decide to take on extra tutoring from a creature that is attuned to a specific element. For example, a student of the College of Earth might learn about life and death from an ancient treant that has observed their forest throughout centuries of life cycles. Similarly, a student from the College of Water might wish to consult with a merfolk cleric who has worked with curative magic for their entire life and understands how to channel the element of water to purify wounds. Since finding these tutors often requires travel to far-off lands, students are willing to pay for adventurers to escort them. These escorts are usually paid with wondrous items, spellcasting, or other arcane services that draw on the University's unparalleled knowledge of magic. Finding an elemental tutor may bring a student and their escorts to elemental planes or uncharted wilderness, or even hidden realms belonging to the fey or djinn. Once a student arrives at their destination, their escorts are usually expected to help them persuade their chosen tutor to take the student on, traditionally by vouching for their dedication in the face of their dangerous travels.

## SEEK A FORMULA

The University is searching for a lost alchemical formula that allows air to be given the same solidity as stone, thereby allowing a mage to create solid structures out of air, or even clouds. This alchemical formula was devised many centuries ago by a powerful conjuror who befriended an air djinn who taught them many secrets of the Elemental Realm of Air. However, in order to recover the formula, the University must send individuals into the abandoned *Flying Fortress* of the ancient mage, which has been drifting across the world for centuries. It is untouched by those who would seek to make the place their own or plunder its secrets because it is protected by mazes of solid air and by the air djinn who still remains loyal to the conjuror, even in death. The seekers of the formula must reach the fortress and navigate invisible mazes made of solid air, which are guarded by air elementals.

The seekers might be able to use a spell (such as find the path) or trickery, such as painting the invisible walls of the air mazes, to assist them in their navigation of the labyrinthine constructions. Even if they do so, they are plagued initially by mephits and then by more dangerous elementals who seek to keep intruders out. Once they reach the main doors of the Flying Fortress, they still must answer a riddle to gain entry, at which point they are accosted by the air djinn who still lives in the castle. The djinn is still loyal to the dead conjuror and has become convinced that they are merely sleeping, all while preserving the corpse by altering the air around it. The djinn must be shown that the conjuror is, in fact, dead if the characters are to have any hope of finding the formula in the vast libraries of the conjuror's castle.

# THE SHIELDS OF OSANYA

Wealth	⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
Resources	● ● ● ● ●
Defence	♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥
Authority	⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡
Services	Blessings, Martial Aid, Protection
Disfavored	Warlocks, Rogues, Rival Clerics
Favored	Clerics, Paladins, Monks



*The Shields aren't like other clerics and priests—their goddess Osanya treads this world like they do. The Mother of Mercy walks among them, performing miracles wherever they pass. They say her touch can heal the direst of wounds, and their touch is her touch. Each day, we pray for their blessings to reach us.*

— Arban South, disaster survivor

**O**ver the years, the Shields of Osanya grew from a small band of faithful paladins and clerics into a sprawling holy order, with their beloved Osanya at the center of it all. Members who perform tremendous acts of bravery and selflessness are rewarded with a piece of Osanya's divinity, which allows them to carry out legendary acts of mercy: a member might dispel a plague by drawing out the contagion from a victim's wounds, survive dozens of mortal blows while protecting others from harm, or even resurrect souls of the dead into new bodies. However, for each piece of divine power that she grants to her followers, Osanya herself becomes weaker and more vulnerable.

Since their inception, the Shields have established footholds across the world, with strongholds in cities and outposts in smaller settlements. They have become famous for their superhuman feats of heroism, but many serve Osanya's mission by helping to rebuild towns after disasters, providing the poor and destitute with food, and curing the sick. All of this is part of Osanya's vision: to transform the Mortal Realm into a paradise that rivals the Celestial Realm that she left behind. Unlike many religious orders, the Shields are lauded for helping anyone in need, not just members. This means they often undertake long, arduous missions to far-flung places in need of help, whether it be

a war-torn kingdom or a region devastated by infernal invaders. Though some members receive generous gifts for their work and carry splendid arms and armor, most Shields are poor. However, even a humble-seeming follower of Osanya may carry a shard of her divinity, making them more powerful than even the strongest warrior.

## DEFENDERS OF THE PEOPLE

The armor-clad warriors of the Shields are instantly recognizable thanks to their lion emblems and flowing manes of hair. Whether traveling alone or in small squads alongside clerics and monks, the guild's paladins are famous for their ability to endure superhuman amounts of pain. They are also known for the divine protection they bestow on those they protect: for every injury their wards would take, the paladin endures it instead, and with each blow they endure, they grow stronger. Paladins close to death have been known to gain demi-god levels of power, and this knowledge alone causes many foes to flee rather than continue the fight. Despite the martial prowess of the Shields, it is rare for them to form armies or participate in wars. Instead, the Shields work to protect civilians from bandits or marauding soldiers—many cities have been saved from the torch due to the protection of the guild, and many more famines have been prevented thanks to the Shields' stalwart defense of farmsteads and fishing towns. The only time that the guild truly rallies its members for war is when it is confronted by a force

that transcends mortal cruelty—a demonic invasion, a fey army, or an undead horde are some of the few times that the Shields will engage in large-scale battles.

## THE MORTAL GODDESS

Osanya's decision to abandon her position in the divine pantheon and share her power with mortals is unprecedented, but Osanya herself believes that there was no alternative. Rather than continuing to answer prayers, give out minor blessings, and watch as her followers were assaulted by destruction and greed, Osanya believed she needed to take a greater role in the events of the Mortal Realm. To do that, she would need to make a monumental sacrifice.

Unlike other gods who may take mortal shapes to hide their divinity, Osanya has given up so much of her divinity to her followers that she is now more mortal than god. She retains her ability to grant blessings and much of her omniscience, including her ability to hear the prayers of the suffering, but she is no longer immortal. Many guild members fear for her safety, though even in her current, weakened state, she is more difficult to kill than most mortals.

Osanya can see into the hearts of mortals and discover which ones are filled with empathy, selflessness, and mercy. With this knowledge, she entrusts those she deems worthy with miraculous power that goes beyond the divine gifts normally granted to clerics or paladins. The most common of these is the ability to heal grievous wounds or cure virulent diseases that would be beyond the ken of most healers, but her other gifts include the ability to rescue souls from the land of the dead, seal away powerful beings in prisons of light, or even sacrifice oneself to erase a single, cataclysmic event from history. Each time Osanya gives the gift of her power to one of her followers, she loses even more of her divinity, slipping further toward becoming an ordinary mortal. However, each act of mercy, selflessness, or charity that her followers perform grants a small portion of that divine power back.

## ARCHITECTS OF A NEW TOMORROW

The Shields of Osanya have existed for just under a century, and have already done much good since their inception. In addition to their battles against the forces of evil, the Shields undertake missions that spread Osanya's light throughout the realm, such as tracking down missing people, helping destroyed settlements plan and rebuild, delivering much-needed medicine and key items to remote and dangerous locations, convincing warlords and bandit companies to stop raiding or pillaging an area, and escorting groups of refugees from hazardous lands to a new home.

Each of these missions is meant to build a better world for future generations, as well as show that altruism, generosity, and benevolence are just as powerful as greed and destruction. The aim of many of the guild

## YORIK LIONHEART

AGE: 57 RACE: Human

GENDER: Male

OCCUPATION: Guild Leader, Paladin

SPECIALTY: Divine Protection, Healing, Combat

For many years, Yorik worked as a mercenary fighting criminals and bandits for coin on *Tannik Road*. During a particularly dirty fight, Yorik was blinded by the poison spit of a snake-folk assassin hired to kill him. In desperation, he called out to the gods for assistance. Osanya heard his cries and took pity on him by curing his blindness and giving him the strength to defeat his assailant. After this life-changing event, Yorik committed himself to Osanya, becoming a paladin in her service.

Although initially mistrusted by other guild members due to his bloody past, Yorik won over many of his fellows after he spared the lives of the cultists of *The Circle of Horns*, who surrendered after seeing Yorik defeat their fiendish patron in a duel. He soon became Osanya's most devoted and blessed servant, and found himself portrayed as an icon of redemption and hope. Yorik took on leadership of the Shields after leading a desperate defense of Osanya's temple, during which Yorik gave an impassioned speech to his enemies, pleading for peace. Yorik then threw down his weapons and offered to weather every blow his foes intended for Osanya. After he had endured one hundred mortal blows, he still stood, bloodied but alive. This act filled his foes with admiration, and they declared their allegiance to the goddess. It's rumored that Yorik has become immortal through his connection with Osanya, but despite his divine favor, he has remained humble and committed to Osanya's creed of mercy. Still, he can be stern and even fearsome when facing the cruel and the greedy, whom he seeks to thwart.

◆ **SPREADING LIGHT:** A new continent, rich in resources, has just been discovered in the frozen north of the world. Many criminal enterprises have flocked to the land to exploit it, and Yorik wants to put a stop to it. He needs help with defending and recruiting the indigenous peoples.

◆ **COMING STORM:** Rumor has it that an undead druid named *Witherblight* has been collecting ancient witch-stones in the hope of summoning a century-long storm to ravage the land. The Shields need assistance in preparing for the worst, as well as hunting down the deranged druid.

✦ **HEALING AURA:** Yorik exudes an aura of holy light in battle. He can use divine magic to restore his allies within the aura's area of effect by healing their wounds and curing them of sickness. He is immune to non-magical and necrotic damage, and has the ability to cure wounds.

members is to leave the world a better place than when they entered it, especially by encouraging harmony and peace. The “New Tomorrow” to which the Shields aspire has inspired many guild members to create works of art, including poetry and prose, paintings and sculptures, and songs and plays. Many of these works can be found on display in the Shields’ guildhouses.

## NOTABLE GUILD MEMBERS

The Shields are famous for their paladins, but these warriors are only a small fraction of the guild’s membership—most are clerics, craftspeople, and other faithful laypeople who search for ways to use their skills to help others.

### ☉ OSANYA, MOTHER OF MERCY (FEMALE DEMI-GOD)

While Osanya is the patron and deity of the Shields, she is not their leader—instead, she believes that the fate of the world (and the guild itself) should be in mortal hands. Although her power has diminished, Osanya’s grandeur has not—everywhere she goes, she shines with golden light, lifting the spirits of those around her. Osanya seeks to act as living proof that the path of mercy and compassion is not hopeless, and that one does not need to be cruel in order to change the world. To mortal eyes, Osanya appears human, though she possesses supernatural beauty and floats slightly above the ground. Osanya still possesses enough divine power to lift terrible curses, grant blessings of health and courage, and protect entire towns with radiant barriers of light, but many of her followers’ gifts now outshine her own abilities. Because of this, Osanya is always protected by an entourage of bodyguards who are sworn to prevent any harm from reaching her.

Although Osanya’s preferred form is that of a humanoid, she can also take the form of a large lioness standing around six feet tall. She takes this form when there is no choice but to meet a foe in battle, or when she needs to intervene to prevent a tragedy. Her lion form is so majestic and beautiful that those who have beheld it dream about it for the rest of their lives.

### ☉ YETUNDE ABDULLAHI (FEMALE HALFLING ARCHITECT)

Never seen without a pencil behind her ear or a scroll of parchment rolled up beneath her arm, Yetunde is a devoted worshipper of Osanya who draws magic from the order domain. She is the guild’s most skilled architect, and is instrumental in the construction and repair of places that have been partially or wholly destroyed, such as previously besieged settlements that were rescued by the

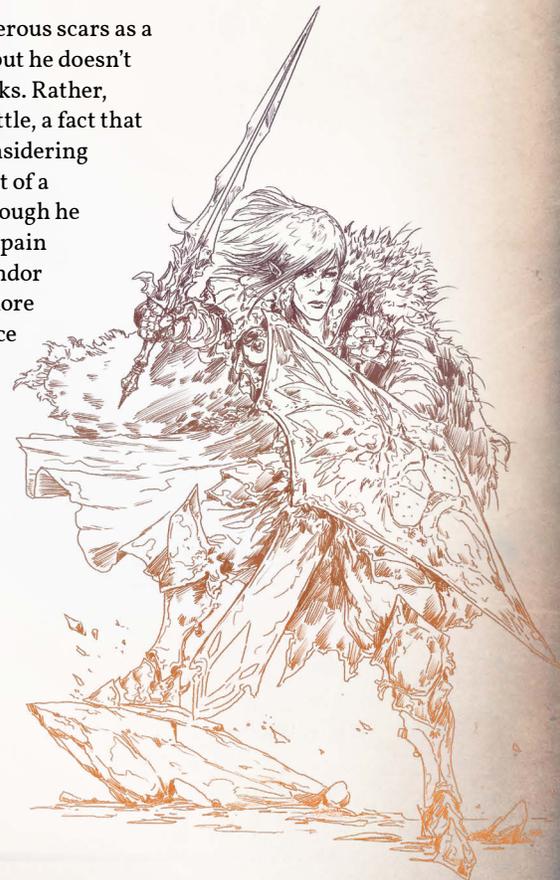
Shields, or places brought low by natural disaster. Yetunde has an amazing eye for design and grandeur, and always ensures that a temple to Osanya stands in a place of pride as part of any restoration project she takes on.

Yetunde is also a keen scholar of all things design and construction, and has vast knowledge concerning secret doors, how to create and thwart traps, and other architectural topics. She is keen to meet new people and ask their opinions on her most recent designs (typically displayed as blueprints on a rolled-up parchment). Although she’s a devout woman, she worries that the guild is gaining a reputation for bloodshed rather than mercy, and always reminds new recruits that showing clemency is paramount in worshipping Osanya.

### ☉ GALANDOR ESPERILLIA (MALE ELF KNIGHT)

Leading the charge against the enemies of righteousness and mercy is Galandor Esperillia, or, as he is sometimes known, the White Lion. The moniker was earned thanks to Galandor’s unflinching bravery in the face of impossible odds, and his willingness to use strength to protect others has earned him a shard of Osanya’s divinity. This spark of divinity allows Galandor to weather blows that would cleave mountains and endure spells that might incinerate lesser mortals, and it’s rumored that as long as Galandor’s faith in Osanya does not waver, there is no foe that he cannot defeat.

Galandor bears numerous scars as a result of his battles, but he doesn’t try to hide these marks. Rather, Galandor relishes battle, a fact that he struggles with considering his status as a servant of a goddess of mercy. Though he is often immersed in pain and bloodshed, Galandor is trying to resolve more conflicts with patience and grace. Galandor is also a talented artist and can paint masterful pieces that are truly inspired, though they often depict warfare and death.



## SERVICES

The Shields of Osanya offer many services to those in need, and ask only that they return the kindness to others. Since most members of the Shields have given up material wealth, few of them can be swayed to use their divine power in exchange for money.

### ◆ ALMS & AID

The guild can offer beds, food, healing, and shelter for those in need. This comes in both magical and non-magical forms, depending on the guild member's access to divine power. This aid is always administered for free, but with the understanding that the almsperson will listen to a sermon about Osanya.

### ◆ MIRACLES

The higher-ranking members of the Shields of Osanya have the ability to perform genuine miracles using the divine power of Osanya herself. Each member's abilities may be limited to a single, powerful effect, while others may have access to two or more. These miracles include curing nigh-incurable diseases, raising the dead, temporary transformation into angelic forms, raising buildings from nothing but dust, or sealing away evil beings.

### ◆ HOLY TRAINING

The guild offers training for clerics, paladins, and other individuals dedicated to the pursuit of the divine.



This training involves tutoring in spells, especially healing and restorative enchantments. The main spells that the Shields teach are those that protect and heal others, as well as blessings and communions that enhance the abilities of others. Of course, the guild only teaches these radiant rituals to practitioners who worship Osanya, the guild's patron.

### ◆ DIVINE DIVINATION

Clerics of Osanya can commune with the goddess herself to discover the plans of the other gods (which Osanya can still perceive, despite being in the Mortal Realm), and how they may manifest. This divine insight can give hints to those who receive the visions as to what might befall the world next. This allows the Shields to work on preventing famine, war, political upheaval, and other such events before they even happen. Unfortunately, while Osanya is communing with other gods or looking into the future, she's unable to bestow any other benefits to her followers.

### ◆ BLESSINGS

Those who are worthy of Osanya's grace can receive a blessing from her clerics and paladins, or from Osanya herself. These blessings can range widely in effect, but can include temporary protection from certain damage types or certain kinds of foes, a bonus to attacks against evil creatures, temporary boosts to health, and even immunity to poisons and disease. These blessings are normally accompanied by visual marks, such as silver eyes, a golden halo, or even an illusory lion that accompanies the blessed individual.

## GUILD RANKS

The hierarchy of the Shields is fairly rigid. One has to prove one's abilities at the lower ranks in order to get further up the ladder. High-ranking members are chosen by Osanya herself, as is the guild leader.

RANK	RESPONSIBILITIES
Builder <sup>1</sup>	Building and repair work, studying Osanya's lore, assisting Architects
Squire <sup>1</sup>	Learning peaceful combat techniques, studying Osanya's lore, assisting Knights
Healer <sup>1</sup>	Assisting Clerics using non-magical healing, caring for patients, studying Osanya's lore
Architect <sup>2</sup>	Designing temples, new buildings, and settlements, overseeing building and repairs, training Builders
Knight <sup>2</sup>	Serving under Paladins as warriors and defenders, training Squires
Cleric <sup>2</sup>	Healing people in need, administering medical aid to the wounded, training Healers
Paladin <sup>3</sup>	Fighting against the forces of evil, protecting settlements and people against chaos
Servant of Osanya <sup>3</sup>	Advising Osanya's Chosen, spearheading crusades
Osanya's Chosen <sup>4</sup>	Managing the guild, determining where to crusade, conducting worship

1 - low rank, 2 - medium rank, 3 - high rank, 4 - leader

## VALIANT VESTMENTS

The items used by the Shields of Osanya are empowered by the goddess's divine magic, and do not work in the hands of those whom Osanya deems unworthy. Because of this, these items are rarely given to non-members.

### ◆ LION'S AEGIS - 3,500 GP (RARE)

These magical shields look like golden lion's heads and are enchanted with Osanya's protective magic. They are granted to paladins of the guild, though some may be given as gifts to warriors allied with the guild. Each time the bearer of a *lion's aegis* is dealt physical damage, they may roll a die that matches the one used to deal the damage. The bearer may add that number of charges to the shield. As an action, the bearer may spend any number of charges from the shield to heal another creature for that number of hit points.

### ◆ REDEMPTION'S HEFT - 980,000 GP (LEGENDARY)

Gleaming with divinity, this immense warhammer deals radiant damage with its strikes, which can also blind opponents. Once per day it can be held aloft, whereupon it sings a glorious hymn, healing all allies in a short radius to their maximum hit points while reducing the bearer's health to the verge of death. In addition, the warhammer has one charge, which can be spent to mark an ally. The marked ally cannot be killed by weapons or spells for one minute, though their health points would decrease as normal. If the marked creature has less than zero hit points when this effect ends, then they immediately die. This weapon regains its charge once every 7 days.

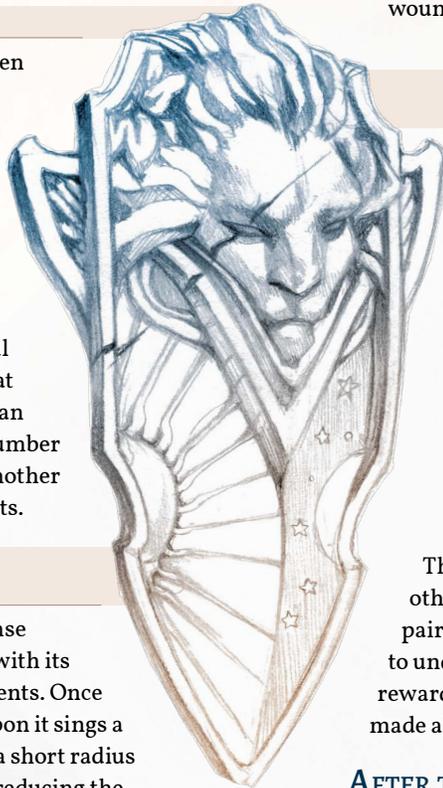
### ◆ CAPE OF COMPASSION - 700 GP (RARE)

Once a member of the Shields of Osanya advances to the middle ranks of the guild, they are bestowed with a *cape of compassion*. These brilliant silver capes are worn about the shoulders, and gain charges whenever the wearer performs an act of selflessness, mercy, or charity (the Game Master decides what qualifies). One charge may be spent to cast one of the following effects: create a banquet that can feed up to six people, heal a grievous wound, counteract a disease or poison, or make up to three nearby creatures temporarily immune to fear or charm effects.

### ◆ OSANYA'S TEAR - 5,000 GP (VERY RARE)

The tears of the goddess Osanya turn to pearls as they leave her eyes. These pearly tears can be collected by her devotees, and bestowed with divine power by Osanya so that they become single-use magic items. A creature

holding a tear can use the divine magic stored within it to bring one other creature back to life, provided that the target has been dead for no more than a century, didn't die of old age, and isn't undead. Alternatively, the magic can also be used to restore a lost limb, heal a mortal wound, or remove a stubborn curse, disease, or hex.



### ◆ LADY'S SWORDBREAKER - 25,000 GP (VERY RARE)

This jitte-like weapon is made of platinum, and has a black leather-bound hilt. Holding it imbues the wielder with enhanced dexterity, giving them the ability to parry and block blows from even heavy weapons. A weapon that is turned away by the blade is not only deflected, but is also weakened. Subsequent attacks made with the weakened weapon have their damage reduced by a significant amount.

## QUESTS

The Shields of Osanya are always looking for others to help them with quests, and will often pair outsiders with fully-fledged guild members to undertake missions. Though the Shields do not reward their allies with gold or items, the alliances made along the way are often their own rewards.

### AFTER THE QUAKE

The player characters are asked to accompany a detachment of builders and planners from the Shields of Osanya to the city of *Bausburg*, where a violent earthquake has caused untold damage and almost leveled the city. The place has been abandoned by its leaders, and is in desperate need of assistance. For a start, the walls of the city have fallen, allowing monsters to roam the streets unchecked. The city is currently occupied by a horde of vicious trolls who have been feasting on the corpses of the dead. To make progress, the walls must be rebuilt and the trolls drawn out of the city limits. In addition, a certain number of homes and businesses must be rebuilt for key figures living within the city, such as the grocer *Tellian* and the inventor *Besar*. Finally, a gang of criminals called the *Red Street Thieves*, who are extorting the desperate, must be disbanded or destroyed. Once the city is back on its feet, there is still work to be done. A new, worthy leader must be found for the rebuilt city. The Shields would prefer that this leader be a member of the guild, or at least someone who shares the Shields' ideals and goals.

### THE LAST QUEST

Osanya is searching for a group of adventurers who are willing to sacrifice their lives to keep hope alive. She

needs the group to defend a mountain temple that holds refugees from a bloody war against an army of flame-commanding cultists called *The Fiery Hand*. The Fiery Hand worships a god of violence and conquest who wishes for Osanya's peaceful influence to be eradicated from the area, and the cultists have been commanded to massacre the temple's refugees to complete their victory. The temple is only accessible via a narrow mountain pass, which must be held against the overwhelming ranks of enemy troops until a larger detachment of the Shields of Osanya can arrive and drive back the cultists. Only a small group will be able to traverse the dangerous mountain terrain in time to hold the pass.

During the mission, player characters are likely to be killed in battle. After reinforcements arrive and the cultists are driven back, any dead player characters are resurrected by Osanya at the temple. Furthermore, those who bravely defended the place despite the overwhelming odds are given a shard of her divinity, which could take the form of a holy weapon formed of radiant flame, a breastplate forged from liquid silver, or an amulet imbued with divine magic that staves off death.

### THE LOST MISSIONARY

While out on a missionary quest, one of the Shields of Osanya has gone missing. They were dispatched to the *Forest of Scales*, a tropical paradise that is darkened by the presence of snake-folk slavers. The Shields sent *Orlin Dagg*, a gnome missionary with great experience in the field and true devotion to Osanya, to preach to the snake-folk in the hope that the slavers might see the light of kindness and renounce their slave-taking ways. When Orlin didn't return from their mission, the Shields began to worry that perhaps they too had been enslaved by the reptilians.

When the party goes exploring to find the missing missionary, they have to face the dangerous wildlife of the rainforest and avoid the snake-folk slavers who would otherwise attempt to capture them. Eventually, they manage to discover Orlin by following their tracks. When they do, they realize that the missionary has lost their faith that mercy, peace, and justice can triumph over all else. The depravity of the slavers has broken their faith. The party must find a way to rekindle Orlin's faith and show them that good can triumph.

### THE SOUL OF CERMANTHIA

The Shields have discovered that the city-state of *Cerманthia* has lost the favor of its patron god and its people are searching for a new deity to worship who will protect them. Cerманthia has struggled with numerous issues for many years, not least of which is the volcanic eruptions that send lava pouring forth from the nearby *Mount Drazgoth*. The Shields hope that the party might be able to prove to the Cerманthians that Osanya can help protect them against these natural disasters.

When the player characters speak with the city's rulers, they realize that they are not the only missionaries there. Many clerics and acolytes of different faiths have converged on the city, hoping to convert the Cerманthians to their religion. If the party puts some time and effort into investigating how to prove that Osanya is the most worthy of Cerманthia's faith, then they will hear that another volcanic eruption is due to occur any day now, and that preventing it would clearly show Osanya's power. When the player characters investigate Mount Drazgoth, they discover that a cult devoted to elemental power has been causing the frequent eruptions. Defeating the cult will not only prevent the next eruption, but also cause the volcano to go extinct, proving once and for all that Osanya is the deity to worship.

### END THE FAMINE

The town of *Bogari* is suffering from an awful famine due to a pestilence that has withered their crops and killed their herds. The town is situated on the steep slopes of the *Angwara Foothills*, which are renowned for their fertile soil. The Shields need a group of capable travelers to take three wagons of rice, salted fish, and other provisions to the town and provide relief from the effects of the famine. Accompanying them are two clerics of the guild who have been sent to handle the pestilence.

Upon arriving in the town, it's clear that something more horrifying than a famine has happened. Those who starved to death have already reanimated as worm-riddled husks that attack the living. The town's fields are filled with poisonous dust and strange, disease-ridden plants. Upon investigating, the party may discover that something foul has taken up residence beneath Bogari, this being *Usharex, Lady of Plagues*, a bloated, maggot-infested demon lord whose very presence brings diseases. Some townspeople have already begun worshipping Usharex in a bid to save their own lives, but others are holed up in their homes, praying for rescue.



# THE ELDRITCH WARDENS

Wealth	⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
Resources	💧 💧 💧 💧
Defense	♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥
Authority	⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡
Services	Abjuration, Planar Travel
Disfavored	Clerics, Wizards, Paladins
Favored	Sorcerers, Druids, Warlocks, Tieflings

*The Prophets of the Void call it a “realm rift:” a tear in the fabric of reality that links this world to the Outer Dark, a plane of chaos and terror. I saw nightmares pour out of it like a burst dam, but the fate of the cultists is what haunts me—their flesh twisted before my eyes, until they were mockeries of natural life.*

— Wynjord, guild Warder

**W**hen beings from other planes of existence threaten to invade the Mortal Realm or mad cultists upset the natural order with dark rituals, the Eldritch Wardens will be there to beat back the loathsome tide. The Wardens are peculiar due to relying on mages whose power falls outside the rigid boundaries of scholarly, arcane magic—indeed, against enemies who defy reason, the only magic with true power is strange, chaotic, and primal.

While the inhabitants of the Mortal Realm continue their mundane lives harvesting crops and tending livestock, the Eldritch Wardens are on the borders of reality, wielding bizarre, primordial spells against unspeakable threats. The terrifying and enigmatic things that this guild is involved in means that its members are sometimes mistaken for cultists and even shunned by the magical community at large. But members don't join the guild for the fame, power, or gold—they join because the Mortal Realm needs someone to keep the forces of madness and destruction at bay.

The guild consists of planar travelers, master abjurers, and scholars with unrivaled knowledge of other dimensions. Initiates study under several masters who train them in esoteric schools of magic unknown to other mages, as well as in the art of interplanar navigation, which requires careful mastery of the Wardens' iconic wardstaves. After their apprenticeship is complete, new Wardens accompany the guild's veterans on



missions before earning their own staves and striking out to patrol the planes. Though many Wardens have sacrificed their lives during this never-ending vigil in the shadows, few will ever know that they exist.

## ENEMIES OF THE ELDRITCH

The dark menagerie of foes that the Wardens face is impossibly vast, but among their number are nameless things that lurk between dimensions, twisted beings who haunt the sleeping world, and tenebrous gods who see the Mortal Realm as another shining beacon to be swallowed up by their bottomless maws. The Wardens patrol many planes of existence to keep a watch over these beings' movements and stop them from expanding beyond their realms, but when one of these nightmarish creatures manages to breach into the Mortal Realm, the Wardens relentlessly seek out the twisted covens and foul aberrations that they create. Because of this, many cults live in fear of the Eldritch Wardens, and know that if they spot robed travelers carrying compass-headed staves that the time has come to scatter.

In the face of eldritch abominations and bizarre interplanar creatures, the Eldritch Wardens cannot rely on strength of arms or even the arcane magic taught in most magical universities. Instead, the Wardens use magic drawn from the bones of the earth, their own bloodlines, or

even the power of a shadowy patron. These kinds of unorthodox magic are often chaotic and esoteric, but provide greater defense against the guild's foes, who are often immune to more traditional spellcasting.

In line with their namesake, the Eldritch Wardens rely heavily on protective magic that can create wards and magical boundaries, as well as suppress other magic. Each Warden is usually enchanted with several layers of protective spells at any given time, as well as additional spells that allow them to detect the presence of the unnatural and otherworldly. However, some of their most important works of spellcraft are used to imprison aberrations, create magical barriers, and open or close planar rifts.

## PLANAR TRAVELERS

When not defending the borders of the Mortal Realm, the Eldritch Wardens are often trekking across the planes in search of impending threats, gathering lore and whispers about their foes, or following aberrations back to their home planes in order to discover their true nature. Among the planar wanderers, the Wardens are among the few who dare to travel to the Outer Dark, where nightmarish monsters float through a mind-warping abyss whose energies have the power to corrupt and mutate minds and flesh alike. The Wardens are frequent visitors to the Infernal Plane as well, much to the chagrin of the demonic inhabitants.

However, this interplanar travel comes at a cost. The combination of planar energies and the chaotic magic that the guild members weave causes strange quirks to manifest in a Warden's very being. They might find themselves surrounded with an aura of frigid air if they've visited the *Timeless Tundra* of the Elemental Realm of Water, or have multiple shadows that were acquired during a delve into *Castle von Schatten* in the Shadow Realm. Sometimes these quirks can be harmless, and at other times unnerving, but every altered guild member wears their quirk as a mark of pride and dedication.

## ARCANE REPAIRS

Though the Wardens are tireless and vigilant when it comes to guarding the borders of the Mortal Realm, there are inevitably breaches. The havoc wrought by a loose aberration, in addition to the tumultuous magical fallout caused by the use of wild and chaotic magic, can create regions where the laws of nature are bent or even broken. In other cases, the area might become corrupted by the influence of an extraplanar invader, making it hostile to living creatures. These areas are cordoned off by the guild and slowly reclaimed. This process typically involves draining the magic from the area and repairing any rifts or magical phenomena that have manifested there. In many ways, this reclamation is just as dangerous as quelling the initial threat, since the residual magics can be subtle and unpredictable.

## YUN YEONG REALMTREADER

AGE: Unknown RACE: Human

GENDER: Female

OCCUPATION: Guild Leader, Mage

SPECIALTY: Chaotic Magic, Planar Travel

Yun Yeong Realmreader joined the Eldritch Wardens after she watched the city of Golden Dangwon become consumed by a growing portal. As young adventurers, Yun Yeong and her brother had been attempting to stop the ritual meant to open the rift, but their last-ditch effort failed catastrophically, allowing a cult to tear open a fiery gateway to the hells that filled Golden Dangwon with infernal flames. At the same time, the city began to shift under their feet as it was wrenched from its foundations and dragged into the hells. Yun Yeong managed to escape the city, but her brother remained behind, determined to right their mistake. The Eldritch Wardens arrived just as the city disappeared and used their power to seal off the rift, as well as rescue the survivors from the remaining fiends trapped in this world.

After recovering from her wounds, Yun Yeong joined the guild in the hopes of redeeming herself for her failure to save Golden Dangwon, as well as to find her lost brother. She dedicated herself, body and soul, to the guild's mission, and soon her empathy toward the common folk and her bravery in the face of unimaginable foes marked her as a true Warden. After years of service, the relatively youthful Yun Yeong was chosen to be the World Warlder, leader of the guild. Yun Yeong appears to be a young woman, but her time in other planes has slowed her aging. She has long black hair that she lets fly wild as a reflection of her chaotic magic. There is great wisdom behind her eyes, which burn with green flame. Since Yun Yeong has spent years exploring the hells, her skin is marked with magically glowing scars resulting from battle with devils.

◆ **INFERNAL INQUEST:** The World Warlder needs a group of experienced adventurers or guild members to head into the hells and search for Golden Dangwon, the missing city of her past. Yun Yeong believes the city must still be intact within the hells, and that perhaps her brother is still alive there.

◆ **REDEEMING REPUTATION:** Yun Yeong has learned that the recent spate of disappearances and murders in the city of *Relshar* is due to an infiltration of eldritch forces from another realm. Yun Yeong knows that things will get worse without intervention, so she needs diplomatic non-guild members to travel to *Relshar* and convince the city's government to lift the ban on the Eldritch Wardens by vouching for the guild and revealing the eldritch nature of the attacks.

Yun Yeong is a master of planar travel and teleportation, skipping between realms and dimensions with relative ease. She uses this in combat to distract her foes, and even trick them into entering other planes.

✦ **PLANAR SWITCH:** Yun Yeong can create a temporary portal at a moment's notice. She can use this to trick a charging creature into plunging into another plane, sneak up behind foes in a split second, and summon forces from other realms.

Even after a site is reclaimed and once again safe for mortals to tread, it inevitably seems to carry some uncanny traits: a babbling brook in a forest glen may sing in otherworldly languages under the light of a full moon, or a ring of standing stones on a lonely moor may glow with unearthly light when thunder booms overhead. To superstitious locals, it seems that the Wardens scar and warp the places they visit, leaving lingering traces of the uncanny in their wake. The truth, however, is that the Wardens see these scars on the world more clearly than anyone and lament that they cannot be mended further.

## NOTABLE GUILD MEMBERS

The members of the Eldritch Wardens tend to be solitary hermits or wanderers comfortable with living on the fringes of civilization. They are usually adept at fending for themselves, and often appear eccentric or gruff to common folk. Despite their reclusive natures, Wardens regularly hold gatherings to learn from one another, exchange news, and share each others' company.

### ILQUAPUL ATREX (MALE HALF-ORC SPY)

Ilquapul Atrex is a half-orc of middle age. He has a thick head of hair that he braids and adorns with jade jewelry, and has a greenstone nose ring. New members of the Eldritch Wardens are likely to meet Ilquapul, as he is one of the guild's few members who mixes with society. He has an uncanny ability to blend into a crowd, and has become the guild's foremost agent when it comes to infiltrating and destroying cults. Ilquapul has a vast network of informants, but presents himself to outsiders as a wandering scholar.

Ilquapul's family joined a cult when he was but a child, and he witnessed them become corrupted by the extraplanar patron of their dark organization. Because of this, he believes strongly in personal freedoms, and rebels against groups that try to control their members too firmly. Despite his status as the Wardens' unofficial spymaster, Ilquapul prefers to deal with problems himself, rather than operate solely from the shadows.

### LAMENT (FEMALE TIEFLING DRUID)

Lament is one of the Eldritch Wardens' Reclaimers, responsible for cleaning up the arcane mess left by eldritch threats, unruly aberrations, and the chaotic magic of the Wardens themselves. She is an extremely powerful druid whose own brand of natural magic causes plant life to spring from her fingertips at the slightest touch and moss to sprout wherever her feet tread. Her ability to restore a devastated wasteland to an area of natural beauty is remarkable, even if she

sometimes creates new species of plants and animals in the process. Of course, Lament isn't so irresponsible as to let these byproducts of her chaotic magic run wild—whenever possible, she rounds them up and adds them to her bizarre menagerie. She's almost always accompanied by a bat-frog, newt-kitten, or three-horned rabbit-lark.

Despite the horrors she sometimes faces, Lament has an upbeat personality; she's always cracking odd jokes about the strange creatures she's collected and the things she's seen from other realms. She enjoys teaching others about the natural world and its hidden intricacies, and is responsible for training new Reclaimers. Few understand the interweaving of nature, magic, and chaos as well as Lament, and this gives her the insight required to deal with phenomena that would stump other mages, such as bizarre curses or magical corruption. Because of her expertise (and her bubbly personality), she's a much-loved figure within the guild's ranks.

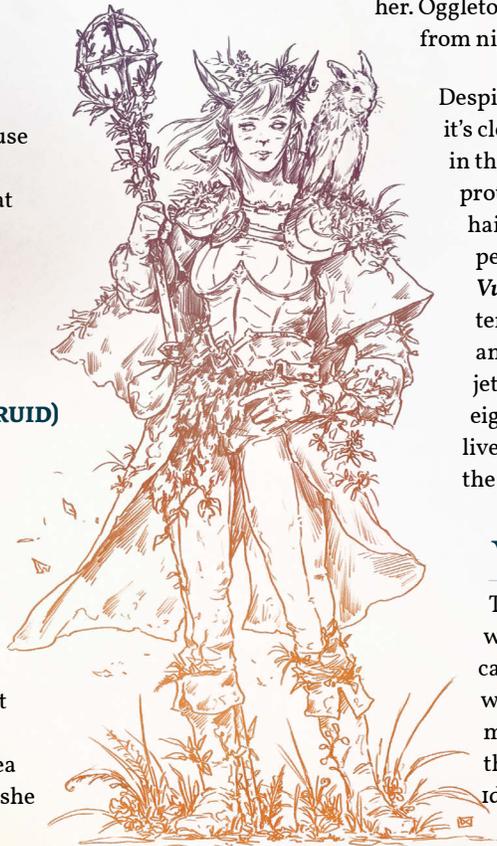
### OGGLETOP SPUTTERSHOCK (FEMALE GNOME SORCERER)

Among the guild's Oculi, Oggletop is perhaps the most notorious. She is an incredibly talented sorcerer with an unrivaled command over wind-based magic, but she has a nasty temper to reckon with. Oggletop's life has been a tragic one, as her gnomish community was ravaged by aberrant horrors called grim fastigors from the Realm of Nightmares when she was a young adult. She was the only survivor of the attack, having been saved by the first manifestation of her sorcerous powers, which summoned a tornado of swirling air around her. Oggletop, or Ogg for short, still suffers from night terrors related to the event.

Despite Ogg's cantankerous demeanor, it's clear to all that she believes strongly in the ideals of the guild, specifically protecting others from dire threats hailing from alien realms. She's personally responsible for slaying *Vuaduun of the Blasted Wastes*, a terrible amalgamation of liquid silver and chitinous scales that spouted jets of flesh-melting acid from its eighteen mouths. Ogg saved countless lives by crushing the being under the weight of a gale-force wind.

## WARDEN TRAITS

The Eldritch Wardens' interactions with bizarre and chaotic magic often cause them to take on strange traits, which can range from harmless to mind-bending. You can choose from the options on the Trait table or roll **1d10** to give a Warden a unique trait.



Trait (d10)	Description
Moon-Silk Hair	The Warden's hair has turned into silver-white gossamer that flows in waves as if underwater.
Stonebones	The Warden's body has become twice or three times as heavy as its original weight, though the Warden can move with the same ease as before.
Bells for Tongues	Those who listen to the Warden speak swear that they hear the soft creak of rope and the distant toll of golden bells.
Slothbacked	Moss grows from the Warden's back like thick hair.
Shadowless	The Warden casts no shadow, having lost it somewhere in the void between the planes.
Wind Kissed	The Warden's hair and clothes jostle as if struck by gusts of wind.
Icy Heart	The Warden's breath forms condensation as if the air were frigid, and their heart slows to an almost imperceptible beat.
Petal Blink	Whenever the Warden blinks, flower petals slip from their eyes and crumble into dust.
Eye of the Beholder	Whenever the Warden looks at their reflection, something minor about their real appearance, such as eye or hair color, suddenly changes.
Cracked	Parts of the Warden's skin are cracked like porcelain and their open wounds emit a faint light.

## GUILD RANKS

Despite operating mostly on their own, the Eldritch Wardens have a strict hierarchy that determines which missions each member is entrusted with. Unlike other guilds, many members spend their entire lives in one rank, only taking on more specialized roles when encouraged by higher-ranking Wardens.

RANK	RESPONSIBILITIES
Warder <sup>1</sup>	Studying the planes, researching potential aberrant threats
Realmwalker <sup>1</sup>	Traveling in search of aberrant magic and reporting back
Ascetic <sup>2</sup>	Traveling the planes for research, studying aberrations, and investigating cults
Magus <sup>2</sup>	Tackling minor threats such as cults, lesser aberrations, and others
Sanctifier <sup>2</sup>	Casting protective magic over at-risk people and places
Reclaimer <sup>3</sup>	Repairing parts of the Mortal Realm damaged by aberrant magic
Oculus <sup>3</sup>	Tackling major threats such as portals, legendary aberrations, and others
Synodite <sup>3</sup>	Supervising lower-ranking members, electing new World Warders, conducting research
World Warde <sup>4</sup>	Managing the guild, managing planar travel, determining new exploits

1 - low rank, 2 - medium rank, 3 - high rank, 4 - leader

## SERVICES

Finding the Eldritch Wardens can itself be a difficult task, but persuading them to offer their unique services is even harder. However, the Wardens are always looking for allies, and members may offer their help to those who share their cause or have the potential to join the guild.

### ◆ ARCAN RECLAMATION

When a wizard destroys their tower with a magical explosion, an unhinged alchemist spills potion reagents into the streets, or a dabbling necromancer accidentally desecrates the town square, the Eldritch Wardens might be called. The guild sends out teams of Reclaimers for a small fee to clean up the magical mess left behind. This process can take days, weeks, or even months depending on the scale of the chaos created, and there's no promise that all traces of stray arcana will be mopped up.

### ◆ PLANAR NAVIGATION

Certain members of the Wardens, typically those of Ascetic rank, can be hired or recruited to serve as guides across the planes of existence and the many dimensions of the multiverse. There are few who know the planes better than the members of the guild, and their expertise both in navigating and surviving in these strange and often illogical places is of immense value. Of course, this provides the guild members with an opportunity to do planar research themselves while the party they are guiding gets on with their own business.

### ◆ ELDRITCH LORE

The guild has a vast quantity of knowledge regarding eldritch beings, aberrations, and abominations, as well as interplanar creatures, locations, and phenomena. This collected knowledge comes from centuries of protecting the Mortal Realm against alien threats, and is informed not

only by research but by first-hand experience. The guild will impart this knowledge to those who they deem worthy, usually for a token fee. Those who use the knowledge to help defeat such threats might be offered guild membership.

## POWERFUL ARTIFACTS

The items that the Eldritch Wardens offer are centered around containing or killing aberrant beings from faraway realms, closing portals that threaten to spew alien beings into the Mortal Realm, and cleaning up the arcane taints left by these hideous entities.

### ◆ WARDSTAFF - 45,000 GP (VERY RARE)

Each Eldritch Warden of Ascetic rank or higher is bestowed a *wardstaff*. A typical wardstaff is made of gnarled wood, and has a spiral or crescent at the top. Levitating above the top of the staff is a magical symbol that matches the magical preference of its wielder. For example, a sorcerer's staff might have a blue flame, while a druid's might display a glowing leaf. These staves channel the chaotic magic that the Wardens use, making their spells more potent. In addition, a wardstaff has the ability to nullify or counter magic in a small area around it in response to the wielder being targeted—this effect is especially powerful against eldritch magic. The symbol capping a wardstaff also serves as a magical compass, which can point toward nearby arcane disturbances or the Mortal Realm if the bearer is traveling through other realms.

### ◆ WICKER COFFIN - 350,000 GP (LEGENDARY)

When the Eldritch Wardens come up against an entity that seems undefeatable, they bring out the *Wicker Coffin*. This coffin serves as a repository for beings that must be trapped rather than slain or banished. It must first be prepared with a ritual that opens up a pocket dimension within the casket, a process that can take many days to successfully achieve. Once properly prepared, the most powerful Wardens combine their magic to bind the entity to the Mortal Realm, preventing it from escaping, then warp these bonds to fuse with the chaotic magic contained within the Wicker Coffin. If the Wardens can maintain their concentration on the bonds, then the entity can be trapped within the Wicker Coffin permanently.

### ◆ AVATAR OF CHAOS - 50,000 GP (VERY RARE)

Enchanted with chronomancy and natural, chaotic magic, these seeds are from ancient trees that can only be found growing in the hearts of eons-old forests. Throwing such a seed on the ground causes it to immediately begin growing. Over the course of ten rounds, the seed grows, becoming a randomly mutated plant-creature hybrid that adapts to its surroundings and is resistant to eldritch and aberrant magic. As each turn passes, it becomes stronger, until it is an immensely powerful avatar of chaotic, natural magic. Once its tenth turn passes, it dies. Because of the immense power of these seeds, they're rarely given to outsiders.

### ◆ STASIS ORB - 2,500 GP (VERY RARE)

These glass orbs are filled with roiling clouds that swirl in a vortex within their encasement. A *stasis orb* can be shattered by smashing it on the ground or throwing it at a solid surface. Once smashed, it releases the clouds, which create a magical field that is 200 feet in diameter. Inside the field, all living things except for the user are placed in suspended animation and are unable to move, think, use their senses or abilities, or take actions. This effect lasts for one minute. Creatures in suspended animation cannot be harmed or targeted by magical effects or spells, but can be physically moved (as can objects).

### ◆ NULLSCROLL - 600 GP (VERY RARE)

These scrolls can be read aloud to create a magic-repelling aura around the speaker. This aura shields the speaker from the effects of spells, magic items, and other magical abilities, though it prevents the user from teleporting or using planar travel. These scrolls can also be used to temporarily close planar rifts or portals and banish creatures from other planes. The effects of a *nullscroll* last for 1 minute.

## QUESTS

Most of the missions that the Wardens undertake are extremely dangerous to those who lack their specialized forms of magic and their knowledge of forbidden or esoteric lore, so they usually restrict any quests to members or groups of adventurers who already have a member. However, if things are particularly dire, then they may be willing to trust outsiders with a quest.

### THE DEPTHS OF SANITY

The *Emerald Sea* south of the *Adamantine Coast* has been swarmed by aberrant marine creatures that threaten the burgeoning trade hubs along the shore. The *Emerald Armada*, which is typically responsible for defending the coast from pirates and other threats, is spread too thin to tackle the encroaching beings, and many ships have gone missing. The Eldritch Wardens are looking for seaworthy adventurers to man ships that can take them closer to the source of the aberrations. They believe that a portal to another realm must have opened up on the ocean floor, and have plenty of potions of water breathing to allow parties to search the depths,



locate the portal, and close it. Each ship sent out to search for the portal is accompanied by a veteran Warden, and several of these ships will be sent to search the coast.

Upon further investigation, it's discovered that a portal to the Realm of Dead Gods has opened in a deep-sea trench in the Emerald Sea. An aboleth has emerged through the portal, and has begun to corrupt and mutate the sea life around them into horrific creatures. Furthermore, they've been mind-controlling ship captains to serve as their minions as they prepare to assault the Adamantine Coast. Anyone who sails too close to the portal is likely to be attacked by these mind-controlled crews.

### SCYTHES OF SKRYBALLYX

Something is stirring in the sewers of the city of *Nelos*. There are rumors that a dark cult dedicated to a foul entity from another realm has started taking captives from the upper echelons of society and replacing them with ooze-like doppelgangers of their former selves. The upper classes are denying this, but no one can be sure who has been replaced and who's merely trying to extinguish the rumor for their own sake. The Wardens have researched possible entities that could be giving the cult such power, and have come across *Skryballyx*—a putrid wretch of a being that feasts on identities and regurgitates copies of its meals.

The Wardens want to investigate *Nelos*, but they have a bad reputation in the city thanks to a previous incident. Instead, they're looking for outsiders to look into the rumors and investigate the city. If successful, the collaborators discover a cult called the *Scythes of Skryballyx*, which has been kidnapping nobles. The cultists are hoping to overthrow the city and run it themselves, and are using *Skryballyx* as a means to that end. The cultists wield scythes with blades of solidified ooze that can cut through metal and cause festering wounds. Upon locating the cultists' hideout, the collaborators need to sneak the Wardens into the city for a raid on the base.

### ENSNARE THE ENTHRALLER

Lament, one of the head Reclaimers, has an unfortunate knack for creating hybrid creatures while she restores natural areas that have been ravaged by planar portals and rampaging aberrations. She's usually capable of rounding up and controlling the creatures, but this time she's managed to create something far less tame than the typical weasel-worms. The creature is a bizarre mix of wolf and stag that can enthrall people with its

empty-socketed stare. Those enthralled by the entity lose all control of their actions and, once finally released from the enchantment, lose all of their memories.

To make things worse, the entity appears to be corrupting those it enthralls: bone spurs erupt through the victims' skin and their eyes rot in their skulls, leaving necrotized wounds from which the creature can channel its enthralling, magical gaze. Lament can't capture the monstrosity on her own, and thus needs some allies to help her with the task. The entity appears unable to leave the formerly corrupted area that Lament restored, which has become a verdant forest, but its thralls can roam freely across the countryside.

### MINDTRAP

The guild has found an artifact that grants whoever deciphers its enigmatic patterns eldritch knowledge.

However, the artifact also marks the decipherer for kidnapping by the artifact's creators, a race of interdimensional beings who graft mortals onto themselves, creating giant hiveminds of merged bodies.

The guild wishes to lure one of these beings in and study its weaknesses, but must first find a way to decipher the artifact, which promises to transform the mind of the decipherer in horrific ways. As the guild members themselves are unwilling to use eldritch magic in any form, and eventually seek to

defeat the merge-beings once they've learned more about them, the Wardens are looking for bold and brave individuals to work on behalf of the guild to decipher the artifact.

Those who accept the quest will find that deciphering the ancient inscriptions is not as easy as it might seem. Rather than simply being able to study the artifact in isolation, the player characters must seek out eldritch sites, including temples, ritual chambers, laboratories, and other such places, to find fragments of similar inscriptions that they can cross-reference to work toward deciphering the item. Once they've gathered this information, they can study the artifact and unlock the eldritch magic within it. However, they must first stave off the mind-altering effects of the artifact, which threaten to drive its wielder insane. If they survive, then they are marked by the artifact and soon hounded by the merge-beings who seek to claim them. The party must help the guild capture at least one of these merge-beings.





CHAPTER 2

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BRINGING YOUR  
GUILDS TO LIFE



# BRINGING YOUR GUILDS TO LIFE

*For decades now, the Order of the Serene Fist has been protecting these communities against bandits and brigands. They have worked tirelessly to keep the roads clear of crime, and to pull out new gangs at the roots. Each time they beat back the underworld, they grow in number as they show the light to those in the darkness.*

—Erabelle D'Ange, court advisor



**G**f all of the factions in the realms, guilds are the most noble, heroic, and perhaps the most varied. Most aim to uphold honorable ideals, work toward virtuous goals, and encourage their members to better themselves. However, even guilds have hierarchies to pass down orders, wealth and resources to spend, ranks to climb, and services to offer.

This chapter provides resources to make your heroic factions more engaging, detailed, and immersive. You can use these resources as presented here, or as inspiration to create your own twists.

## WEALTH & RESOURCES

A guild's *Wealth* and *Resource* Levels determine how much money it has to spend on things like uniforms, buildings, travel, and amenities, as well as how many valuable assets it has, like armor, tools, mounts, and knowledge. Most guilds' wealth levels are determined by their own commercial ventures, such as building and selling ships or crafting tools, while resource level might depend on the guild's access to experienced personnel and materials, or its connection to outside forces like gods or nature.

Naturally, a guild's wealth affects what it can offer its members: a relatively poor guild of monks might not have the money to equip its members with expensive armor or buy rare ingredients for alchemical recipes, while a prosperous guild of artificers might have an entire complex dedicated to the organization, including workshops, a library, and a lounge. The services and items that a guild offers are also impacted by access to resources: those with plentiful gold but limited access to alchemical reagents would struggle to offer healing potions, for example.

### WEALTH LEVEL

A guild's *Wealth Level* determines the amount of coin at its disposal, which can be used to fund new buildings, purchase equipment, and offer members benefits like room and board. It's worth noting that some guilds are primarily commercial enterprises, and generally have higher wealth due to their constant trade in goods or services. Guilds who don't offer wares or services to the public may depend on donations, or find creative ways to raise funds, such as securing the aid of a wealthy patron.

Money can open many doors for a guild, but vast wealth does not always translate into power or resources—a rich guild of scholars may be able to buy rare books, but have few connections with royal officials and no magic to help them translate their ancient tomes.

Wealth Level	Income
⊗	Squalid
⊗⊗	Common
⊗⊗⊗	Respectable
⊗⊗⊗⊗	Prosperous
⊗⊗⊗⊗⊗	Mythical

## INCOME SOURCES

The Wealth Level table gives examples of ways that a guild can make money. These examples can be tailored to suit a particular type of guild or environment—fighting crime in an urban environment, for example, looks very different from fighting crime in a rural area.

In addition, certain sources could always bring in more income than the level at which they are listed below if the faction is particularly proficient in that method. Brewing ales would be a **Common** income source, but if a guild creates world-renowned drinks, then that could raise the guild's income level to **Respectable** or even higher, such as with the case of the *Society of Benevolent Brewers*. A guild's monthly income can be considered as an average, with various windfalls or mishaps causing the exact total to fluctuate.



## WEALTHY GUILDS

Many guilds find wealth from selling goods, offering masterful services, making wise investments, or discovering vast hoards of treasure. Wealthy guilds may have elaborate uniforms, specially made equipment, large and well-appointed buildings, and luxurious amenities for members. Alternatively, a guild may take on a humbler appearance due to spending its profits elsewhere—for example, a wealthy guild of airshipwrights may eschew fancy trappings in favor of pouring funds into research.

See the table below for some characteristics ascribed to wealthy guilds and organisations.

### d20 Wealthy Guild Characteristics

- 1 Each member of the guild has a signature uncommon magic item available only to guild members.
- 2 The guild makes lavish donations to charitable causes on a monthly basis.
- 3 The guild members have access to a certain service for free, thanks to links with another faction.
- 4 The guild members can always count on free room and board from local guild houses.
- 5 Guild members who make notable achievements are honored through statuary or special ceremonies.
- 6 The guild provides each of its members with a luxury outfit to be worn to events.
- 7 Each year, the guild holds a festival, religious or otherwise, with banquets, feasts, and the like.
- 8 Members only drink wine of the very finest quality, which is imported from far-flung locales.

Wealth Level	Income Sources	Income/month
Squalid	Selling trinkets; manual labor; odd jobs; subsistence farming; helping others for donations; ingredient foraging.	150 gp
Common	Performances; selling common equipment and services; crime fighting; brewing and cooking; ranging, cartography, serving as guides; academic research.	500 gp
Respectable	Mercenary work; private investigation; selling uncommon equipment and services; translation; custom item creation; skills training; minor enchantments.	1,500 gp
Prosperous	Recovering treasure; selling rare equipment and services; magic item creation; rare training; major enchantments; political matchmaking; large-scale manufacture.	5,000 gp
Mythical	Realm-saving actions; commercial investments; epic spellcasting; custom magic items; awesome boons; selling extraplanar items or resources.	15,000+ gp

- 9 Guild members never have to pay for travel around cities; the guild provides them with resplendent carriages or other vehicles to travel in.
- 10 Businesses run by the guild's members receive a large grant from the guild, no questions asked.
- 11 Each guild member is given a portrait of themselves, painted by a master artist, as a token of appreciation for joining the guild.
- 12 The guild has access to rare mounts, such as pegasi and griffons.
- 13 When a guild member dies, their funeral is paid for by the guild and their family receives a generous pension for the next 10 years.
- 14 The guild has a monopoly on a certain trade, allowing all craftspeople to set fair prices.
- 15 The guild is invested in a certain art, such as opera or classical music, and hosts private events that members can attend for free.
- 16 The guild pays for its members' security. Members have access to bodyguards for themselves and bouncers for their workplaces.
- 17 Each year, the guild issues a bonus to its members based on the overall performance of the organization.
- 18 The guild owns a dozen or more properties that its members can use as holiday homes or as venues for their own events.
- 19 The guild gives members luxurious tokens of membership, such as monogrammed handkerchiefs or specially minted coins.
- 20 The guild only works for wealthy clients that can afford the quality that its members offer.

## POOR GUILDS

**D**espite their heroic work, not all guilds have wealthy benefactors, commercial branches, or steady income. Many rely on donations or alms for their basic needs, and an oath of poverty might even be part of their creed. These guilds might be more appealing to the common folk, who might see lavish displays of wealth as wasteful or pompous. Poor guilds might have access to things other than money, such as divine power, favor with the spirits of nature, or wisdom related to magic or martial arts. Just because a guild lacks material wealth doesn't mean they lack the power to act, or to make an impact on the world at large.

See the Poor Guild Characteristics table below for some characteristics ascribed to poor guilds.

### d20 Poor Guild Characteristics

- 1 The guild frequently has to take out loans from banks, individuals, or temples.
- 2 The guild has no headquarters; instead, it is forced to meet in taverns or backrooms.
- 3 Instead of gold, the guild asks for favors as payment for its services.
- 4 The guild works in rural areas, rather than towns and cities.
- 5 The services that the guild provides are given pro bono to those who can't otherwise afford them.
- 6 The guild's uniforms are simple and designed for heavy wear and tear.
- 7 The guild relies on wilderness survival and natural resources to operate in the wilds.
- 8 The guild members have accents or styles of speaking that are considered unrefined or crude.
- 9 The guild members don't have the airs and graces of wealthier factions, but are more down-to-earth.
- 10 The equipment that the guild offers its members is often second-hand or slightly broken, but still usable.
- 11 The guild cannot afford a permanent headquarters, and thus is forced to move between cities every year or so.
- 12 The guild relies more on intangible resources, like information and secrets, rather than rare materials or expensive equipment.
- 13 New guild members are asked to give up their material goods to start a minimalistic spiritual journey.



- 14 The guild offers beggars, ex-criminals, or other poor people a chance at a new life through training.
- 15 The guild has great relations with the poor, who are willing to help however they can.
- 16 The guild has strong ties to wild or uncivilized folk, and relies on their aid in times of crisis.
- 17 The guild has its own smallholding from which it gets all of the food for its members.
- 18 The leader of the guild believes that renouncing material wealth leads to enlightenment and betterment.
- 19 The guild plans a yearly event that's meant to raise funds from locals.
- 20 The guild struggles to compete against wealthier rivals who offer similar services or wares.

## GUILD RESOURCES



A guild's **Resource Level** measures its access to valuable assets beyond gold and jewels, including knowledge, weaponry and armor, books, holy relics, magic items, and ingredients. While some of these resources can be bought, others rely on the expertise or abilities of guild members to create or obtain. The availability and quality of these depends on the Resource Level of the guild; the higher the level, the greater the quantity and quality of available resources.

To determine a guild's *Resource Level*, either roll 1d6 (and reroll a 6) or tally up the number of guild buildings that give access to a resource. These can be found in the **Common Buildings** section of the *Creating Your Own Guilds* chapter. From there, see the Resource Level table to determine how many resources the guild gains per month.

Resource Level	Number of Resources
◆	1
◆ ◆	1d2 + 1
◆ ◆ ◆	1d2 + 2
◆ ◆ ◆ ◆	1d2 + 3
◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆	1d2 + 4

## GUILD TYPES & RESOURCES

Most guilds fall into one of six archetypes: Commercial, Craft, Greater Good, Military, Magical, or Research. A guild of benevolent clerics and paladins that wander in search of those in need might fall into the "Greater Good" category, while an alliance of artificers who use their inventions to improve their home city would fit the "Craft" archetype.

Each of these archetypes has a need for different kinds of resources, though a guild's needs can always be tailored to a unique vision.

### COMMERCIAL

#### *Intelligence/Secrets, Vehicles, Mounts*

Commercial guilds offer services, such as transportation or spying, and thus need resources that match their offerings. Because many of these businesses rely on their members' expertise, their personnel are often their most valuable asset.

**SAMPLE RESOURCES:** tavern eavesdropper (Squalid), riding horse (Common), scrying orb (Respectable), noble courtesan (Prosperous), pegasus (Mythical)

### CRAFT

#### *Special Materials, Ingredients, Tools*

Craft guilds prize special materials, such as adamantine, mithral, silk, mahogany, jewels, or other, more exotic substances that can be used to create or enhance their items. They also value high-quality tools, such as loupes and diamond-tipped saws.

**SAMPLE RESOURCES:** silver (Squalid), cold iron (Common), mithral (Respectable), adamantine (Prosperous), meteoric steel (Mythical)

### GREATER GOOD

#### *Offerings, Magic Items, Relics*

Guilds that work for the greater good can vary greatly in goals and specialties. They often eschew making money or offering goods in favor of helping people directly. Many guilds acting according to the will of a god or magical patron fall into this category.

**SAMPLE RESOURCES:** incense (Squalid), holy water (Common), sword of radiant light (Respectable), staff of angels (Prosperous), the hand of *Angor the Martyr* (Mythical)

### MILITARY

#### *Weapons, Armor, Potions*

These guilds usually focus on collecting weapons and armor for their followers to make them more fearsome in battle. Enchanted arms and armor are highly sought-after and given to champions.

**SAMPLE RESOURCES:** battered shields (Squalid), steel greatswords (Common), tempered plate armor (Respectable), marksman's greatbow (Prosperous), lance of flaming steel (Mythical)

d10	Resource Type	Description	Uses
1	Spell Components	Natural items such as bat guano, sulfur, or newt eyes.	Can be used to create spell scrolls, carry out normal spells, or assist in ritual casting.
2	Special Materials	Materials can include adamantine ore, dragon scales, and clockwork parts.	Can be used to create weapons and armor, magic items, and the like.
3	Ingredients	Natural ingredients such as dried plants or animal parts.	Can be used to create poisons, potions, or other consumables.
4	Arms/Armor	Weapons and armor suitable for use by the guild members.	Can be used to arm guild members as well as stock training facilities and armories.
5	Magic Items	Special magical objects, such as enchanted mirrors, trinkets, or clothing.	These can serve a wide range of uses, from assisting in combat to enhancing stealth.
6	Artifacts/Relics	Mysterious items with unusual, one-of-a-kind powers.	These can serve a wide range of uses, from providing glimpses of the future to enslaving the minds of enemies.
7	Offerings	Rare or exotic materials that are associated with a god or powerful being	Can be used in rituals to please a god or patron, as well as commune with them.
8	Intelligence/Secrets	Information about the guild's enemies or allies.	Can be used to form plans or learn the weaknesses of rivals.
9	Potions/Spell Scrolls	Single-use magic items that have a limited benefit.	These can serve a wide range of uses, from enhancing the strength of guild members to granting invisibility.
10	Lore	Information about the world's history.	Can be used to locate lost sites, learn where to harvest rare ingredients, or discover the weakness of a creature.

## MAGICAL

### *Magical Tomes, Spell Components, Lore*

Magical guilds perform a variety of different functions, from making enchanted items to offering spellcasting services to conducting arcane research. They're always looking for new tomes to add to their library, as well as magical lore.

**SAMPLE RESOURCES:** bat guano (Squalid), hedge wizard spellbook (Common), elemental dust (Respectable), pristine diamond (Prosperous), Telerius' Treatise on Metamagic (Mythical)

## RESEARCH

### *Books, Artifacts, Lore*

Guilds that specialize in research, typically made up of academics and scholars, place high value on lore, whether historical, magical, or mechanical. Research guilds also seek out powerful artifacts that can shed light on the past and the cosmos.

**SAMPLE RESOURCES:** second-hand encyclopedia (Squalid), wizard's almanac (Common), Hieronyos' Book of Histories (Respectable), ancient tablets (Prosperous), mysterious puzzle box (Mythical)

### EXAMPLE: FORTUNE TELLERS' GUILD

Magical Guild, Wealth Level 3, Resource Level 3

**SUMMARY:** Born out of an alliance of palm readers who aspired to receive true divinatory knowledge, the Fortune Tellers' Guild has become a familiar fixture on the city streets. Apart from their reputation for accuracy, the guild is known for its reasonable rates and wise members. The guild's true goal is to use its knowledge of thousands of customers' lives to weave a picture of the future of all living things, and thereby avert disasters and crises by finding and counseling key figures.

**GOAL:** Build a picture of the future and avoid tragedies

**INCOME SOURCES:** Palm-reading, divinatory services

**RESOURCES:** Magical tomes on tarot and augury, lore regarding fate and destiny, spell components such as bird entrails or dragon knucklebones

# INFLUENCE & DISPOSITION



A guild's sphere of influence varies depending on the type of guild and how they operate. A commercial guild that produces adventuring supplies, for example, might only exert influence over their chosen business, like dealing with suppliers and shippers. Alternatively, it might have influence over an entire chain of connected businesses and people, like the local adventurer's guild, the blacksmiths who provide adventurers with weapons and armor, and the magistrate who taxes treasure brought in by adventurers. While a lesser guild might struggle to negotiate with a governor or noble, a more influential one can subtly guide the policies of an entire kingdom.

This is not to say that small guilds always have less influence than large guilds. A small group of dedicated faction members can still have powerful connections, vast resources, and the knowledge to use those effectively. A handful of well-trained mages can use illusions, potent magical displays, and a carefully cultivated air of mystery to project a much more powerful image than their numbers may reflect, but they'll have to work much harder for that influence than, say, a powerful trading company with thousands of members and business contacts.

## GUILD AUTHORITY LEVELS

As an optional rule, each guild can have an *Authority Level* on a scale from 1 to 5, indicating the reach of its influence.

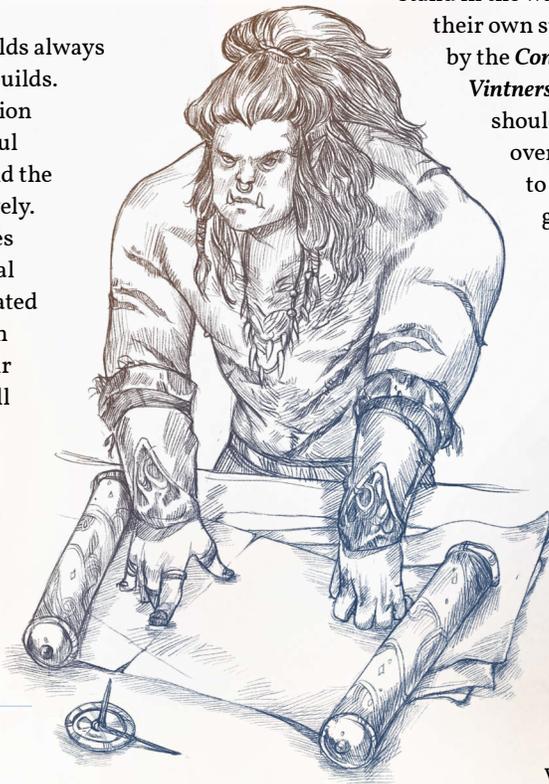
Guild Authority Level	Reach
1	Local influence
2	Regional influence
3	Province-level influence
4	Worldwide
5	Omnipresent/Planar

A guild's authority level reveals its scope and the kinds of affairs that it gets involved with. A guild with local influence generally stays out of regional wars or wider

political intrigue, while a worldwide guild might be called on to contend with an interplanar invasion or a crisis that spans multiple continents. Keep in mind that even a widely influential guild might still have places and areas where its influence doesn't count for much: a mage college might influence the tutoring of wizards across the world, but have little impact on banking or the intrigue between monarchs.

## CHANGES OVER TIME

A guild's authority level can change over time and should shift as player characters and NPCs interact with it. It's up to the Game Master to determine exactly how and when this occurs. Sometimes this shift might be obvious: if the party helps the *Alliance of Beastspeakers* broker a peace between a pack of roaming drakes and a group of local settlements, then the guild's authority level should probably increase, perhaps from local to regional. Alternatively, if the player characters do something to stand in the way of another guild, such as opening their own successful winery in a city controlled by the *Concordant Treaty of Winemakers and Vintners*, then that guild's Authority Level should decrease as they lose their monopoly over the trade. Keep in mind that changes to authority level can be temporary—given enough time, most guilds can usually recover from setbacks.



## GUILD OPPOSITION

While all of the factions presented in this book ardently believe that they are advancing the greater good in some way, that doesn't mean that they don't face opposition. These opposers might be rival factions, local leaders, military forces, or even religious orders. Some may have different beliefs, ideologies, or agendas, or may share a guild's goals but differ on how to carry them out. Whatever the case, just because a guild is trying to do good doesn't mean its members will always be treated as heroes.

For example, if the *Order of the Bloody Banner* plans to overthrow a queen who has been rewarding her noble allies by endlessly raising taxes on her subjects, loyalists to the queen may oppose the guild's attempts at raising a peasant army and storming the capital. While the loyalists may accept that the queen's taxes are unjust, they might believe that violently deposing her will cause her "allies" among the nobility to oppose the new regime and plunge the once-unified kingdom into a destructive civil war.

The Guild Action table below presents examples of guild actions and potential opposition that may result. It can be used to create obstacles and opponents for the guild, or unintended consequences that a guild must face.

### Guild Action

### Opposition or Consequence

A guild dethrones a tyrant and dismantles their corrupt, oppressive regime.

Law and order break down, and criminals/bandits claim dominion of certain regions.

A guild researches a new type of magic that promises a deeper understanding of the cosmos.

If abused, the magic has the potential to corrupt and destroy large numbers of people.

A guild explores and maps a vast jungle filled with exotic flora and fauna.

The new exploration causes settlers, beast tamers, and others to travel to the jungle to exploit it.

A guild seals off a giant subterranean city to ensure that the undead horrors within never escape.

The local ruler authorizes a well-equipped expedition to recover valuable relics from the underground city, despite the risks.

A guild brings word of their god, deity, or patron to a new settlement and tries to gain followers.

The new recruits to the guild are ostracized from their former families and community for abandoning their traditions.

A guild uncovers a new resource that can be used to improve magic item production, and begins extracting and using it.

Merchants who specialize in the creation of magic items wish to ban the use of the resource to protect their businesses.

A guild summons a celestial warrior to help defend a kingdom against a rival ruler's army.

Advisors fear that the celestial warrior will be used to exact revenge and claim new territories to punish their rival's belligerence.

A guild unites skilled workers under its banner and helps them negotiate for better pay and working conditions.

Employers hire foreign workers or move to another city to find skilled laborers who will work for less.

A guild hunts a powerful monster that's killing anyone who enters a mountain range.

A group of druids defends the monster, saying that it's the only thing that keeps the mountain's ecosystem in balance.

A guild creates a magical teleportation device that allows for safer travel across great distances.

The technology is widely used by criminals to escape the authorities or find new territories to operate in.

## GUILD STRATEGIES

Valiant factions use various strategies to exercise their influence over society. These strategies may change based on a guild's type and goals. Use the entries in the *Guild Strategies* table below as inspiration for how a guild might go about achieving its aims or exerting its influence.

### Guild Strategy

### Description

Strength of Arms

The guild believes that valor and skill on the battlefield is the best way to achieve its goals, whether that means wiping out dangerous beings or defending settlements from attack.

Diplomacy

The guild uses orators, negotiators, and skilled representatives to make strong bonds with key figures and achieve its goals through favors, persuasion, and deals.

Innovation

The guild has decided that its strength lies in creating new, inventive methods to tackle age-old problems and emerging ones.

Gifts & Blessings

The guild relies on the magical or divine gifts of a powerful being or god in order to achieve its goals, and those gifts may take the form of enhanced abilities or magical boons.

Summoned Beings

The guild believes that beings summoned from other planes of existence are its best hope at achieving its goals, perhaps due to the powers that these beings possess.

Subterfuge

The guild uses spies and agents to collect information that can be used for the greater good. Finding the right knowledge about the right people is key.

Empowerment

The guild tries to empower members of disenfranchised or disregarded communities. It believes that uniting people is the best route to progress.

Proselytizing

The guild spreads word of its work far and wide, hoping to promote its own goals by encouraging others to take part, and showing off the good deeds that it has done.

Law & Order

The guild enforces laws to bring about an ordered state of life that can help tackle greater societal or mercantile problems.

Secrecy

The guild knows that its missions are best carried out in secret, away from the eyes of the world. Only the initiated are trusted with full knowledge of the guild's goals and methods.

## EFFECTS OF A GUILD'S INFLUENCE

Heroic factions are always striving to change the world for the better, and it's often possible to see a guild's influence manifested in tangible ways. Signs of a guild's influence could include the acceptance of a new faith or creed, evidenced by street preachers and changing laws; unionization of tradespeople into collectives that ensure fair pay, as shown by guild crests that they each display in their stores; or widespread use of the guild's signature items, such as magical vehicles or tools. Sometimes the clues are more subtle—a certain custom may die out, or criminal activity may ebb in certain areas.

Use the below to provide hints and indications of a guild's influence.

### d20 Guild Influence Effect

- 1 Large, colorful banners with a guild's insignia hang from walls and bridges. Passersby run their hands along the banners, apparently for luck.
- 2 Small, crab-like automatons clad in guild livery trundle across the city's streets, carrying small packs filled with refuse and debris.
- 3 A small shrine has been built at the edge of town and festooned with flowers and trinkets. It depicts a crude likeness of a guild leader, who the locals say possesses magical powers.
- 4 Boxes, barrels, and wagons around town have been stamped with the insignia of a guild, and porters seem to handle them with special care.
- 5 The poorer quarters of the city or town seem strangely clean and orderly, and few beggars are seen on the streets.
- 6 People greet each other with a strange mantra or hand sign that was not previously used in the settlement, and seems to convey more than a simple "hello."
- 7 Wooden guild crests hang behind the counters of several stores of a certain type, such as blacksmiths, alchemists, or enchanters.
- 8 Small magical portals have appeared throughout various important buildings in the city, allowing for rapid transportation of goods.
- 9 Songs or hymns that are not native to the settlement are sung at a certain time each day, bringing the community together.
- 10 Papers of identification are now required to do many things within the city, including trading and owning property. They can be acquired at a guild's headquarters.
- 11 New coins minted with a guild's emblem are now used in a certain region. Regular coins are no longer accepted there. The coins might have different names or be made of strange materials.
- 12 A new holiday is introduced to the city, and a festival takes place as a result. The celebration could involve parades, dances, and/or gift-giving.
- 13 Children are heard or seen pretending to be prominent members of a guild and re-enacting their famous or recent deeds.
- 14 Flowering plants and rampant growth have spread throughout the city, merging perfectly with the urban architecture, and introduce harmony with nature to the metropolis.
- 15 Benevolent ghosts walk the streets, welcoming newcomers and offering to serve as guides for those who don't know the way. They ask for nothing in return except for peaceful conduct in the settlement.
- 16 Fliers with new codes of conduct are nailed to street corners and important sites. They promote law and order, and encourage neighbors to support each other wherever possible.
- 17 Instead of a normal town guard, the settlement is protected by groups of people wearing guild uniforms or badges, who carry distinctive weapons and armor.
- 18 A beacon of divine light shines up from a temple in the city, piercing the heavens and spreading a warm glow through the nearby streets.
- 19 An influx of wealth has helped the local region prosper. Decrepit buildings are being repaired, streets are being cleaned, and new parks and gardens are opened.
- 20 Friendly and docile wild animals adorned with flowers and guild symbols roam the streets, and people don't seem bothered by them.



## GUILD DISPOSITION

Earning a guild's favor is often worth more than gold. Most guilds are highly selective about who they invite to join their ranks—asplicants must not only demonstrate their skills and talent, but the strength of their character and their dedication to the guild's ideals. Once admitted to a guild, a new member must continue upholding the organization's creed in their conduct, dress, and speech. Outsiders who wish to simply associate with a guild by buying its wares, engaging its services, or asking for its expertise, for example, must show themselves to be worthy of it, and building this trust can take time.

As an optional rule for your game, each guild can have a disposition toward classes or other characteristics that it finds important. In general, guilds should not negatively discriminate based on things like race or gender.

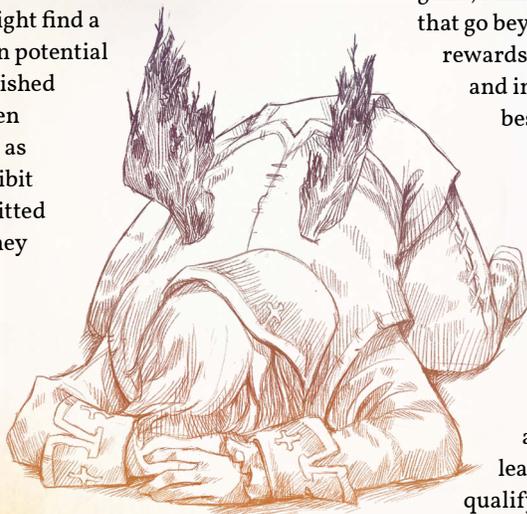
**FAVORED** - If a particular class or talent is favored, members of this guild go out of their way to recruit people with those skills. These people are often granted special privileges within the guild, such as better equipment, greater rewards, or more frequent increases in rank.

**POSITIVE** - If a guild has a positive disposition toward a person, then that individual might have an easier time gaining membership. They might also be chosen for more lucrative or safer missions and treated to other benefits such as divine boons.

**NEUTRAL** - If no disposition is specified, then the guild is likely neutral toward these individuals.

**DISFAVORED** - Guilds who are unwelcoming toward a certain type of person may display distaste toward them, or ask them to make changes before being admitted. Such individuals might gain admission to the guild, but will likely be denied access to higher echelons until they change their ways.

**HOSTILE** - Some guilds might find a certain trait intolerable in potential members, such as unpunished criminal history, ill-gotten gains, or even a vice such as laziness. People who exhibit these traits are not permitted to join the guild unless they make positive changes.



## GAINING AND LOSING STANDING

Some guilds don't require people to be full members in order to purchase their goods, learn their techniques, or undertake quests for them. However, player characters and NPCs must gain the trust of those guilds by being in good standing. Most guilds have actions and behaviors that please or displease them, or a code of conduct that they follow. Non-members can gain standing with guilds depending on what quests and missions they choose to embark on, who they work for, and how they handle certain kinds of conflict.

If adventurers were to capture and incarcerate some criminals acting as highwaymen on a popular trade route, they might gain standing with the *Order of the Serene Fist*, which believes in the redemption of criminals rather than execution. Conversely, if the bandits were killed without question, then the adventurers might lose standing with the guild, who may send a representative to ask that they leave protecting the highways to the Order.

The *Standing Gained* and *Standing Lost* tables provide examples of actions that people might take that would increase or decrease their standing with a good-aligned faction—feel free to adapt these entries or imagine new ones for guilds of your own creation.

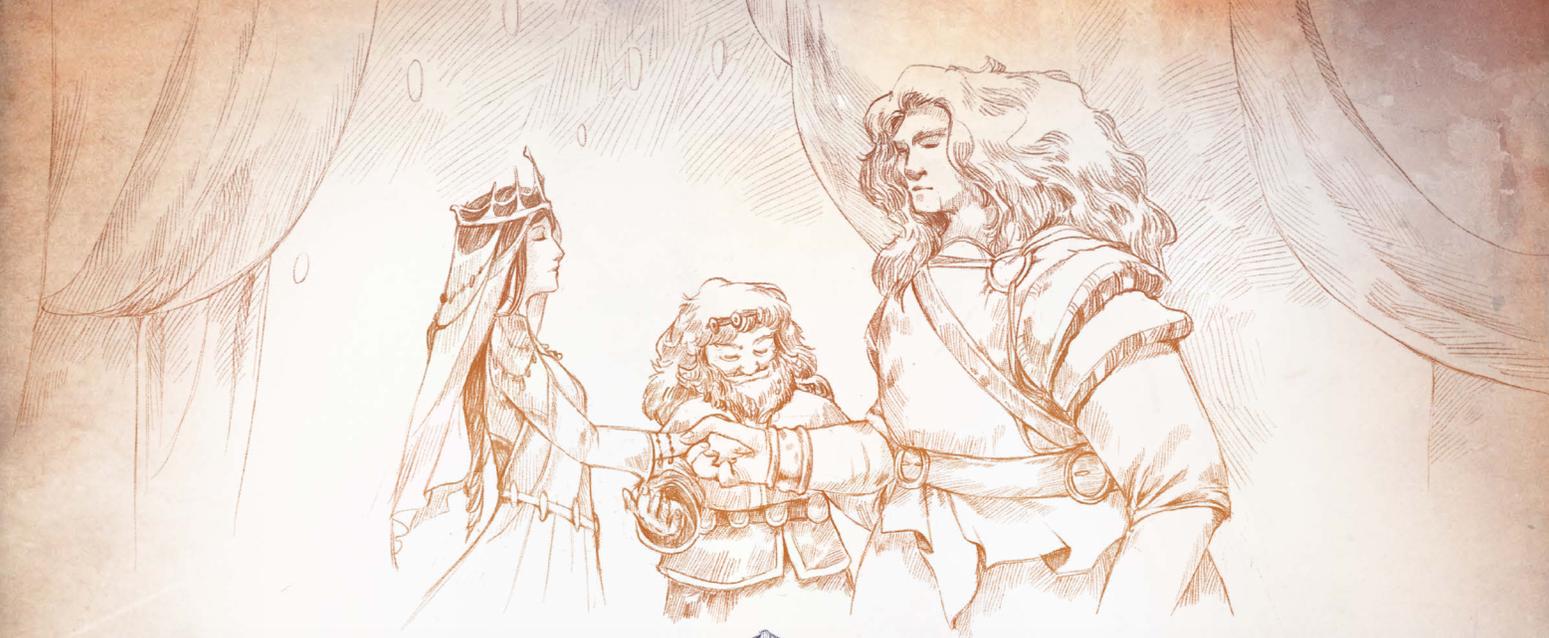
### EFFECTS OF GOOD & BAD STANDING

Guilds can show that a player character or NPC is in good or bad standing in numerous ways. Those in good standing might be offered membership, or if they're already members, promotions within the guild's ranks. Those who are in bad standing might be forbidden from working with the guild, or have guild agents assigned to follow them and watch their activities.

## RENOWN

As they work toward the greater good by serving their guild, a member's heroic actions may earn them rewards that go beyond ranks, standing, gold, or items. These rewards reflect the character's growing reputation and influence in the wider world, and are usually bestowed by grateful citizens, influential groups, and powerful figures outside the guild.

Offering players paths to gain renown gives them not only challenges that befit a hero, but opportunities to show how their actions shape the world. For example, a talented bard who excels at theatrical speeches and avoiding conflict may not gain fame from *Defeating a Legendary Opponent*, but they might become renowned for cleverly and decisively arguing against a rival guild leader during an audience with the royal court, qualifying them for *Winning a Public Debate*.



### Standing Level

### Effect

Awful	A guild agent is sent to arrest, neutralize, or even kill the character.
Very Low	People who previously interacted with the character stop offering services or avoid them altogether.
Low	The guild issues an official warning to the character to cease their bad behavior.
Poor	The guild sends an agent to determine what the goals of the character are and whether they're a threat to the guild.
Moderate	Nothing.
Good	The guild sends a small token of favor to the character, thanking them for their actions.
High	The guild offers mentorship to the character in a certain skill or another benefit, such as discounts or loaned items.
Very High	The guild offers the character membership, which comes with certain rewards and benefits.
Outstanding	The guild gives the character a powerful magic item or other momentous reward, as well as a high rank within the faction that commands respect.

### Standing Gained

### Example Character Action

Very Low	A character publically voices support for or interest in the guild and its goals.
Low	A character gives a common item, such as a set of armor, or a monetary donation to the guild.
Moderate	A character accepts—and satisfactorily executes—a quest to further the guild's goals.
High	A character successfully performs a vital task for the guild.
Very High	A character recruits important new members to the guild, or formally dedicates their life to service.

### Standing Lost

### Example Character Action

Very Low	A character openly mocks or criticizes the actions of the guild.
Low	A character opposes or thwarts a member of the guild.
Moderate	A character disrupts a guild quest or operation, such as surveillance of a gang or retrieval of a relic.
High	A character derails a ceremony or is found infiltrating the guild's headquarters.
Very High	A character kills an initiated member of the guild or causes the guild to be rejected by a community.



Action	Description	Benefit
Make a Masterwork	Craft a unique magical or mundane item that represents a significant innovation or is worth over 80,000 gp (or a value determined by the Game Master).	Craftspeople will offer magical or mechanical products for a discount, and the character will be approached by apprentices who wish to study under them.
Defeat a Legendary Opponent	Kill, banish, imprison, or successfully duel a person or monster with a mythical reputation.	The character is approached by a promising young warrior who wishes to accompany them.
Save a City from Disaster	Take action to prevent a populous settlement from being overcome by some disaster, natural or otherwise, such as an earthquake or dragon attack.	The character is given land or property within the settlement, as well as a title that holds power there.
Discover a Lost Ruin	Uncover the remnants of an ancient society, culture, or people	Admiring archeologists or historians will grant access to rare or private lore that cannot be found elsewhere.
Make a Wondrous Discovery	Make some technological, magical, or philosophical discovery that changes a significant portion of society for the better.	People affected by the discovery offer their services to the character free of charge.
Lead By Example	Inspire a contingent of individuals to go above and beyond in their service or actions, achieving some goal that was previously thought impossible.	The character is given command over a detachment of individuals who can be used for non-guild business. They might be a smaller, loosely defined faction.
Avert a Crisis	Prevent some awful event from occurring that would threaten a large number of people. The event could be anything from a natural disaster to the spread of a plague.	The character gains an epithet related to the crisis, such as "Shield of the Earth" or "Plague-Killer."
Rebuild a City	Take great pains to help a ruined settlement get back on its feet through inspirational speeches and leadership, or through work rebuilding on the ground.	The character is given informal influence over rulership of the settlement once rebuilt.
Make Peace	Through political or military means, ensure that peace is made between two opposing factions.	The character receives a castle in one of the territories involved in the peace agreement.
Recruit a Powerful Member	Recruit a desirable individual to the guild that has particular skills that the faction has been searching for. Could be a mythical creature or a legendary hero.	The character gains special access to the benefits that the new member offers, and has a lasting relationship with that member.



Found a New Faction Branch	Set up a new headquarters for the guild in a part of the world (or multiverse) that it previously had no presence in.	The character is given command over guild operations in the new location, as well as the benefits of a guildhouse such as room and board.
Help People in Need	Come to the aid of a group of people who cannot defend themselves against a threat that is about to overcome them.	The character is awarded some special distinction or commemoration during a ceremony or other event.
Conduct a Beneficial Deal	Broker an economic, military, or political deal that is fundamentally important to the ongoing success of a kingdom or region.	The character is invited to the courts of powerful nobles or merchants who wish to forge friendships and ties.
Win a Public Debate	Engage in a public debate with a notorious opponent of great standing, such as a member of a royal family or head of a magic school, and overcome them.	Powerful rivals of the defeated opponent ask for the character's counsel and allegiance.
Forge a Momentous Allegiance	Work with members of another powerful faction to align goals and methods so that the two can support each other in new and interesting ways.	The character is given the opportunity to serve as an emissary or ambassador for the alliance.
Expose Corruption	Root out the cause of corruption within a government, such as crooked nobles, bribing merchants, or secret agents who are manipulating officials.	The character is granted an honorary office in the government and personal audiences with rulers.
Invent an Extraordinary Spell	Devise and cast a new spell, ritual, or similar magical action that helps a certain sector of society in a major way.	The character can contribute their name to the spell, if they wish, and reserve the right to teach the spell to whomever they desire.
Put on a Performance of a Lifetime	Produce a piece of artwork or participate in a performance that is unrivaled.	The character is approached by a wealthy patron eager to sponsor them, and is honored in song, statuary, or other means.
Serve a High-Ranking Politician or Leader	Make special efforts to serve a high-ranking leader, such as saving their life or taking personal missions on their behalf.	The character gains the ear of the politician or leader and gains the ability to alter policy or influence governance.
Commune with a Powerful Being	Make a pact or deal with a powerful being, such as a god or supernatural entity.	The character gains a boon or other magical enchantment from their interaction with the being, which marks them physically.

# SERVICES & TRAINING

**G**uilds pride themselves on the experience and talent of their members, and many allow non-members to take advantage of this. Whether it's engaging a guild's magical experts to craft a new spell that freezes lightning or training with a master swordswoman to learn an ancient fighting style, the services and training offered by guilds can be just as wondrous as the guilds themselves. Although many guilds accept gold for these services, some ask for favors or trades instead—a guild of wandering monks, for example, may have little use for money, but may need help with repairing a temple.

## VALOROUS SERVICES

Offering wares and services to the public is how many guilds support themselves. Most guilds' offerings are of remarkable (or even supernatural) quality, surpassing the goods and services of other, more mundane shops or organizations. However, this means that their prices are usually higher—and sometimes even exorbitant. However, some guilds offer their services for free if doing so aligns with the faction's overarching goal. A group devoted to healing and helping the sick, for example, would never charge for its services.

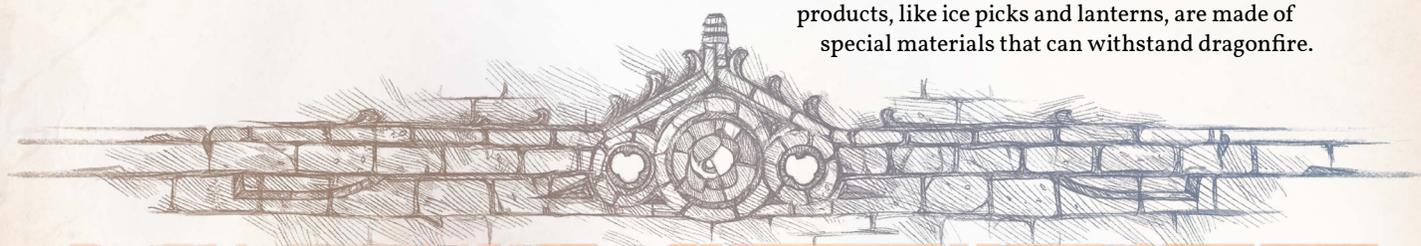
## CRAFTING WEAPONS & ARMOR

Guilds such as the *Draconic Smiths* focus on the creation of incredible armor and armaments. Typically, these guilds are capable of having their lower-ranking members create mundane weapons and armor, but might also (for a higher price) be able to create masterwork items, or even enchanted items of immense value. In the case of the Draconic Smiths, the higher-ranking smiths are capable of making magic weapons, such as swords wreathed in ice-cold blue flame, by using dragonfire to augment the metal involved. Payment for mundane items is almost always in coin, but for the more powerful items, the guild might require the purchaser to undertake a quest to gather components or resources, or to prove themselves worthy of a guild-forged blade.

## CRAFTING OTHER THINGS

Those less concerned with battle and bloodshed focus their crafting talents on a vast array of goods, both magical and mundane. These creations could be anything from masterpiece portraits whose subjects can move and talk to flying machines that can glide between planes. Some guilds purvey humbler goods, but even they reflect the organization's mastery: a normal metal goblet might reveal veins of silver when under moonlight, while a wooden carriage might have small, cunning springs attached to its wheels for a smoother ride. As a general rule, items crafted by guilds outshine those created by other types of craftspeople.

The *Scholars of Antiquity*, for example, create extraordinary dungeoneering items for adventurers that blend scientific research with magical effects. Even their more mundane products, like ice picks and lanterns, are made of special materials that can withstand dragonfire.



This table lists services that may be offered by guilds, along with their relative rarity and price ranges.

Name	Rarity	Price
Crafting (Weapons & Armor)	Common	10–8,500 gp
Crafting (Other)	Common	10–8,500 gp
Blessings & Divination	Uncommon	500–2,500 gp
Enchantments	Rare	1,000–15,000 gp
Tomes & Research	Rare	50–5,000 gp
Potions & Ingredients	Uncommon	50–500 gp
Information & Secrets	Rare	250–2,500 gp
Spellbooks & Spellcrafting	Uncommon	250–5,500 gp
Exploration & Cartography	Uncommon	50–3,500 gp
Travel & Transportation	Common	50–1,000 gp
Protection	Common	50–2,000 gp

## BLESSINGS & DIVINATION

Guilds focused around a particular deity, or who draw divine power from following honorable creeds, might be capable of bestowing blessings. These blessings can range from immunity to poison or disease to gaining the strength of an ox. Those who ask for such blessings must typically prove themselves worthy in the eyes of the faction's patron or members before the request will be accepted. Guilds such as the *Shields of Osanya* offer a variety of blessings to their members, but also to notable non-members carrying out the peaceful will of Osanya.

Similarly, some factions offer divinatory services. The sort of target they're willing to use their scrying powers on, or who they offer their foresight to, depends on the nature of the guild. For example, the druidic *Oaken Alliance* won't offer futuresight to anyone that they believe might harm their forests.

## ENCHANTMENTS

Enchantment is one of the most coveted and valuable services offered by guilds, and usually requires skilled mages, large sums of gold, and days of preparation. The payoff, however, is often singular: a guild can turn a normal longbow into a *horizon bow* that can accurately shoot as far as the eye can see, or enchant a vault door with a spell that can withstand molten lava. Most guilds have their own specialties, such as elemental magic, illusions, or transmutation, which limits the kind of enchantments they'll offer.

The members of the *Company of Living Tales* are some of the most well-known users of enchantments, both permanent and temporary. They might recite the story of *Enturi, Who Entered the Hydra's Den*, and imbue a sword with the ability to slice through dragon scales.

## TOMES & RESEARCH

Academically inclined guilds often have dedicated libraries that contain a wealth of information about history, philosophy, magic, crafting, or other topics. For a fee, the guild may allow non-members to conduct their own research using these libraries, and might even allow them to borrow or purchase some of the tomes held within. Obviously, much of the challenge of acquiring this service is finding the right faction with the right books.

As well as allowing others to conduct their own research, some guilds are dedicated to doing that research for others. The *Sisterhood of the Omniscient Mind* is a monastic tradition that seeks knowledge in all forms, and has an enormous scrollarium filled with the writings of generation upon generation of its members. The monks there willingly accept research topics from non-members for a fee, then collect their findings in a folio for their clients.

## POTIONS & INGREDIENTS

Guilds that focus on alchemy and magical potions usually strive to go beyond the antidotes and healing potions sold by common merchants—instead, they may create tinctures that can paralyze a storm giant, magical ointments that turn the skin of a warrior to steel, or other concoctions with rare and wondrous effects. Alternatively, some guilds specialize in the other end of this creation process—the discovery and acquisition of ingredients.

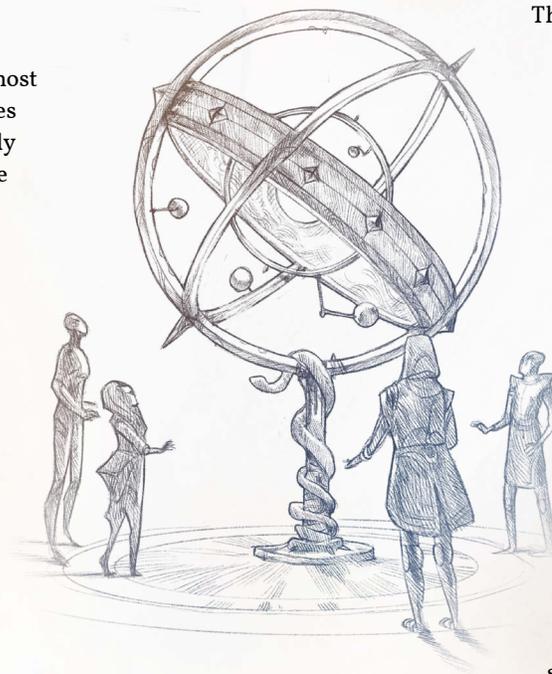
These guilds might be able to advise people creating their own potions on which ingredients they need for a specific recipe. Members might even be able to head into the wilderness to gather strange reagents themselves.

The *Society of Benevolent Brewers* is an example of a guild that makes money by creating custom potions. Most members of this faction are skilled brewers who can create beverages with amusing and beneficial effects, such as the ability to speak a new language or float in the air.

## INFORMATION & SECRETS

Though it's usually the purview of criminals, some guilds offer services that involve discretely collecting secrets and hidden information, usually through spying. These types of guilds are rare, and sometimes ride the line between good and morally gray. Most have special areas of expertise—some may focus on digging up the secrets of the rich and powerful, while others are more concerned with keeping an eye on powerful criminals and underworld organizations. If a group of vigilantes is trying to gain information about where a certain criminal gang is hiding out or dig up some dirt on a corrupt politician, then these guilds are well-suited for the task. Though most prefer payment upfront, many will trade secrets for secrets—or favors for favors.

The *Bureau of Mysteries* is an example of a guild that conducts this type of work, though their main focus is on investigating crimes. The guild keeps an extensive archive dealing with the secrets and personal lives of many unsavory figures, though it's rare for the organization to give others access to it.



## SPELLBOOKS & SPELLCRAFTING

Arcane guilds, such as mage colleges or warlock circles, usually have a trove of spellbooks and scrolls that contain spells ranging from practical to exotic. Some of these spells may not be widely taught, and others may be known only to the guild itself, so obtaining a spellbook from such a guild can cost far more than just money—some guilds require something of equal value, such as a magical item or the discovery of a lost magical formula.

On the other hand, only the most elite guilds of mages are able to craft new spells. One example of such an elite institution is the *Hermetic University*, whose mastery of the fifth element, arcana, allows its members to create “living spells.” Spellcrafting is an arduous, time-consuming, and expensive process, and those that have mastered the art are especially wary of creating destructive spells—plans for a spell that manipulates blood or rewinds time may be rejected by the guild’s spellcrafters.

## EXPLORATION & CARTOGRAPHY

Guilds like the *Frontier Greenmounts* may offer their services as guides through the wildlands, bringing clients to hidden ruins or leading them on hunts for beasts known only in legends. Guild guides are well-trained in the art of wilderness survival, navigation, and pathfinding, and can usually deal with unexpected crises, such as whiteout conditions on a mountain or a poisoned party member.

Other factions like the *Honorable Order of the Gilded Compass* are dedicated to mapping new lands, and can be called upon to explore and map new places, as well as sell copies of maps that they’ve already made. Any activity that takes guild agents out into the field is typically charged per day, with an upfront payment of several days, as well as cost of provisions thrown in. If the work is especially dangerous, a hazard premium might be added to the final price.

## PROTECTION & HIRELINGS

When threatened by assassins or thieves, hiring a guild bodyguard can provide a client with a world-class warrior... or something more unexpected, such as a flock of watchful ravens who fly overhead and descend in fury on any assailant who gets too close. Protection contracts are often particularly serious for guilds, whose members usually pride themselves not only on their fighting abilities, but also their sacred vow to safeguard the righteous from harm.

Guilds may also offer members as hirelings who will accompany clients for a daily fee. These hirelings are often better-trained and infinitely more reliable than mercenaries, and may offer new and powerful abilities. The *Unbroken Vow* is a faction of paladins who sometimes offer their services as bodyguards or hirelings. They are known for their vigilance and diligence, as well as their ability to see through walls and sense the motives of others.



## TRAVEL & TRANSPORTATION



number of guilds specialize in strange and unique means of travel, and many provide their services to the public at large, especially for long-distance travel.

*The Elevated Company of Flying Threads* operates out of *Jauzun*, offering flying carpet rides to those in need of expeditious travel. On an even grander scale, factions like the *Eldritch Wardens* offer planar transportation via portals. Meanwhile, the *Frontier Greenmounts* are well known for breeding rare and powerful mounts that can carry clients through uncharted wilds.

## MOUNTS

Many guilds take pride in their well-stocked stables, though some eschew the use of horses in favor of something more unique. Smaller clients may find themselves astride a mastiff or boar, while larger mounts can range from elephants, whose huge statures allow them to traverse jungles and rivers, to rocs, whose wingspans dwarf that of an ornithopter. More uncommon mounts might include sea serpents or giant moles, who are suited to aquatic or subterranean environments, respectively. Hiring one of these mounts can be expensive, and any harm that comes to the animal leaves the client in debt to the guild. Most mounts who have completed their service can be left at their respective guilds' guild halls, but some make their own way back to their masters.

## VEHICLES

Much like mounts, vehicles of a more mundane variety like coaches, carriages, and chariots can be acquired from almost all guilds. However, many guilds have more exotic and sometimes experimental vehicles that they hire out to clients. These can include magic carpets or brooms of flying, or totally unique creations like submersibles made from magic air bubbles, airships that operate using trapped elementals, mechanical horses that can run on any surface, and drill-headed machines that churn through the earth with amazing speed. These sorts of vehicles typically require a talented driver or pilot, though some are designed to steer themselves based on verbal commands or even telepathic links. Clients should be wary, however—destroying or damaging one of these vehicles can be punished with fines, but allowing them to fall into the hands of others may carry stiffer penalties.

## PORTALS

Magical portals offer a quick method for getting from place to place, but using them is expensive, for they require at least one powerful spellcaster to create and maintain them. In addition, portals are risky: the magical path from portal to portal often traverses perilous routes, passing through mind-twisting dimensions or freezing realms that lie in the liminal spaces between planes. Most commonly, a guild offers portal travel to another city or major settlement, but some guilds have portals set up in other locations that are meaningful to them, such as their hidden headquarters or a holy forest glade. Rarely, a guild may have a portal that does not need an established exit—instead, passing through the portal simply teleports the user to a destination with no way back.

## MASTERFUL TRAINING

**N**aturally, guilds that specialize in a certain craft or art are also some of the best people to provide training in these areas. More often than not, an individual is required to enroll into the guild before the secrets of an art are taught, but basic tutelage might be available to non-members to see if they're interested in pursuing the craft further.

For player characters, guild training offers an in-game way to learn a new class, like ranger or assassin, or a skill, like calligraphy or even magic. Roleplaying this process can be fun for both players and Game Masters, but if the game's rules only allow for learning new skills and abilities upon leveling up, a Game Master should be careful about offering ways for characters to circumvent those restrictions—a barbarian learning to cast a cantrip without multi-classing (or undergoing an equivalent process) can quickly spiral out of control. The most common kinds of training are described below in more detail.

## COMBAT & WEAPON TRAINING

Many guilds are oriented around military activity, whether that includes fighting off invaders from other realms or defending the common folk from criminal assailants. These guilds can offer an opportunity to learn new combat skills, master new or exotic weapons, or improve existing martial abilities. This training often takes many weeks or even months to complete, and can be reflected in new maneuvers, martial feats, improved physical abilities, and the like. Those in search of open-hand martial arts techniques might train with the *Order of the Serene Fist*, for example, while those interested in mastering the fusion of martial combat with divine magic could work with the *Shields of Osanya*.

## CRAFTING

Training with a crafting guild can allow an individual to learn the talents required to create anything from common objects, like lanterns or crossbows, to masterwork items, augmented by their own technical or artistic vision, such as spring-loaded boots or an oil-fueled flamethrower. Guilds cover all varieties of crafting, from mundane smithing and woodwork to artful sculpture and tapestry weaving, all the way to clockwork artificing, golem building, and even firearm creation. To acquire a mastery of crafting from no existing experience can take months or years, and thus taking up crafting in a serious way is rarely done by working adventurers.

## SPELLCASTING & MAGIC

Those looking to learn new spells, create their own unique spells, and dabble with metamagic might seek out a guild that can provide tutelage in the arcane arts. Guilds can unlock a wide variety of esoteric secrets, including new versions of common spells, new techniques that make the mage hardier in battle, and even new schools of magic. Depending on which guild the individual chooses to work with, the study of magic can be likened more to an art or a science, drawing on different perspectives and techniques, such as mathematical formulae or crystal foci. Though some magic might be minor enough for anyone to learn (such as prestidigitation or summoning a candle flame), some spells require more ingredients and involvement to cast—a powerful ritual may require a physical third eye or complex, ritualistic tattoos.

## INSTRUMENTS & SINGING

The ability to entrance a crowd with a captivating solo or soothe weary spirits with a well-chosen song opens up all kinds of roleplaying opportunities for player characters, whether they're seeking to make a little extra coin or become a virtuoso. The art of music is usually taught at guilds that specialize in performing, such as musical troupes, though some guilds may use music as a medium for magic or even battle. Whatever the case, most

guilds focus on producing music either through singing or playing a type of instrument, but rarely both. Some guilds may specialize in a particular instrument, such as the lyre or flute, or employ a fully stocked orchestra.

### ORATORY & RHETORIC

As one of the more subtle arts, oratory and rhetoric focus on not only supplying a speaker with amusing turns of phrase or clever arguments, but also teaching them how to find just the right words to bring an enemy to their side, strike fear into the heart of an opponent, or convince a skeptical listener that their intentions are pure. The guilds that train these skills often use force as an unfortunate last resort, and instead try to use diplomacy, deception, and theatrical displays to dissuade their opponents from even drawing their weapons. Such guilds might include organizations made up of diplomats, spies, or politicians.

### MEDICINE & SURGERY

Although healing magic may be powerful, many who are not gifted with magical talents or divine favor still seek ways to treat wounds, cure poison, and deal with illnesses. These skills are in high demand, and often work in conjunction with the art of alchemy. Guilds with extensive knowledge of medicine might focus on treating those injured in battle or infected with rare diseases, but their methods can widely vary: a guild of druids might rely on herbs and other ingredients gathered from potent natural sources, while an order of artificers might prefer delicate surgery with specialized tools. Surgery in particular is a difficult skill to acquire, and often requires months or years of study.

### STEALTH & PICKPOCKETING

Most guilds eschew thievery, but some rare organizations will train select individuals how to move silently, enter buildings without keys, and even steal from under the noses of their enemies. These guilds usually operate in secret, and do not advertise this type of training to outsiders. Whether they are virtuous thieves, cold and calculating assassins, or shrewd information brokers, members of these guilds have strict limits on how they use these skills. The techniques themselves can include training one's movements in order to distribute weight and balance like a dancer, learning to misdirect marks, and using camouflage and shadows to hide one's presence.

### SURVIVAL & ANIMAL HANDLING

Guilds that operate in the wilds can pass on their knowledge of flora, fauna, and the faces of nature, including predicting the weather and navigating harsh terrain. Learning these skills allows an adventurer to take advantage of the bounty of nature by foraging, finding shelter, and even crafting new items from natural components. Dealing with animals is closely related to

these skills, but relies on more specialized training, such as learning to recognize a creature's mood, knowing how to calm a beast when it's scared or angry, and directing an animal while riding on its back. Guilds with many druids and rangers are likely to offer these types of training, though few will be interested in money.

## LEARNING & TRAINING SKILLS

If the Game Master decides to allow player characters to learn and train new skills without having to level up or gain those skills according to the system's usual rules, then they can use some of the ideas in this section to help establish new rules for skill advancement. These alternative methods rely on four elements: practice, talent, time, and mentorship. Another key element is mentorship—the guidance of a master or experienced practitioner can help a player character or NPC advance far more quickly than if they were pursuing their area of study alone. Although many skills can be honed without needing a mentor's guidance every step of the way, most rely on at least a short period of initial training by a master or mentor. A few skills, such as medicine or leather-working, can be learned solely from a book, but only at the most basic level.

### PRACTICE

Practice is where much of the fun is—a player may be asked to act out how their character goes about baking their first cake or shooting clay pigeons out of the air with their new crossbow, and the results can range from exciting to disastrous. This kind of roleplaying helps the player immerse themselves in the experience of learning their new skill, and provides a way to weave that process into gameplay.

In most cases, a player character should only be allowed to devote time to practicing their skill once per day. During this practice period, which should usually range from 1 to 2 hours, the player may roll a die and add any modifiers or bonuses related to practicing that skill, such as dexterity or affinity for bladed weapons. The Game Master determines the difficulty of the check, and if the player succeeds, their practice session progresses the player character toward mastering that skill.

Sometimes, an action like fighting an enemy with a newly acquired weapon or helping an artificer with building an invention might also give a player character practice with their chosen skill.

### TALENT

Some player characters or NPCs have attributes or natural affinities that give them an advantage when training certain skills. A rogue that has a high dexterity attribute and experience with climbing might have an easier time learning the art of acrobatics than a barbarian with copious strength. Meanwhile, a merfolk

wizard might have an advantage when learning how to sail a ship due to spending a lifetime at sea.

When translated into gameplay, one's talents can make the dice checks for practicing easier. Talents are ideally expressed via a tangible statistic on the character sheet so that they can be measured more easily, but the Game Master can decide on a looser measurement, such as a fighter's years of experience on the battlefield making it easier for them to learn how to use a new weapon.

## TIME

Time is the most important gameplay factor when it comes to training. This is partly because the usefulness and complexity of the skill being learned should be reflected in how long it takes to master, and partly because time is used in lieu of a cost, like experience points. Forcing a player to wait to acquire a new skill adds a cost to it, and keeps them from exploiting the game.

When determining how long a skill takes to learn, consider 1) how much of an impact it will have on the player character or NPC and the game overall, 2) how difficult the skill would be to learn, and 3) the complexity of the skill. For most skills, the time to learn a new skill might be measured in weeks, while others might be measured in months.

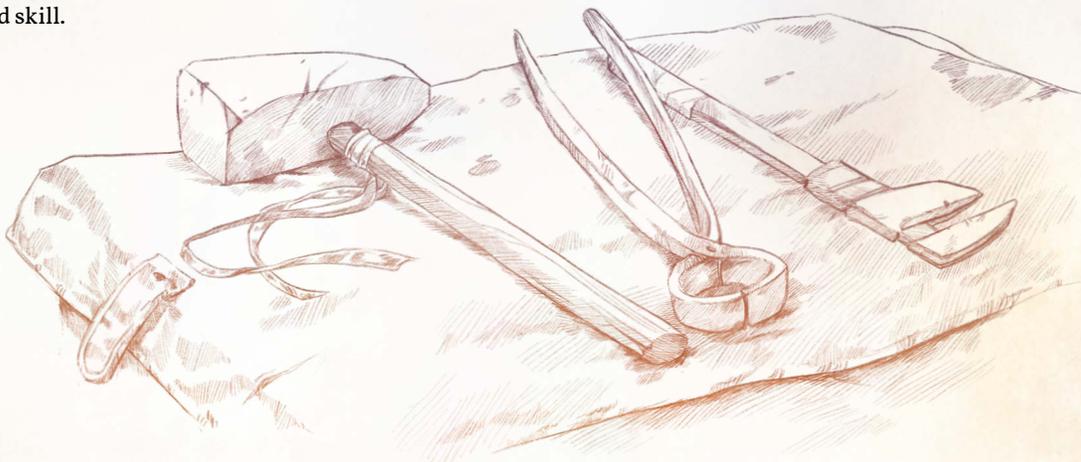
For example, a gnome with a high intelligence attribute might be able to learn about history and lore relatively easily, and the impact of these skills on the game may be minor. History and lore are complex topics, however. With that in mind, a Game Master might assign a timeline of 6 to 8 weeks to gain a point in a history- or lore-related skill.

## MENTORSHIP

A good teacher makes all the difference. Most guilds have resident instructors or trainers to help guild members reach the organization's requisite levels of skill, whether it be in shipbuilding, sword fighting, or snake charming. These teachers might be calm and patient, verbose and theatrical, or brusque and no-nonsense, but each one represents a unique roleplaying opportunity for players and Game Masters alike: learning a new skill is often a way to open a player character's mind to the intricacies and hidden dimensions of their world, as well as a chance for the player to genuinely learn something new, all while interacting with a memorable character.

For example, a player character who wants to learn alchemy may seek out *Master Terracia Gordarsson*, a stout dwarf who never smiles and who is a prominent member of a guild of mages. Over the course of the player character's training, they may learn about real-life chemical processes like calcination, dissolution, and separation, which reflect the magical process of purifying the soul. They might earn Terracia's grudging respect, and discover that his gruff exterior hides a childlike wonder toward the natural world.

In terms of gameplay, studying with a mentor or master should make other aspects of training easier and faster: the time required to study the skill should be reduced, and the difficulty of checks to successfully practice should be lowered. After a 4 to 6 week period, a player character may be able to begin practicing the skill on their own, but the Game Master has the final say.



*“My mother said if I grew up to be a journeyman, I would become a blacksmith. If I became a scholar, I’d be a sage. But I became an adventurer, and now I am a hero.”*

*—Izban, knight-errant of The Lances of Wolfbar*

# RANKS & ADVANCEMENT

*To rise through the ranks of a guild is an honor, and one not earned easily. It is not enough to merely do well. You must exceed expectations. You must rise above the rest. When you finally receive the title of "Master," it's not the badge on your chest that sets you apart—it's what you do with it.*

—Tamara Weft, master spellbook binder

**N**oble factions run the gamut from knightly fraternities to crafting workshops, from bold exploration companies to benevolent spy networks. One commonality between these varied organizations is that each has a system of ranks and advancement that allows members to mark their skill, talent, and achievements. Two guilds with the same goal might create very different organizations and offer members different means by which to rise through the ranks.

The most typical rank hierarchy is set out by traditional craft guilds, the like of which can be found throughout all major cities of the world. These guilds are formed of artisans and merchants gathered around a particular craft. Members join as apprentices, working beneath the more skilled members and learning the basics of their chosen trade. This schooling allows apprentices to decide whether the craft is for them, and lets their mentors discover their natural talents.

Once they complete their basic training, an apprentice rises to the level of journeyman. These journeymen are able to travel around and work for different masters, picking up new training and secret skills along the way. They might work in this fashion for many years before they feel able to create a masterpiece. This work should be a phenomenal piece of artistry, and is submitted to

the other masters of the guild for approval. If all are in accordance, then the journeyman rises to the rank of master, and enjoys all the benefits of the guild.

This typical hierarchy is echoed by most guilds, but not all. While the *Monstrum Venatorum Corps* might start off with apprentices hunting cockatrices and culminate with the "masterpiece" of a slain dragon, other, less structured guilds might have branching paths of advancement, or shun a hierarchical structure altogether. The *Unified Sorority of Apothecaries*, for example, is split into three different branches, with each focusing on a different variety of potion-making, and its members freely swap techniques even with relatively new members.

Of course, guild membership comes with responsibilities and rites of passage. Most apprentices must go through some kind of examination to even be considered for membership, and the road to creating a masterpiece is a long and difficult one. Additionally, the higher up the ranks one rises, the more responsibilities one has. A master is expected to take on apprentices, for example. However, the benefits of joining a guild are significant, and the promise of mastery is alluring for many...

## OATHS

Upon joining a guild, many factions require initiates to take oaths that align with the guild's goals, ideals, or way of operating. These oaths represent the new member bonding themselves to the guild, perhaps for life, and usually bestow a magical benefit or boon, as well as certain conditions that will break the oath. If an oath is broken, the member must visit their guild to reinstate it—however, each time an oath is broken, a penalty or punishment may be applied.

Examples of oaths can be found in the Oath table below, as well as a description of what each oath entails.

### Name of Oath

### Description

Oath of Peace

The swearer of this oath gains a bonus to persuasion and health points as long as they do not kill another living creature.

Oath of Ingenuity

The swearer of this oath gains a bonus to crafting or enchanting attempts as long as they spend two hours per day studying a book on crafting/enchanting.

Oath of the Wilds

The swearer of this oath gains the ability to speak to animals or track a target of their choice as long as they do not enter a town, city, or permanent settlement.

Oath of Silence

The swearer of this oath gains a bonus to stealth as long as they do not reveal any information about the guild, save for its name.

Oath of Protection

The swearer of this oath gains a bonus to martial prowess and armor when they protect an ally or innocent from harm.

Oath of Arcana

The swearer of this oath gains a bonus to a specific type of magic as long as they cast no other types of spells.

## ALLIANCES

**F**or those looking to enjoy some of the benefits of guild membership without the responsibilities and duties of becoming an initiate, there is the option of forging a relationship with the faction akin to a political alliance. This status is reserved for non-members, and represents a hybrid status between an associate and an initiated member.

Forming an alliance with an organization usually involves meeting with a guild's masters, understanding how their goals are aligned with the characters' goals, and undergoing a trial or a quest to prove one's capabilities and good faith. Once the alliance is sealed, the alliance members may gain access to special services, items, and training, and even magical benefits that are not typically offered to the general public.

Alliance members might also gain steep discounts on products and services provided by the guild, or other benefits.

The *Alliance Type* table below provides examples of alliances and the kinds of benefits that they come with.

### JOINING A GUILD

Many folk see joining a guild as one of the most reputable and noble things that can be done with one's mortal life. Dedicating oneself to a just and fair cause, or to the pursuit of artistry and craft, is lauded by people from all walks of life. While committing to one faction might mean perfecting a specific craft, joining other guilds is more like joining an army: the experience comes to dominate a person's life, even after they leave. It is this level of dedication to a shared cause that makes guilds great.

When deciding whether to join a guild, player characters and NPCs will likely want to meet with high-ranking members of the faction to get an overall idea of the guild's goals and the benefits that it can offer. These high-ranking

members don't want to waste anyone's time, least of all their own, and so they only offer guild meetings to people that they feel would be valuable members of their faction. For example, the *Legion of the Minotaur* won't bother to talk to anyone who hasn't already displayed martial prowess on the field of battle, since that guild's specific training requires that combat basics have already been mastered.

### GUILD INITIATION

Once both the guild's masters and the player characters and/or NPCs have agreed that joining the guild is the right course of action, they'll have to go through an initiation process. This process can involve a formal examination, interviews, and tests of the skills that the guild prioritizes. It might also include rites or ceremonies in which oaths are made, signs and symbols exchanged, and perhaps even magical boons conferred. Some of these events are steeped in secrecy, and knowledge of them binds new members to guild veterans. Gaining an organization's confidence can be accomplished in a number of ways:

**VOUCH.** Aspirants wishing to join a guild could seek a friend—one who is a member or associate of the organization—to vouch for their dedication, character, and skill. Perhaps the aspirants did this person a favor totally unrelated to the guild, such as helping to defeat an evil cult or deliver a piece of art, or perhaps the person knows them by reputation.

**OFFERING/DEED.** The organization could require some representation of the aspirant's skill or craft, such as a finely made instrument or an enchanted piece of armor. Alternatively, the aspirant might be able to present evidence of a deed, like saving a besieged city or defeating a lich.

**TRIAL.** Sometimes, a guild decides to test an aspirant's dedication or skill with a trial. This challenge could be a dangerous ordeal meant to push an aspirant to their limit—for example, forcing them to face their greatest fear—or it might be more moral in nature, such as sending an aspirant to deliver a seemingly minor item, only to have a disguised guild member tempt them into handing it over.

#### Alliance Type

#### Description

Companions	Gain an NPC ally from the guild that will accompany the party for a short time.
Business Connection	Gain a discount on all of the guild's goods and/or services.
Research Partners	Share knowledge and information with the guild, use their libraries, etc.
Investigative Pact	Gain access to guild spies and agents for private work.
Creative Alliance	Gain access to guild workstations and resources for a cut of item sales.
Military Treaty	Assist each other with military endeavors, share weapons and armor.



The Initiation Rite table below contains some ideas for initiation rites or tests that guilds may use to induct new members.

### d20 Initiation Rite

- 1 Track down a rare beast and present a description or drawing of the creature.
- 2 Decipher a magical puzzle and make a blueprint of it.
- 3 Determine the ingredients of a potion or poison without tasting it.
- 4 Best an enemy of the guild in martial combat, but show mercy.
- 5 Recreate a wonderful piece of art in a new and interesting style.
- 6 Conduct a holy ritual and bestow a blessing upon a guild member.
- 7 Hunt down and kill a dangerous monster that threatens a local village.
- 8 Memorize a previously undiscovered tale and perform it for the guild.
- 9 Come up with a new invention and make a functional prototype.
- 10 Write an essay or treatise on some previously unknown historical subject.
- 11 Organize a meeting between two rivals and help them make peace.
- 12 Submit to an examination of one's soul by the guild's god or patron.
- 13 Solve a minor crime on behalf of the guild and capture the criminals.
- 14 Brew a uniquely flavored beer or wine for a guild tasting ceremony.
- 15 Survive a vivid and disturbing vision that tests the bounds of one's mental abilities.
- 16 Defeat an aberration that has invaded the Mortal Realm.
- 17 Find a new use for an existing spell and demonstrate its use.
- 18 Peacefully capture a bandit and deliver them to jail.
- 19 Bring someone whose life they saved to speak before the guild.
- 20 Allow themselves to become stranded in the wilds and return to the guild in 2 days.

## GUILD RANKS

Most guilds have a three-tiered rank system, with Apprentices at the bottom and Masters at the top. In this section, you'll find a more generic assortment of roles for a guild's members alongside their associated ranks. For examples of guilds with more specific hierarchies, "The Remarkable Guilds" chapter provides ten unique guilds for use in your games, each with a rank table that lists the key roles in a guild, as well as their general rank level.

### LOW RANK: APPRENTICE

Apprentices are often trained or mentored by higher-ranking members, and carry out much of the guild's more mundane work. They have the least access to the guild's inner workings and special privileges. They might only be allowed to work with certain materials, or take on certain tasks. However, sometimes low-ranking faction members take on more specialized roles after finishing their initial training.

### MEDIUM RANK: JOURNEYMAN

Guild journeymen (also known as journeywomen, or journeypeople) have finished their apprentice training and now have more freedom to travel and work as they see fit. They are expected to take on more responsibilities, possibly including an apprentice of their own, and take advantage of new, exclusive benefits. Some journeymen take on medium-rank roles (see the Medium Rank Role table below), which grant them even greater benefits and responsibilities.

### HIGH RANK: MASTER

Those who attain a master-level rank are tasked with the most important and demanding roles in a guild, but the rewards usually eclipse anything attainable by lower ranks. They often take part in determining the future of the guild, often by voting on key decisions. They are also privy to the deepest secrets and hidden techniques safeguarded by the guild. The requirements for master-level members are high, and the consequences of failure are severe.

## GUILD ROLES & KEY MEMBERS

Whether they're lycanthrope hunters or master spellcasters, most guilds have special roles within their hierarchy called *Key Members*. Some of these Key Members are highly trained specialists, while lower-ranking ones may still be perfecting their abilities. Many higher-ranking roles have a title and benefits that other rank-and-file members cannot access. You can find a selection of key member roles in the Low Rank Role, Medium Rank Role, and High Rank Role tables below, along with the roles' ranks, duties, benefits, and requirements.

**Low Rank Role****Tasks/Duties****Benefits****Requirements**Animal Keeper/  
TamerTrains and cares for  
creatures such as hounds,  
owlbears, or horsesAccess to a variety of mundane,  
exotic, or magical animalsProficiency in animal  
handling

Warrior/Hunter

Takes on foes of the  
guild, whether humanoid  
or monstrousTraining in melee combat, access  
to quality weapons and armorProficiency with weapons  
and armor, or demonstrated  
combat ability

Scribe/Squire

Assists higher-ranking  
members with daily dutiesAdvanced training in a  
specific area of interestDedication to the  
guild and its goals

Investigator

Collects information about  
targets, collects evidenceTraining in investigative  
skills, access to quality gearProficiency in stealth  
or investigationMissionary/  
EmissaryRecruits new  
followers, spreads  
the guild's message,  
represents the guildSupplies and paid travel  
to various locationsProficiency in  
persuasion or insight

Crafter/Wright

Creates works of  
art, tools, or gearFunding for creations, access to  
quality tools and workshops

Proficiency with a set of tools

**Medium Rank Role****Tasks/Duties****Benefits****Requirements**

Knight/Veteran

Protects the guild, carries  
out martial questsAccess to special weapons, armor,  
mounts, and other such itemsDemonstrated combat  
proficiency

Magician

Conducts magical  
ceremonies, opens  
portals, uses divinationAdditional spellcasting, plus  
access to magic items and  
ceremony componentsAbility to cast spells, or  
proficiency in a specific  
school of magic

Artisan

Creates fine works  
of art, tools, or gear,  
teaches apprenticesAccess to specialist tools  
and workshops, cut of  
apprentices' profitsDemonstrated crafting  
or performing abilityAlchemist/  
EnchanterCreates magical potions,  
bestows enchantmentsAccess to magical workshops  
for personal useProficiency in spellcasting  
or alchemical supplies

Healer

Heals the guild's allies,  
casts protective spells  
on other membersHoly symbols and new spells,  
training in healing (both  
magical and mundane)Access to healing  
magic or skills

Scholar/Researcher

Researches history,  
arcana, or other topics,  
conducts field researchAccess to specialist knowledge  
and libraries, access to assistantsResearch or investigation  
skills, high intelligence**High Rank Role****Tasks/Duties****Benefits****Requirements**

Champion

Fights powerful  
foes, especially non-  
human entitiesAccess to the guild's best  
weapons and armorMartial class or proficiency  
with martial weapons,  
demonstrated skill in battle

Loremaster

Researches history,  
arcana, rituals, or other  
obscure knowledgeUnparalleled access to clandestine  
and esoteric knowledge,  
including scrolls and booksExpertise in at least one area of  
research related to the guild

General

Commands guild  
members during battlesAccess to loot seized  
from enemiesLeadership experience,  
knowledge of tactics  
and strategy

Archmage

Conducts rituals, casts  
spells to aid the guildAccess to new spells and  
powerful arcane itemsPowerful spellcasting abilities,  
a second initiation ceremony

High Priest

Conducts ceremonies,  
communes with  
deities, heals alliesAccess to new spells and  
powerful holy itemsPowerful spellcasting abilities,  
a second initiation ceremony

Master Artificer

Creates masterpieces of  
art, tools, or gear, teaches  
lower-ranking membersAccess to the best tools and  
workshops, which may be  
enchanted, cut of guild profits

A certified masterpiece

## GUILD LEADERS

**H**eading every guild is either a leader or a council of leaders. If the organization is dedicated to a patron, then the leader answers only to that patron. Leaders may be voted to the position by their fellows, or chosen by undergoing a series of grueling trials. Most leaders have years of experience in the guild, but some are relatively young, relying on their talent and the strength of their vision to sway the guild's members to their side, rather than their veteran status. A faction member might ascend to become a master over the span of their career, but few ever attain the position of leader.

The benefits of leading a guild can be immense. Commercial guilds produce vast sums of wealth each month, military guilds provide control over what is essentially a private army, and political guilds hold sway over huge numbers of people. However, a leader must also prove worthy of their hallowed position; they must come up with plans that further the guild's goals, ensure that the greater good is never lost sight of, and inspire confidence among the guild's members. For guilds with patrons, continuing to serve that patron's will is paramount; failing to do so might result in a leader's fall from grace.



If a player character is promoted to the position of guild leader via rank ascension, inherits guild leadership from a previous leader, or starts their own guild, refer to the chapter "Player-Run Guilds" for information about operating a guild.

## RANK ADVANCEMENT

Guild members may be given an opportunity to advance in rank (if they are initiated into the guild). However, rank advancement sometimes has requirements. Examples include a special creation, an honorific ceremony, or specific skills as detailed in the "Guild Ranks" section. Potential requirements for advancement are displayed in the Rank Advancement Requirement table below.

### d10 Rank Advancement Requirement

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 1  | <b>SERVICE.</b> The guild member must have served the guild for a certain amount of time.   |
| 2  | <b>OFFERING.</b> The guild member must make an offering to the guild, such as a masterpiece that they have made, a wonderful performance, or the sword of an enemy. |
| 3  | <b>SACRIFICE.</b> The guild member must make some sacrifice for the guild, such as serving as a tutor for a year, or allowing others to use their workshop.         |
| 4  | <b>CEREMONY.</b> The guild member must undergo another ceremony, typically a magical one.   |
| 5  | <b>TRAINING.</b> The guild member must develop a certain skill, such as a new language.   |
| 6  | <b>QUEST.</b> The guild member must undertake and complete a follow-up quest.   |
| 7  | <b>STUDY.</b> The guild member must master some new area of knowledge.  |
| 8  | <b>OATH.</b> The guild member must take an oath that, if broken, has serious consequences.  |
| 9  | <b>COMMUNE.</b> The guild member must appear before the guild's leader, deity, or patron for approval.  |
| 10 | <b>TEST.</b> The guild member must pass a test of some sort, such as making a certain item, before they can advance.  |

### ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the ideas listed in the Rank Advancement Requirement table, Game Masters can see the following section for more requirement ideas.

### FAITH/CHOSEN

Guilds that worship a god or a patron often require faith in and obedience to a deity, and they especially require adherence to that deity's core tenets. Those willing to

sacrifice their bodies, their wealth, or their safety in service of the deity are usually considered the most faithful. The exact signs of devotion vary based on the deity's nature; a nature deity has different priorities than a forge deity, for example. Sometimes a guild member is chosen by the deity or patron to be raised to a higher rank without the judgment of mortal leaders. These members may become avatars of the deity, champions, prophets, or new leaders.

### LEADERSHIP

A member aspiring to gain a promotion may need to show remarkable leadership skills or the potential to develop them. This can manifest in numerous ways, like organizing the defense of the guild's headquarters, successfully leading a group of faction members on a quest, or taking initiative to create a wondrous new item to help the guild. Leadership can be demonstrated in more extreme scenarios too, such as on the field of battle or within the ranks in a time of crisis. Cowardice and a failure to lead mark a member as an unlikely candidate for advancement; these qualities can result in a swift reduction in rank as well.

### LOYALTY

Some organizations consider loyalty to be the most important criterion for advancement. Whether to the organization as a whole or to the leader as an individual, unswerving obedience and respect are key in demonstrating one's devotion. A guild member may be asked to prove their loyalty via a quest that inspires inner conflict—giving up their beloved instrument to another, for instance, or defending a realm that they once warred with. In addition, more senior guild members may be asked to observe and report on the tasked member's words and actions. If a guild member refuses to carry out orders, puts their own interests ahead of the guild, or disrespects the guild's leaders, the penalty may be severe.

### MERITOCRACY

Some guilds prize skill and competence over slavish obedience and humble deference. In this case, a guild member must prove themselves capable of performing the duties of the office to which they aspire, such as identifying and treating a poison in order to advance to the rank of alchemist or thwarting a number of assassination attempts to become a bodyguard. Some guilds require the candidate to successfully complete a dangerous quest on their behalf while accompanied and monitored by an observer from the organization. Other guilds use a codified trial or test system in which the candidate undergoes an examination within the safety of a guildhouse.

### SERVICE

Service is a significant act or achievement that a member performed outside of a quest, such as saving the life of a high-ranking guild member, discovering a previously

unknown ancient tome that contains sought-after lore, enlisting new recruits with desirable skills, or making a breakthrough that advances the guild's plans. In essence, if a guild member goes above and beyond their duties in a way that results in serious, lasting benefits for the guild, then they are likely to be recognized and rewarded.

## LOSING RANK & PUNISHMENTS

**W**hile most guilds are relatively forgiving in nature, they sometimes find it necessary to punish members who disgrace the guild. Failure to complete a quest, betraying the guild, or displeasing the guild's patron can result in demotion, expulsion, or even the loss of one's soul. Although failure or bringing dishonor to a guild is always judged seriously, intention is often the most important criterion for punishment: selfish or malicious motivations can be more damning than the act itself, and may cause a relatively minor mistake to garner a more severe punishment.

Below are a few punishments that may be meted out to guild members.

### LOSS OF RANK

In many honorable factions, repeated failures or offenses typically result in demotion. The member is stripped of their rank, the benefits of their office, and even their belongings—including guild-granted treasure such as magic items. Some groups allow demoted members to attempt to work their way back up the ranks, but other guilds don't, especially if they feel that the member caused the guild's reputation to be compromised. In the latter case, failing guild members are permanently stuck at the lowest rank of the organization. Loss of rank is the most common form of severe punishment for guild members.

### EXPULSION

Expulsion is usually the punishment for when a guild member rejects the guild's oath, betrays the organization, ruins its reputation, or displeases the guild's leaders. For most guilds, expulsion is the most severe punishment that they can level against a member. An expelled member loses access to all guild benefits and is usually prevented from ever rejoining that organization. Sometimes expelled members are reported or have their names spread around, which makes it harder for them to get normal work after their expulsion.

### SERVICES

A less severe but still harsh punishment given to failing guild members is some kind of necessary service. For example, a guild member might be forced to take on many apprentices and train them in the basics before they're

allowed to pursue their own goals again, or they might have to put on a certain number of shows to raise funds for the guild as reparation for the mistake they made. These services typically take no more than a year or two, and the member is still compensated for their time in some way, such as room and board at a guildhouse.

### RETRAINING

If a guild member repeatedly fails the guild in some way, such as on quests or during trials, it is likely that they'll have to either leave the guild or retrain. Retraining is obviously a long and difficult process that mirrors the work of apprentices and lower-ranking members of the guild. The member up for retraining still retains their current rank and benefits, but having to retrain is often seen as shameful or embarrassing for higher-ranking members. Once they've undergone their retraining, they pick up where they left off.

### LOSS OF THE SOUL

In very rare instances, a guild member might be punished severely by the guild's patron. For example, if a knight dedicated to an order of chivalry were to kill an innocent in cold blood, this would not be tolerated by the deity to which they have pledged themselves. In such a case, the deity might choose to claim the soul of the knight before it can undergo further corruption. If the soul can be redeemed in the Celestial Realm, it might later return to the guild as an ascended creature, or serve the deity as an angelic or celestial warrior.



## GUILD QUESTS

**G**uild members are expected to uphold numerous duties, including undertaking quests that further the faction's goals. *The Draconic Smiths* might need adamantine ore mined from inside a volcano, or the *Frontier Greenmounts* might need a rare beast to be tracked down. Sometimes, a faction looks outside of its member base for help with quests. This might occur because its own members lack the skills, abilities, or connections necessary to complete the task. For example, the fey paladins of the *Alliance of the Unicorn* might uncover a threat to the Fey Realm coming from the Celestial Realm, but may be unable to enter the other plane to deal with it due to their magical oaths.

Guild quests provide exciting roleplay and gameplay opportunities that can reveal hidden conflicts between factions or important NPCs, as well enhance a guild's fame and advance its goals.

### QUEST STRUCTURE

A well-crafted quest has four main components: a goal, a briefing, restraints, and preparations. These provide structure to the quest, establish the guild's expectations, and offer discrete steps that the players can use to plan the party's course of action.

**GOAL.** This is the quest's main objective. Examples include protecting a village, delivering medical supplies, recovering stolen goods, or protecting a valuable relic from theft. The quest may include lesser objectives as well (such as delivering medical supplies and discovering the source of the disease, for example).

**BRIEFING.** The party's contact or mentor within the guild should give as detailed of a briefing as possible by listing potential risks, key facts about the situation, and advice on achieving the objective. The mentor figure shouldn't plan the operation for the party, but they should provide some vital information, such as the fact that the worm threatening a settlement has been spotted burrowing underground.

**RESTRAINTS.** Restraints are restrictions to the quest that are vital for its success. They might involve completing the quest in a certain amount of time, avoiding combat, or minimizing collateral damage. They may also come in the form of directives, like "Don't draw your weapons," "Avoid spreading ill will," "Leave no one behind," or "Complete the quest by sundown."

**PREPARATIONS.** Preparation consists of tasks carried out before the quest to help ensure its success, like gathering intelligence on the objective through NPC contacts, finding the right equipment to scale the terrain, and so on. Wise parties will use this stage to prepare gear, spells, and tactics specifically tailored to the quest.

When crafting guild-directed quests, Game Masters should consider how each of the stages above can provide player characters with opportunities to shine. A goal that involves little combat but plenty of wilderness survival skills, such as finding a legendary tree in an ancient forest, might suit a druid or barbarian well, while including a restraint to move unseen might be a chance for a rogue to teach the party how to move more stealthily.

## QUEST ARCHETYPES

Quests can be as simple as creating a set of mining tools for a local quarry or as complex as empowering a noble family to claim a throne. However, most quests fall into general archetypes based on the goal, such as Craft, Diplomacy, Missionary, Research, Retrieval, and others. Some quests may have multiple parts to them, as well.

For example, if the *Arcane Order of Enlightened Architects* was commissioned to build a wizard's tower for the local archmage, they would need to complete several steps. First, they might need to source the materials (such as stone or timber) required to build the structure, which corresponds to a low-rank Retrieval quest. Once the resources are acquired, the place needs to be drafted and built, which entails a medium-rank Craft quest. Once the place is built, the finishing touches should be added, such as casting warding spells upon the doors. This would be a high-rank Ritual quest, which might first require the completion of low-rank Retrieval quests to gather spell ingredients.

The archetype of a quest determines its general outline and requirements. Game Masters can use these archetypes as inspiration to assemble a custom-made quest.

**Note:** Quests available to outsiders are marked with the letter O; quests available only to guild members are marked with the letter M.

**TRADE. [M]** The guild needs to raise significant funds through commercial activity, and thus needs experienced sellers and financially experienced individuals to buy and sell items or services. This could include making business deals, transporting goods, and negotiating trade.

**COMMUNE. [M]** The guild requires contact to be made with a patron, deity, or other powerful entity. The communion might be because the guild seeks the being's help or approval, or because it's reaching out with an offer. Typically, communing

involves some kind of magical ceremony.

**CRAFT. [O/M]** The guild needs to create an item, perhaps for use in a ritual, to outfit its headquarters, to equip its members, for general sale, or to earn prestige. The item can be anything from simple tools to a complex piece of siege equipment or even a magical artifact capable of detecting aberrant portals. To complete the item's creation, special materials or power sources may be required. Depending on the item's purpose, the crafting process might have to be completed by a high-ranking guild member.

**BATTLE. [M]** The faction needs experienced warriors, hunters, fighters, spellcasters, and the like to seek out enemies of the guild and destroy them. Typical foes include aberrations from alien realms, devils from the Infernal Realm, or evil cults. The guild might sanction killing the enemies, or might require them to be captured instead. The ranks of the members sent out depends on the level of threat.

**DIPLOMACY. [M]** Diplomacy involves the guild making ties with powerful individuals, such as monarchs or military generals, mercenary companies, spellcasting organizations, or with other factions who have similar goals. The aim might be to secure funding, to form an alliance, or to share information. Guilds may also pursue diplomacy to broker peace agreements with rivals, to gain new territory, or to earn entry into a new region.

**INSPIRE. [M]** The guild wishes to spread inspiration or courage among the general populace, within a specific group, or to an individual. The aim might be to increase acceptance and funding for the arts, or to help repel the evil influences of fiendish creatures or an unholy faith. Guild members influence the targeted group using speeches, events, demonstrations, or even rallies.

**INVESTIGATION. [O/M]** The guild wishes to acquire information about a specific individual, group, item, location, or other topic through surveillance, infiltration, or interviews. Usually, no illegal activity may occur during this type of quest; only legal actions such as observation, questioning, and gathering rumors. If the subject of the investigation is a person or group, then the guild might require that the subject doesn't find out that they're being investigated.

**MISSIONARY/PROMOTION. [M]** This involves activities that improve the public's perception of the guild. The aim of these quests is to earn legitimacy, gain trust, recruit new members, or raise funds for a project. Missionary work might involve reaching out to local groups, giving talks in town halls, conducting street sermons, or putting on fairs or exhibitions where guild creations are displayed.

*Continued on the next page.*

**PERFORM.** [O/M] Performers are asked to put on a show of some sort, either to show off what the guild has been working on or because they've been hired to provide entertainment by someone. Performances can range from concerts to speed painting, from poetry readings to operas. Depending on the level of spectacle required, Perform quests might be assigned to members of different ranks.

**EXPLORE.** [M] Exploration involves traveling to uncharted areas in order to expand the guild's understanding of the world, planes, or cosmos. This could be a relatively small quest such as climbing a mountain to something as epic as traveling to another plane of existence. There might also be auxiliary goals such as discovering and sampling new flora and fauna, or locating rumored ruins or special sites.

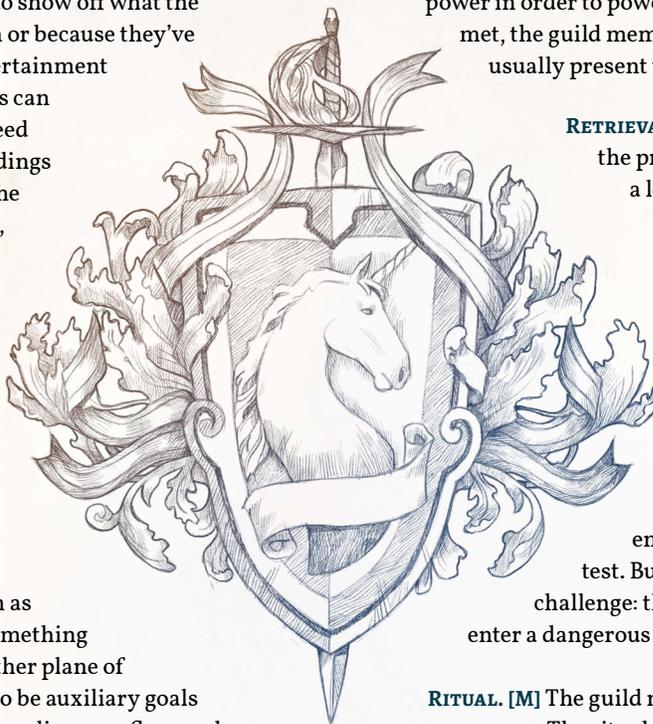
**PROTECT.** [O/M] The guild needs to protect a certain place, item, or person from a threat. The target in need of protection might be directly related to the guild, such as a guildhouse that's being besieged by demons, or it might be part of a service, as in the case of a noblewoman who has paid the guild to send members to serve as bodyguards while she travels through a dangerous region of the world.

**CULTIVATE.** [O/M] The guild wishes to bolster the natural world in some fashion. This might involve breeding an animal that has been pushed to the brink of extinction, or it could feature week-long rituals in which druids call down rainstorms to help a woodland recover from deforestation. In some cases, it may involve removing a blight, such as a source of necromantic corruption or a disease that infects living things. These quests don't usually involve destroying elements of civilization, such as dams or farms.

**RESCUE.** [O/M] Rescue quests involve safely recovering something or someone who is in danger, or has been taken captive or hostage by another organization. Rescue quests might be subtle in nature, using stealth above all else, or might be a fully-armed charge into the lair of a dragon to rescue a captive craftsperson. The level of danger dictates the rank of members or the experience of non-members sent on the quest.

**RESEARCH.** [O/M] The guild needs to uncover lost knowledge or discover something new. This can be accomplished by delving into ancient libraries, speaking to enlightened entities, or conducting arcane experiments. The goal

might be recovering the methodology for a forgotten ceremony or finding a new way to draw upon arcane power in order to power constructs. Once the goal is met, the guild member tasked with the quest will usually present the knowledge to their superiors.



**RETRIEVAL.** [O/M] Retrieval quests focus on the procurement of certain items from a location or individual. The item could be anything, such as a book, a crafting material, a weapon, or an artifact. It might be lost in a hidden sanctum, a forgotten ruin, a subterranean dungeon, or a lost tomb. In most cases, fetching the item is only half the quest; sometimes the location must be discovered through diligent research, with entry allowed only upon passing a test. But sometimes the journey is the true challenge: the quest might force adventurers to enter a dangerous forest or travel to another plane.

**RITUAL.** [M] The guild needs to conduct a magical ritual or ceremony. The ritual might be to cause an isolated magical effect, or it could be summoning a celestial or divine guide. Alternatively, the ritual could be part of a chain of rituals designed to invoke the fulfillment of a plan much broader in scope. Rituals might be undertaken for various reasons, such as to place a boon on an ally, to gain a powerful magic item or enchantment, or to brighten the stars to keep the roads safer at night.

## ADVANCING RANKS

### LOW TO MEDIUM

Undertaking a quest to advance from low to medium rank is the most common way to rise through a guild's hierarchy. Typically these quests are relatively low-risk, but success can bring rewards beyond promotion, while failure may mean the member has to undergo further training before trying again. See the Low to Medium Quest table below for some examples of low-ranking quests, their requirements, and potential consequences for success and failure.

### MEDIUM TO HIGH

Moving from medium to high ranks is a steeper climb than moving from a low position to one that's middling. Such a progression might involve undertaking several quests or at least one large quest split into multiple parts. Furthermore, the requirements to be considered for such a quest are more demanding. The perks of success and the consequences of failure are similarly increased. See the Medium to High Quest table below for some examples of medium-ranking quests, their requirements, and potential consequences for success and failure.



### Low to Medium Quest

Craft a musical instrument

### Requirement

Proficiency with woodworker's tools

### Success

You are rewarded with gold from the instrument's sale.

### Failure

You must undergo further training with a skilled artisan.

Inspire villagers to fight against a tyrant

Proficiency with persuasion or insight

You are gifted with an item that improves your charisma.

You must undertake training in rhetoric.

Retrieve a tome from a ruined library

Experience with dungeoneering

You are given a minor magic item.

You must try again with another guild member.

Capture a dangerous criminal

Proficiency in combat

You receive a magical boon.

You must train with the town guard.

Arrange a political meeting between rivals

Proficiency in persuasion or performance

You are put into contact with powerful politicians.

You must serve one of the rivals for a short time.

Investigate a crime

Proficiency in investigation or crime-solving

You are taught a new forensic technique.

You are taken off of all active cases.

### Medium to High Quest

Ally with another faction

### Requirement

Charisma, good social connections

### Success

You are granted an audience with a powerful figure.

### Failure

You are demoted.

Recruit a skilled individual

High charisma or persuasion skills

You are awarded a vast sum of gold.

You are stripped of guild benefits.

Summon a celestial avatar of justice

Spellcasting ability, divine study

You gain access to new divine boons and spellcasting.

You must repent before trying again.

Arrange and conduct a masterful performance

Proficiency in performance and a musical instrument, dance, or other means of performing

You are gifted with a magical musical instrument or a similar gift.

Your instrument is given to another.

Create a wondrous magical item

Previous well-constructed items

You are given a lavish gift, such as enchanted tools.

Your item materials are donated to the guild.

Defeat a dangerous foe

Experience in combat, martial or otherwise

You are given a magic weapon or other martial item.

You must undergo combat training until you are deemed ready.

# MOUNTS & VEHICLES

**F**lame-spitting chimeras, dragon turtles carrying entire living quarters on their backs, and automotive speedsppheres created by azer glassblowers are just a few of the amazing mounts and vehicles that guilds have access to. These factions often possess, tame, or create some of the most wondrous mounts and vehicles available in all the realms.

Mounts and vehicles often represent the peak of a guild's power, prestige, and ability, requiring exceptional skill and expertise to handle. Acquiring

one of these fantastical mounts or vehicles usually requires more than money, however; some guilds are only willing to share their beasts or inventions with those who ally with their faction or share their goals. Meanwhile, other guilds may offer more conventional mounts and vehicles to the public. These offerings are of the highest quality, and usually come with special abilities or perks that set them apart from their more mundane counterparts.

## GENERAL MOUNTS

There are many mounts that are not unique to guilds, but possess qualities that make them truly exceptional. Most are highly trained and significantly more intelligent than others of their kind. These mounts may be paid for in gold, or exchanged for a significant favor.

Mount	Size	Rarity	Price	Perk/Ability
Bull	Large	Common	70 gp	Can charge through small structures, such as barricades or doors.
Horse	Large	Common	75 gp	Can carry extra baggage and be equipped with armor.
Mastiff	Medium	Common	25 gp	Can track targets via smell and leap 5 feet into the air.
Pony	Medium	Common	30 gp	Can dodge attacks and traverse rocky terrain without being slowed.
Warhorse	Large	Common	400 gp	Is immune to fear and can trample enemies for extra damage.
Camel	Large	Uncommon	50 gp	Can perform a ranged spit attack, distracting foes on a successful hit.
Giant Boar	Large	Uncommon	200 gp	Can frenzy when it is hurt, gaining extra attacks.
Axebeak	Large	Rare	100 gp	Can wind up for a powerful attack that deals extra damage and can stun.
Bear	Large	Rare	250 gp	Is resistant to physical attacks and can claw two adjacent foes in one attack.
Elephant	Huge	Rare	400 gp	Can be equipped with armor and one large equipment and can trample through enemies for extra damage.
Dire Wolf	Large	Rare	200 gp	Can track targets via smell and deals additional damage to distracted foes.
Rhino	Large	Rare	200 gp	While charging, it can knock enemies back and gore a single target, dealing extra damage.
Giant Bat	Large	Remarkable	350 gp	Can echolocate enemies and regenerate health after feeding.
Giant Crab	Huge	Remarkable	200 gp	Is resistant to physical attacks and can grapple foes.
Giant Eagle	Huge	Remarkable	500 gp	Can spot targets from great distances and can perform aerial dive attacks.
Giant Lizard	Large	Remarkable	100 gp	Can camouflage itself and cling to surfaces.
Giant Seahorse	Large	Remarkable	300 gp	Can blow bubbles that encase and float targets to the surface of the water.
Griffon	Large	Remarkable	1,000 gp	Can counterattack when hurt and fly extremely quickly.
Pegasus	Large	Remarkable	1,000 gp	Can beat its wings to unleash powerful gusts of wind that blow enemies away.
Sea Serpent	Huge	Remarkable	1,000 gp	Does extra damage to ships and can move stealthily at night.



## UNIQUE GUILD MOUNTS

Some guilds breed or tame their own unique mounts, which are not available for sale in any market. These mounts are especially powerful and possess exotic abilities that may aid their masters in battle or help them travel to places that would otherwise be impossible to reach. Owning one of these mounts is a sign of immense prestige, both within a guild and outside of it. Although some heroes may choose mounts suited for destruction or battle, most unique guild mounts are less ferocious and more intelligent.

### \* GREAT SUN MOTH

**SIZE:** Huge **SPEED:** Fast **MOVEMENT:** Flying  
**ARMOR:** 1/5 **MIGHT:** 2/5  
**CAPACITY:** Six Medium-Sized Beings  
**ABILITIES:** Blinding Burst, Shimmering Armor, Fragile Wings

Though its iridescent, golden wings rival those of a roc's, the great sun moth is known for its gentle nature and great intelligence rather than its prowess as a predator. It can be found in dense jungles and the *Antediluvian Forest*, where it feeds on giant flowers and the sap of ancient trees. It is beloved by druids, who cultivate and protect the moth's larval and pupal forms and tame them when they reach adulthood. Most great sun moths understand Druidic and Common, and can obey complex commands. Fully grown great sun moths can carry up to six passengers and can fly up to 72 miles per day in fair weather.

When flying during the day, the wings of great sun moths collect the rays of the sun, which causes them to shine with blinding light that can be seen for

miles. These moths have a severe dislike for snow and cold temperatures, but are attracted to bright sources of light, including the lights of cities.

**WAYS TO ACQUIRE:** Great sun moths are carefully raised and trained by druid circles, but these druids are extremely selective when it comes to giving them to outsiders. In most cases, a great favor or a priceless item must be given in exchange. Wild great sun moths are smaller and rarer, but can still serve as powerful mounts.

### ABILITIES:

**BLINDING BURST:** After being exposed to sunlight for 6 hours, the great sun moth gains a charge for this ability. For each charge spent, all creatures within 100 feet are blinded and take 1d20 radiant damage, unless they are riding the moth or pass a check.

**SHIMMERING ARMOR:** While the great sun moth has one or more charges for its Blinding Burst ability, all attacks against the moth suffer a penalty to accuracy.

**FRAGILE WINGS:** The great sun moth's wings are notoriously fragile and can easily be damaged by crossbows or other missile weapons, which will force the creature to land. Absorbing more sunlight can heal a great sun moth's wounds, but it may take one or more days to fully recover.

### \* CORAL DRAKE

**SIZE:** Huge **SPEED:** Medium **MOVEMENT:** Swimming  
**ARMOR:** 3/5 **MIGHT:** 3/5  
**CAPACITY:** Four Medium-Sized Beings  
**ABILITIES:** Scintillating Spiral, Steam Breath, Aquatic Restrictions

Coral drakes are giant predators known to attack small ships, such as schooners. These wonderfully colored aquatic dragonkin look like a cross between a kaleidoscopic coral reef and a plesiosaur. Their bodies are mostly streamlined, but are studded with rigid, coral-like growths in a wide range of colors that allow them to blend in perfectly with their native reefs.

They are famous along the *Adamantine Coast* for being cunning and relentless hunters who find sport in chasing pirate vessels, but more mature coral drakes are less aggressive and more amenable to working with other creatures. Coral drakes are elegant swimmers native to tropical seas, but they can withstand vast ranges of temperature and salinity, meaning that they can travel from polar seas to inland streams if their riders so require. They can take up to four riders on their backs.

**WAYS TO ACQUIRE:** A powerful seafaring guild of sea elves known as the *Saltbrine Sailing Company* on the Adamantine Coast breeds the drakes as mounts and escorts

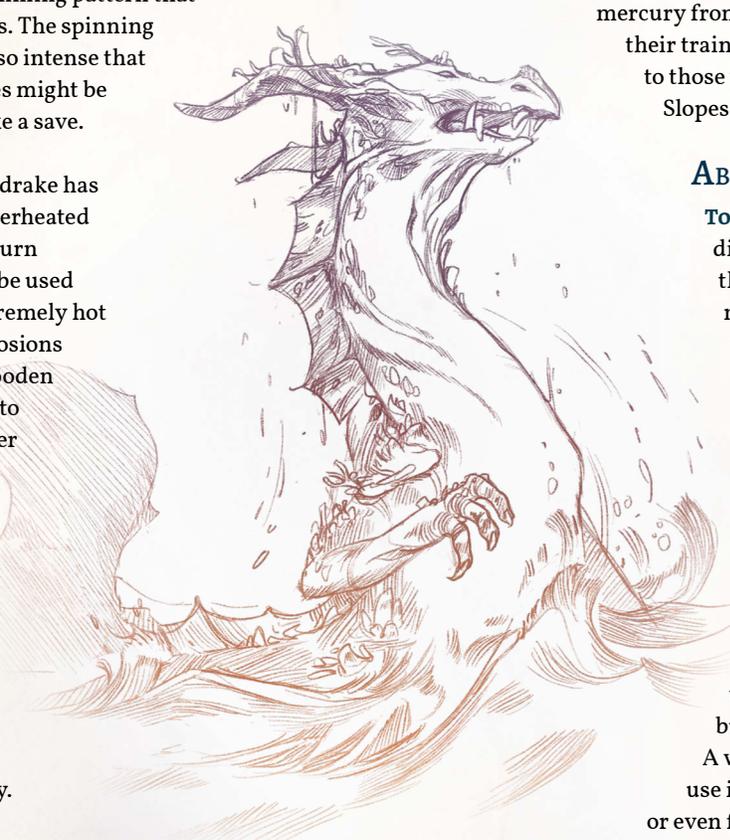
for their ships. Though the sea elves are consummate businesspeople, they will only grant outsiders the right to own one of their drakes after undergoing a grueling voyage to their secret breeding grounds, which tests the character of the potential owner.

### ABILITIES:

**SCINTILLATING SPIRAL:** With or without a rider, the drake goes into a spiraling swimming pattern that flashes its amazing colors. The spinning kaleidoscope of colors is so intense that nearby predators and foes might be stunned unless they make a save.

**STEAM BREATH:** The coral drake has the ability to breathe superheated air, which can instantly turn water to steam. This can be used underwater to create extremely hot geysers or powerful explosions that can blow holes in wooden ships. It can also be used to “flash-cook” fish and other aquatic creatures.

**AQUATIC RESTRICTIONS:** While coral drakes are at home in many types of seas (and even rivers or lakes), they're unable to function on land, and must be submerged in water for the majority of the day to remain healthy.



uniquely sensitive to sound, and the bridles don't pull upon them, but rather create tapping sounds that the intelligent mount responds to. The aardvarks can also be trained to sniff out certain scents and follow them.

**WAYS TO ACQUIRE:** Aldrave aardvarks are bred by a ranger guild operating out of the Aldrave Slopes. The guild members struggle to defend their homeland against those who seek to mine the cinnabar and extract mercury from it, and will offer one of their trained aardvarks as a reward to those who help them keep the Slopes from being taken over.

### ABILITIES:

**TOXIC BREATH:** Through digesting the cinnabar, the aardvarks produce natural mercury gas. They themselves are immune to the toxic miasma, but can unleash it on other creatures to deprive them of their senses and poison them.

**ADHESIVE TONGUE:** These aardvarks have extraordinarily long, sticky tongues. They use these to eat ants and termites, but also to detect cinnabar. A well-trained aardvark can use its tongue to grab items or even foes and grapple them.

**MERCURIAL:** While the aardvarks are usually dependable mounts, they are prone to sudden changes of mood and can become difficult to control. It's best to keep a pouch of cinnabar close at hand to rouse an aardvark's spirits should it become ornery.

## \* ALDRAVE AARDVARK

**SIZE:** Large **SPEED:** Slow **MOVEMENT:** Burrowing  
**ARMOR:** 3/5 **MIGHT:** 2/5  
**CAPACITY:** Four Medium-Sized Beings  
**ABILITIES:** Toxic Breath, Adhesive Tongue, Mercurial

These enormous aardvarks, native to the dusty *Aldrave Slopes*, devour the valuable cinnabar that can be found in the foothills. Their consumption of this mineral has augmented the creatures, and their natural enormity is enhanced by a thick, red, mineralized hide and the ability to breathe toxic fumes. As one might expect, the aardvarks' burrowing and tunneling ability is unmatched. They dig constantly in search of cinnabar and have spade-like claws that can cut through solid stone at a rapid rate. Special saddles masterfully crafted from leather serve as sling-like carriages in which a rider can sit, controlling the pace and direction of the aardvark through the use of a unique bridle system that attaches to the creature's ears. The aardvark's ears are

## \* FUNGRILLA

**SIZE:** Huge **SPEED:** Medium **MOVEMENT:** Climbing/Crawling  
**ARMOR:** 2/5 **MIGHT:** 2/5  
**CAPACITY:** Eight Medium-Sized Beings  
**ABILITIES:** Regeneration, Engulf, Desiccation

Fungrillas look vaguely like octopi, as they have large, geometric “heads” and masses of vine-like tendrils radiating out from them that can stick to almost any surface. Their huge, hollow heads can be opened with a command word, allowing riders to climb inside. With a hulking, hollow frame that is large enough to accommodate up to eight medium-sized riders,

these bizarre fungal creatures are often used to climb across terrain that would otherwise be impassible.

Once inside, riders are gently wrapped in vines and adhered to the inside of the head to keep them safe. This allows the fungrilla to travel at steep angles (or even upside down) without inconveniencing its passengers. These vines also have the ability to read the minds of creatures that they touch, enabling a creature to steer the fungrilla. When not crewed by other creatures, fungrillas can move around and feed on their own, but are only semi-sentient.

**WAYS TO ACQUIRE:** The first fungrillas were created by the *Order of Mystical Mycologists*, which breeds fungi for a wide range of purposes, including for use as siege engines. The Order only entrusts its creations to those with a strong connection to nature, especially flora, and usually asks potential customers to bring exceptionally rare plants in addition to more traditional forms of payment.

#### ABILITIES:

**REGENERATION:** If left in a dark, moist, warm environment, a fungrilla can rapidly regenerate to heal any damage caused to it. Provided that at least half of the creature is left intact, it can regrow its tendrils, body, mouth, and other parts within a matter of days.

**ENGULF:** Fungrillas can absorb almost any large-sized plant or animal that they come into contact with by wrapping it in its tendrils. Once grappled, the

plant or animal is slowly dissolved with potent acid and assimilated into the body of the fungrilla.

**DESICCATION:** Fungrillas can cross almost all terrain types, but they're not suited to particularly hot and dry environments. Special care should be taken to keep the creatures cool and wet in these environs.

## GENERAL VEHICLES

General vehicles are not created solely by guilds, but may have been modified or improved upon by guild-affiliated craftspeople. These vehicles are made of high-quality, durable materials, and usually stand up to magic and physical damage better than their mundane counterparts. These vehicles may be paid for in gold, or exchanged for a significant favor.

See the table below for a variety of vehicle options.

## GUILD VEHICLES

Many guilds pioneer new forms of transportation, whether mechanical or magical. These vehicles may be too difficult or costly for others to build, or they may rely on secret techniques or technology that only the guild possesses. Each one is a technical marvel in itself, and simply possessing one can inspire awe in onlookers. On the next pages you will find several truly unique, named guild vehicles.

Vehicle	Passengers	Rarity	Price	Perk/Ability
Carriage	6	Common	200 gp	Cannot be tipped over and has light armored plates in sides and roof.
Covered Wagon	12	Common	100 gp	Can traverse rough terrain easily and has a secret compartment.
Sleigh	5	Common	50 gp	Gains bonus speed when crossing snow or sand-covered terrain.
Hot Air Balloon	7	Uncommon	1,000 gp	Almost completely silent and easy to repair.
Caravel	30	Uncommon	10,000 gp	Gains bonus speed when sailing with the wind and houses secret cargo space.
Galleon	80	Uncommon	30,000 gp	Iron plated hull and auto-rig sails make this ship durable and quick to launch.
Cumulus Glider	4	Rare	2,500 gp	Can drift inside thick fog or clouds to avoid detection.
Ornithopter	6	Rare	9,500 gp	Can fly in extreme weather and has substantial room for storage.
Turtle Dreadnaught	20	Remarkable	40,000 gp	Can traverse either land or sea, and is impervious to most damage.
Arachnid Tank	8	Remarkable	20,000 gp	Can cross steep/mountainous terrain and has six cannons.

## \*WAYFARER EXPERIMENTAL STEAM CARRIAGE

**SPEED:** Medium **MOVEMENT:** Normal

**ARMOR:** 4/5 **MIGHT:** 1/5

**VALUE:** 5,000 gp

**CAPACITY:** Eight Medium-Sized Beings

**ABILITIES:** Juggernaut, Temperamental, Animated

Sporting a giant magical boiler, a large cab, and four heavy-duty wheels, the Wayfarer carriage is an experimental fusion of magical and mechanical ingenuity capable of traveling up cliffs, through bogs, and over mountains. The heart of the Wayfarer is a powerful magical engine that grants the carriage its unusual properties, including a rudimentary level of animation that gives it the ability to move on its own and communicate in a language of mechanical squeaks. This engine can be dangerous and unpredictable if not maintained, but even more troublesome is its tendency to attract imps and fiends, who will sabotage the carriage in order to claim the engine for themselves.

These carriages have space for luggage, loot, and equipment, and most experienced Wayfarer drivers make sure to bring along spare parts. The carriage has a reputation for breaking down, refusing to move, or even partially exploding if not maintained. The carriage itself is immune to most non-magical damage, but is terrified of dragons.

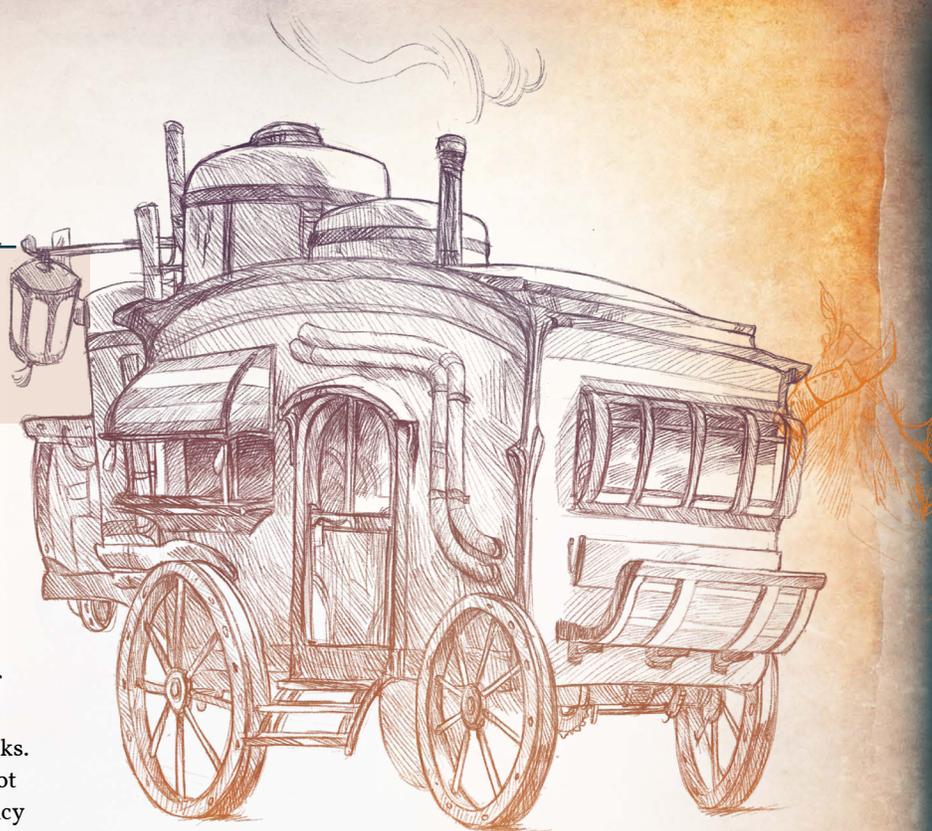
**WAYS TO ACQUIRE:** Wayfarer carriages can only be built by the most talented and wealthy craft guilds. To acquire one, a customer must bring a qualified guild a large quantity of meteoric metal, which is used to craft the engine.

### ABILITIES:

**JUGGERNAUT:** This vehicle ignores rough or difficult terrain when calculating the distance traveled. It also has the ability to move up or down cliff faces, mountainsides, and other sheer surfaces, even if gravity would normally cause it to fall. It is immune to most non-magical damage.

**TEMPERAMENTAL:** If this vehicle's engine, boiler, or other parts are not cleaned, repaired, or replaced by a qualified craftsman or mage every 5 days, it may refuse to move, try to escape its owner, or even explode.

**ANIMATED:** This vehicle is animated, and may move of its own will. It has its own personality, desires, and thoughts, and may try to communicate with others, but its mechanical speech can only be understood by an artificer or equivalent class.



## \*KRAKEN-O-MATIC

**SPEED:** Slow **MOVEMENT:** Swimming

**ARMOR:** 5/5 **Might:** 4/5

**VALUE:** 45,000 gp

**CAPACITY:** Sixteen Medium-Sized Beings

**ABILITIES:** Tentacle Grapplers, Lightning Blast, Ink Dispersal

**DESCRIPTION:** Forged from plates of gleaming copper, portholes of transparent crystal, and girders of barnacle-studded steel, this gargantuan vehicle looks exactly like a mechanical kraken. It can hold a dozen creatures safely within its metallic hold and up to four in its steering bay, where its pilots can see out through its crystal viewport. The vehicle is powered by lightning strikes, which are attracted to the copper plates on the top side of the vehicle, and can move at a top speed of 20 knots.

The Kraken-o-matic can dive down to a depth of 2,000 feet, though it moves more slowly as it dives deeper. Provided that the vehicle is kept well-powered by exposing it to storms on a regular basis, a Kraken-o-matic's pilots can exert control over all eight of the vehicle's tentacles and subsystems, though each system requires a separate person to operate. However, overcharging the vehicle can be dangerous, and can cause the vehicle to release electrical charges at random, or even explode!

**WAYS TO ACQUIRE:** The *Alliance of Ingenious Shipwrights*—a guild of artificers and enchanters—carefully guards the plans for these amazing vehicles, which requires the assistance of the guild's underwater humanoid

## ★ FLYING FORT

**SPEED:** Slow **MOVEMENT:** Flying

**ARMOR:** 5/5 **MIGHT:** 1/5

**VALUE:** 60,000 gp

**CAPACITY:** Twenty or More Medium-Sized Beings

**ABILITIES:** Ceaseless Flight, Customization, Sensitive Controls

Flying forts range from three-room towers to palace-sized bastions, all floating atop foundations of clouds enchanted with powerful magic that keeps them aloft. Many flying forts are equipped with catapults, arrow slits, cannons, and more exotic forms of weaponry that allow them to defend themselves when they land, but some are designed to bombard enemies from the air with giant boulders, explosive barrels, or even magical spores. Others are meant to be untouchable retreats—storied places of beauty and seclusion that move according to the owners' whims.

Every flying fort is controlled by a single magical device, which is used to steer the fort. This device can take the form of a floating crystal ball, a magical griffon-feather compass, or a gyroscopic metal sphere, as long as it can be used to alter direction, altitude, and speed. This device also serves as the magical anchor for the fort, and will cause the entire edifice to crumble if destroyed.

**WAYS TO ACQUIRE:** A legendary masonry guild called the *Cloudhammer Collective* is the sole group that constructs flying forts. Their headquarters is built into a treacherous mountain that can only be reached by airship. To commission a flying fort, the petitioner must convince the guild's cloud giants, who desire fame and respect from those who witness their creations, that their plans will not only constitute a monument to the giants' skill, but will also be a work of art. In addition, the commissioner must pay the guild a monumental sum—usually enough to empty a lord's coffers.

### ABILITIES:

**CEASELESS FLIGHT:** A flying fort never tires, and has no fuel to speak of. This means that it can continue to float and fly regardless of time, speed, and other factors. The forts do occasionally struggle in inclement weather though, and might be forced to stop if the winds are too strong.

**CUSTOMIZATION:** A flying fort can be customized in many ways: additional rooms with different functions can be added on, weapons can be installed, and magical wards can be placed upon the doors and windows. Each of these must be purchased from the guild or from a cloud giant architect.

**SENSITIVE CONTROLS:** If a flying fort's control focus is damaged, then the fort might break in some way. It might be unable to land, turn, or elevate, or it could lean at an angle.



members. The Shipwrights are only willing to create these vehicles for outsiders who help them recover items from dangerous shipwrecks, specifically those that have sunk into the deepest parts of the ocean or are inhabited by hostile creatures, such as merrow or sea serpents.

### ABILITIES:

**TENTACLE GRAPPLERS:** The enormous tentacles of the Kraken-o-matic are very dextrous despite their size and strength. A lesser pilot might simply use them to bash foes, but a skilled one can manipulate the tentacles to grasp a ship's propeller, crush a mast, or even pluck a drowning person from the waves.

**LIGHTNING BLAST:** Mounted just below the Kraken-o-matic's viewing platform is a lightning cannon—an experimental piece of weaponry designed to unleash a line of electricity that doesn't dissipate while within water. Unleashing a bolt drains a number of the vehicle's stored charges.

**INK DISPERSAL:** The Kraken-o-matic has a limited number of ink cartridges, which are metal barrels filled with tinted fluid. These can be detonated to create a cloud around the vehicle while within water. This ink can help the vehicle flee from dangerous situations and provide cover against attacks.

## ★ SPEEDSPHERE

**SPEED:** Very Fast **MOVEMENT:** Rolling  
**ARMOR:** 4/5 **MIGHT:** 1/5  
**VALUE:** 50,000 gp  
**CAPACITY:** Three Medium-Sized Beings  
**ABILITIES:** Immense Speed, Incredible Agility

Crafted in the Realm of Everlasting Flame by azer glassblowers, these glass spheres are a wonder to behold. Each one is unique, but all of them incorporate molten metal that flows across their surfaces in majestic patterns. Stored within the spheres is a warmth that cannot be dispelled, and each has seating inside that can fit up to three people. These spheres can roll at incredible speeds while keeping the riders upright thanks to a second sphere that magically levitates within the first. Both spheres are extremely resilient and will not crack unless subjected to intense force, such as a bolt from a siege ballista. While the spheres are incredibly fast and nimble, and are able to turn on a dime, they are dangerous to pilot. Speedspheres are notoriously difficult to steer thanks to the complex controls and the requirement for the pilot to think as fast as the speedsphere can travel. Furthermore, there is no space for cargo within the vehicles unless riders are ejected.

**WAYS TO ACQUIRE:** In order to acquire a speedsphere, one must please the guild of azer glassblowers, *The Molten Brotherhood*. This might be achieved by bringing rare resources from other elemental realms, or by freeing the elemental smiths from their efreeti oppressors. The guild provides training to pilot the spheres, but it can be expensive and takes several days.

### ABILITIES:

**IMMENSE SPEED:** When piloted by a skilled driver, speedspheres can reach unrivaled speeds. They're also incredibly resilient, meaning that they are rarely damaged if they crash, and they're capable of crushing undergrowth and other difficult terrain beneath them, effectively ignoring it.

**INCREDIBLE AGILITY:** The ability of a speedsphere to turn in place means that they are incredibly nimble in the hands of a skilled pilot. Furthermore, the levitation of the internal sphere can be extended to the external sphere for short periods of time, allowing the spheres to float briefly in the air to ascend jagged natural stairs or sheer cliff faces, for example.

## ★ SOARING SMITHY

**SPEED:** Medium **MOVEMENT:** Flying  
**ARMOR:** 2/5 **MIGHT:** 3/5  
**VALUE:** 35,000 gp  
**CAPACITY:** Six Medium-Sized Beings  
**ABILITIES:** Solar Flamethrowers, Arcane Forge

**DESCRIPTION:** This vehicle resembles a hot air balloon, but with far grander proportions. The intricate, gondola-like basket slung beneath the balloon is made of wondrously light threads of metal that have been braided together and enchanted with magical wards. This extra protection allows the basket to weather arrows, slugs, and even arcane projectiles when flown into enemy territory, which is not uncommon due to the balloons being used for rescue missions.

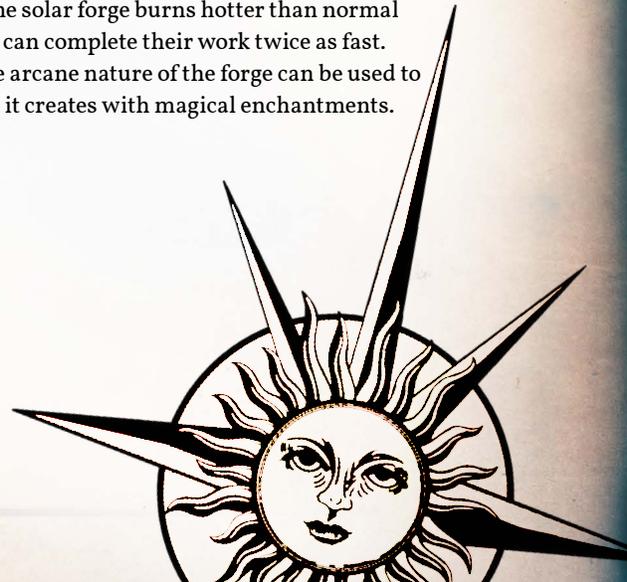
Rather than being powered by conventional flame, these vehicles harness solar power to stay afloat. Each balloon has a crystal ball at the top that magically charges in sunlight, and it channels enormous amounts of heat that can be controlled with an arcane apparatus. This heat powers a solar forge held within the basket, which inflates the balloon with hot air and enables the smithy's users to craft weapons, armor, and other metal objects while traveling. The crystal ball also powers two immense flamethrowers, which are located on either side of the basket.

**WAYS TO ACQUIRE:** Soaring smithies are created by the *Radiant Sisterhood of Sunlight*, a group of female battlemages who channel sunlight into powerful spells and magical weapons. If a party of adventurers agrees to help the Sisterhood with a rescue mission, then they might be loaned a balloon. If the mission is a success, then the balloon may be gifted to them.

### ABILITIES:

**SOLAR FLAMETHROWERS:** The soaring smithies are equipped with two flamethrowers, each of which can hit targets up to 1,000 feet away. Depending on the setting, these can be used to shoot fire or radiant beams of sunlight.

**ARCANE FORGE:** The solar forge burns hotter than normal forges, and users can complete their work twice as fast. Furthermore, the arcane nature of the forge can be used to imbue items that it creates with magical enchantments.



## \* CURSEBANE COACH

**SPEED:** Fast **MOVEMENT:** Normal

**ARMOR:** 3/5 **MIGHT:** 2/5

**VALUE:** 25,000 gp

**CAPACITY:** Five Medium-Sized Beings

**ABILITIES:** Spectral Steeds, Divine Gear, Shadow Stealth

**DESCRIPTION:** Pulled by spectral horses, these coaches are filled with gear and gadgets designed to hunt undead, lycanthropes, fiends, and more. Each coach includes a portable altar, mounted crossbows with silver-tipped bolts, and an in-built iron cage for holding monsters (or protecting oneself from them) that can be locked and barred from either side. The iron itself is repulsive to many monsters, but the bars of this cage are further enhanced with divine blessings that burn fiends, fey, and shapechangers who touch them. The wheels of the coaches have silver spurs to protect them from shapechanger attacks and ensure that the vehicle can travel across difficult terrain. On top of this, each carriage is warded against supernatural attacks with holy symbols that reinforce the strength of the wooden structure.

**WAYS TO ACQUIRE:** These highly customized coaches are built by *The Midnight Watchers*, a guild made up of clerics and rangers who travel between isolated communities at the edges of civilization, where residents under threat of attack from the undead, vampires, lycanthropes, fey, or other enemies of mortals. To acquire a coach, one must demonstrate their skill in fighting the guild's enemies, as well as take an oath to become a deputy member.

### ABILITIES:

**SPECTRAL STEEDS:** These coaches are pulled by magical, semi-corporeal stallions who are impervious to physical attacks and can travel through a variety of punishing conditions without needing rest. Upon being destroyed or separated from the coach by a distance of more than 20 feet, they disappear and must be resummoned the next day.

**DIVINE GEAR:** Each coach is packed full of monster hunting gear, including vials of holy water concealed in the walls, divine flames burning in sconces, silvered weapons and ammunition kept in locked racks, and books of prayers and rituals stored in trunks.

**SHADOW STEALTH:** The coach is enchanted with a spectral ward that causes it to become almost invisible while in darkness. This, coupled with the spectral nature of the stallions that pull it, makes the coach extremely stealthy.

## \* WAVEHOPPER

**SPEED:** Very Fast **MOVEMENT:** Sailing, Teleportation

**ARMOR:** 1/5 **MIGHT:** 2/5

**VALUE:** 40,000 gp

**CAPACITY:** Six Medium-Sized Beings

**ABILITIES:** Wave Jumping, Enhanced Speed, Elemental Portals

**DESCRIPTION:** This small, camakau-style boat consists of a single-hulled canoe with an outrigger attached to an enormous razor shell and a large seaweed sail fastened to its lone mast. Each wavehopper has a water elemental bound to its razor shell, as well as an air elemental bound to its woven sail. Although the ship won't stand up well to attacks, spells, or fire in general, its flexible construction can weather rough waters and stormy weather very well. The wavehopper has limited cargo space, but it is renowned as the fastest way to travel by sea.

Each wavehopper must be constructed by hand, and is then transported to the elemental realms, where water and air elementals are willingly bound by nature rituals into the vehicle. Only the most powerful druids and shamans can conduct these rituals without angering or being overpowered by the elementals.

**WAYS TO ACQUIRE:** Wavehoppers are built by *The Waveriders of Atmos*. This band of druids, merfolk, and sailors aims to keep their home islands safe from pirates and raiders, as well as those who would exploit the natural bounty of their home. To acquire a wavehopper, a group must capture an enemy ship.

### ABILITIES:

**WAVE JUMPING:** The ship's water elemental can be called upon to cause the ship to "leap" over dangerous marine terrain, such as enormous waves, reefs, whirlpools, and the like. This can also be used to leap out of the way of an attack, or even jump over a galleon.

**ENHANCED SPEED:** The air elemental can cause the boat to move at immense speeds, even when there is no wind. The top speed of the ship is roughly 70 knots, or 80 miles per hour, though rougher waters can slow it down.

**ELEMENTAL PORTALS:** In tandem, the ship's elementals can create a whirlpool-like portal that the ship can sail into. The ship will then emerge out of another portal at a chosen oceanic location within 100 miles. Once used this way, the ship's elementals cannot be called upon for 3 days.



# GUILD DEEDS



any adventurers pursue quests for treasure or powerful artifacts, but guilds may undertake deeds, which can have significant impacts on the world at large.

For a sense of scale, a party of adventurers may defeat a band of raiders and make the highways safer, but a guild of clever investigators may topple an entire criminal empire from the inside, making an entire kingdom safer. Because they are vital to a guild's mission, deeds are only available to fully fledged guild members.

Deeds offer player characters a way to change the world for the better by carrying out the guild's mission or ideals. In addition, deeds help tie players to the world and its inhabitants: instead of being focused solely on personal power, fame, or riches, player characters who undertake deeds become involved with the people and struggles that shape their world. Likewise, deeds bind player characters to their guildmates: instead of embarking alone on quests, player characters learn to rely on the knowledge, skills, and counsel of their fellow guild members, showing that they really are stronger together.

A guild's deeds are closely connected to the organization's nature and specialty. A magical guild may cast a world-changing ritual that restores the balance of nature, a military guild may intervene to stop a bloody siege, and a research guild may found a new university dedicated to studying ancient lore, for example. Whatever form they take, deeds improve the world in some way and serve as true testaments to a guild's heroism.

## CREATING YOUR OWN DEEDS

This section provides Game Masters with the tools to craft guild-specific deeds. This involves using a step-by-step process that includes choosing a legendary goal, working in intriguing challenges, and choosing surprising subversions. Unlike normal quests, deeds usually require more than just clearing out a dungeon or acquiring a certain tome—they're often multi-part adventures that require extensive preparations, new allies, and special guidelines that ensure that participants live up to the standards of the guild.

A deed centers on its major goal, which is a heroic objective that aids the world at large. Once you've determined which Guild Type best fits the guild in question, you can then choose an appropriate major goal. From there, you may choose one or more minor goals, as well as any number of restrictions, challenges, and twists. The tables in this section can provide you with ideas, or you can come up with your own.



## GUILD TYPES

Most guilds can be grouped into one of six categories: Commercial, Craft, Greater Good, Magical, Military, or Research. Although all guilds generally work toward a "greater good," guilds in the Greater Good category either pursue that goal at the expense of making money—such as an order of wandering clerics who rely on alms—or don't quite fit into the other categories. A guild of investigators, virtuous thieves, or benevolent spies, for example, may fall outside of the other categories. You can see a description of each Guild Type in the Guild Type table below.

Guild Type	Description
Military	Organizations that specialize in combat, whether magical or physical. These guilds may be warriors or assassins, but they achieve their goals by fighting enemies.
Commercial	Organizations that are primarily concerned with offering goods and services to clients, conducting trade, or harvesting and selling resources such as ore.
Magical	Organizations that focus on using and studying magic, whether it be scholarly, arcane spellcraft or druidic rituals. Most members of these guilds are mages.
Craft	Organizations that seek to master a trade or make innovations. Though they may create items, they focus less on selling these creations and more on perfecting their work.
Research	Organizations that seek out, collect, and study pieces of knowledge, including books, artifacts, or magical lore. Most of these guilds value knowledge for its own sake.
Greater Good	Organizations that are wholly focused on directly helping others, or who pursue their goals in unconventional ways.

## MAJOR GOALS

Goals are the overarching objectives of deeds. They are tied to the type of guild in question—a Commercial guild that deals with transporting vital goods via airship is going to have very different goals than a Military guild that's concerned with blending magic and swordplay in new ways. No matter the guild, however, a goal always has major implications for the world at large.

## MINOR GOALS

Minor goals are smaller objectives that help a guild achieve its major goal. Achieving a minor goal may make other parts of the deed easier, such as finding a well-connected ally that can call in a favor. However, failing a minor goal can push a major goal out of reach, such as failing to heal a sacred animal, thus displeasing a nature god whose blessing is needed to restore a drought-ridden kingdom.

Major Goal	Possible Goals	Minor Goal	Description
Commercial	Establish a new trading route, secure access to an exotic resource, broker a new partnership, promote a public good, renovate a city	Commercial	Raise capital, procure rights to a new technology or magic, make an ally, set up a headquarters, launch a new enterprise
Military	Halt an invasion, liberate an occupied territory, rescue a target, vanquish a powerful foe, destroy a cult, invent a new fighting style, defend a city	Military	Obtain a weapon or armor, discover an enemy's weakness, raise an army, train under a legend, train a squire, prepare fortifications
Greater Good	Cleanse a corrupted region, protect a sacred grove, broker a peace treaty, remove a powerful curse, relocate refugees, stop a sinister plot	Greater Good	Redeem an evil being, find an artifact, convert enemies, rally the masses, investigate a strange occurrence, commune with nature or a deity
Magical	Make a prophecy, correct a magical imbalance, gain new insight into the arcane, fashion an item of power, found a school of magic	Magical	Conduct a magical ritual to gain information, locate powerful tools, convene with colleagues for advice, summon an extraplanar being
Craft	Invent a new power source, forge a legendary weapon, revolutionize transportation, develop a world-changing concoction, pioneer a new field	Craft	Carry out a risky experiment, gather an exotic material, find a power supply, acquire a specialized tool or resource, research a new technique
Research	Uncover the tomb of a famous king, replicate an ancient technology or ritual, expose fraudulent research, converse with a forgotten god	Research	Track down specific books or sources, embark on an expedition, translate ancient texts, solve an ancient puzzle, raise funds, locate a lost place





*“Every time you step outside wearing the guild’s insignia, you are telling the world that you speak for us. Every time you draw your blade, you are showing people what we would die for. So choose your words carefully, and choose your battles even more so.”*

*— Bara Tegan, guildmaster of The Redhearts*

## RESTRICTIONS

Restrictions are usually issued by the guilds themselves and are tied to how quests should be carried out. Often, they include requirements to follow laws, not harm innocents, and/or uphold the guild’s creed or ideals. Restrictions can make deeds more challenging by imposing limitations on player characters and NPCs, or more fun by forcing players to roleplay their player characters in new ways, such as using guile and diplomacy instead of force.

## CHALLENGES

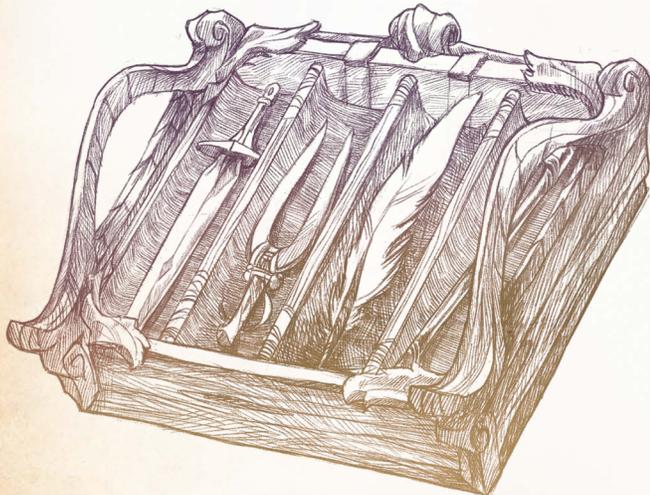
Challenges are complications that make the deed less straightforward or more risky to carry out. Challenges can be discrete events or scenarios, like dealing with an assassin, or they can be conditions that affect the entire deed, like a magical alignment of planets that makes spells weaker. Challenges make relatively straightforward goals, like saving a town or mining an ore vein, more interesting.

Restrictions	Description	Challenges	Description
Commercial	Obey the law, do not exceed the given budget, uphold the image of the guild, do not displease allies or partners, resolve conflicts without violence	Commercial	A rival guild competes for the goal, a spy sabotages a key asset, a player character must please powerful politicians, the guild’s coffers are empty
Military	Uphold code of honor, prevent the deaths of innocents, defeat an enemy in single combat, never retreat, capture enemies instead of killing them	Military	An assassin targets the characters, enemies’ magic makes weapons useless, innocents are held hostage, characters must ambush an enemy
Greater Good	Obey the guild’s creed, do not harm any wild creature or plant, do not lie or steal, kill no creatures, move unseen by enemies, leave no traces	Greater Good	A rival god interferes, innocents are being mind controlled, an ally is held hostage, an enemy cannot be arrested or killed due to their title
Magical	Complete the task within a given timeframe, use only one school of magic, do not allow harm to come to innocents, do not abuse magic for selfish gains	Magical	A cosmic event makes magic weak, a certain type of magic cannot be used, a powerful magical being is scheming against the guild
Craft	Do not harm anyone, complete work within a timeframe, do not use low quality materials, make the creation safe, make the creation beautiful	Craft	Key material is in dangerous location, a prototype might explode, a character must compete with a rival, a material is deadly to the touch
Research	Do not damage ancient items or architecture, do not lie, cheat, or steal, do not desecrate burial sites, do not use knowledge for personal gain	Research	A key asset is in the hands of a collector, the player characters must race against an unscrupulous rival, key information is in a forgotten language

## TWISTS

Twists are scenarios in which something that the players assumed or expected turns out to be false. Examples include the expectation that an ally's army would bolster the guild's ranks, only to have that ally retreat at the last second, or expecting that a demonic being would fight tooth and nail for control of a spellbook, only for the demon to instead offer a trade. Twists can make things easier or harder for the player characters or NPCs involved, but either way, they should be surprising and offer a new way to approach the major or minor goals.

Subversions	Description
Commercial	A key ally or buyer reneges on a deal, a key shipment vanishes, a ruler prohibits a guild activity, a key contact is actually a spy, pirates or bandits offer an alliance
Military	An enemy force launches an ambush, the enemy unleashes a powerful beast, an ally retreats, the enemy has unexpected allies or powers
Greater Good	A force for good is corrupted, a relic has lost its power, innocents turn against the guild, an ally is slain, an enemy reveals good motives
Magical	A taboo spell is required, a powerful ally fails, an evil entity offers a deal, a key artifact is stolen, important research is found to be flawed
Craft	The creation has a harmful side effect, the creation attracts the attention of enemies, the prototype is sabotaged, a key part of the creation is stolen
Research	A key contact is found dead, a key asset is unexpectedly destroyed, an artifact is not what it seems to be, a discovery unleashes an ancient evil



## PREMADE DEEDS

This section provides Game Masters with premade deeds that they can use in their games. Each one is tied to a guild archetype and has multiple “stages” that represent distinct parts of the deed, as well key locations and characters. These summaries and short descriptions can be adapted and expanded to become full adventures, complete with a special gameplay element that makes the deed truly challenging and memorable.

### BLOCKADE RUNNERS

**GUILD ARCHETYPE:** Commercial

The party has been chosen by the guild to escort a ship, commanded by *Captain Aletza*, to a distant port. The ship is full of the guild's goods, and while this cargo was paid for in advance, the guild can only collect the substantial payment if the cargo is safely delivered. However, the port that they're trying to reach, *Kingsport*, has been blockaded by a pirate fleet led by *Captain Mooneye*, who's attempting to extort the governor of the port.

#### RUN THE BLOCKADE

Meanwhile, a large group of merchant ships has anchored outside the blockade. They contact the party's ship, and ask if the party members are willing to act as blockade-runners and lead a landing party to retake the town. If the party accepts, then the party members are joined by a group of armed sailors. They are also loaded with vital cargo from the other merchants meant for the port's citizens, such as food and weapons.

Mooneye's forces have blocked off the mouth of the port and sent several bands of pirates ashore to control and loot the town. The party members must sail past the blockade using speed, stealth, sabotage, or ship-to-ship combat, then anchor at the docks and fight their way to the warehouses, where they can safely drop off the cargo and rally the citizens to take back the port from Mooneye.

#### SHOWDOWN WITH MOONEYE

Captain Aletza, the captain of the party's ship, volunteers to lead the uprising against Mooneye's pirates, but asks the party members to track down Mooneye themselves. They can find her in the governor's mansion, holed up with a group of her pirates. Mooneye emerges from the balcony and asks to parlay with the party. If the party members allow Mooneye to escape with her plunder, then she and her pirates will go peacefully. If they refuse, Mooneye jumps down and fights the party.



## RESTRICTIONS

If the guild's cargo is significantly damaged or not delivered at all, then the guild will go bankrupt. If Mooneye is not persuaded to leave, killed, or forced to flee, then the pirate ships making up the blockade will not leave, keeping the port blocked.

## KEY ASPECTS

**KINGSPORT:** Kingsport is a flourishing port town on the *Adamantine Coast* that is known for its exports of exotic goods, especially adamantine. It hosts a large bank, several prominent merchant families, theaters, and even a grand park in the center of the city. The port sits on a large bay, and can hold up to a hundred ships at its docks.

**CAPTAIN MOONEYE:** Captain Mooneye is a devious and flamboyant female tiefling pirate captain. She blends vicious swordsmanship with infernal fire spells, and her crew members are known for using fire to intimidate their foes. Mooneye is shrewd and cruel, but she treats her large crew as a family.

**CAPTAIN ALETZA:** Captain Aletza is the female gnome captain of the party's ship. She has spent over 30 years at sea and has retrofitted her ship, the *Triton*, with all kinds of modifications. She is pragmatic, fearless and resourceful, and she also has a deadpan sense of humor. She has crossed paths with Mooneye before.

**THE TRITON:** The party's ship, the *Triton*, has been heavily augmented with various gadgets, as well as armor plating and experimental sails. It has a magical device that can create fog around the ship, as well as a set of grappling hook harpoons that can be fired at long range.

# PERFORM A HEIST

**GUILD ARCHETYPE:** Craft



The party has been asked to perform a heist on behalf of the guild. The guild was recently raided by a criminal organization known as *The Talons*, who stole valuable blueprints and formulae. The Talons even kidnapped a member of the organization as an insurance policy to stop the guild from calling upon the help of law enforcement. The party must recover the guild member alive and retrieve the blueprints and formulae before they are sold to the black market.

## UNDERWORLD CONTACT

To learn where *The Talons* are based, the party must gather information from or about the criminal underworld. This leads them to *Albethus Armsfall*, a well-connected information broker who operates out of the dingy *Troll Tongue Inn*. Albethus is extremely cautious about revealing his true appearance, and appears in disguise after the party arranges to meet with him.

Albethus reveals that *The Talons* operate out of an old potion distillery in a rough quarter of the city and provides the party with a rough floor plan, which includes potential ways in and out of the building. These include partially shuttered skylights on the roof, an underground drainage system, and several maintenance corridors close to the distilling vats. He also warns the party that *The Talons* have been distilling their own potions, and their effects can range from explosive to mutative.

## THE HEIST

Once the party members have reached the potion distillery, they must sneak into the building without being detected and locate both the guild member and the blueprints and formulae. If their presence is discovered, then *The Talons* will use potions from their bandoliers to fight back. While infiltrating the distillery, the party members may overhear that a mysterious group will soon arrive to negotiate for the blueprints and formulae. When the appointed time comes, it's revealed that the group consists of representatives from a rival craft guild, along with a group of heavily armed bodyguards. The party must release the hostage and evacuate them safely, as well as take back the blueprints and formulae before the negotiation between *The Talons* and the representatives concludes with a handover of the goods.

## RESTRICTIONS

The party cannot call on law enforcement for help, since *The Talons* will injure or even kill the hostage. The party must bring back the hostage alive, and they must retrieve the blueprints and formulae before they are handed over to the rival guild.

## KEY ASPECTS

**TROLL TONGUE INN:** This dingy establishment is a haven for criminals and conmen, and is located in a slum. Rumor has it that the place is haunted by the ghost of the last innkeep, who was murdered by the current proprietor.

**FIZZO'S POTION DISTILLERY:** Long abandoned by its original owners, the distillery now serves as The Talons' headquarters. The volatile potion-creating apparatuses are still in use, and produce strange-smelling gasses and mists that fill the place.

**ALBETHUS ARMSFALL:** Albethus is a dwarf career criminal with dozens of connections who uses a combination of illusions and transmutation magic to disguise his appearance. He is crude, paranoid, and greedy, but he's not stupid.

**GRIFFON "GRIFF" HUBBARD:** As the leader of The Talons, Griffon is a hardened half-elf criminal looking to turn his gang members into specialists in mercantile espionage, including stealing trade secrets, extorting guilds, and robbing shipments. He is smart, well-spoken, and ruthless.

**UNPREDICTABLE POTIONS:** Members of The Talons have access to a variety of experimental potions that can be used offensively (i.e., acid, explosives, poisonous mist) as well as to enhance their own combat abilities, such as granting them the ability to breathe fire, see in the dark, or shrug off blows.



## DIPLOMACY

**ARCHETYPE:** Greater Good

The party members have been asked by the guild to serve as mediators to two powerful monarchs. **King Isat** of **Osnar** is on the verge of war with the neighboring kingdom of **Alamarce**, ruled by **Queen Pallas**. Pallas claims that Osnar is sending pirates to raid her kingdom, while Isat has declared that his kingdom needs Alamarce's mines to continue prospering.

### BEHIND THE CURTAIN

The party must gain entry to Isat and Pallas' courts, either by infiltrating them or posing as foreign nobles, entertainers, or another group. Once there, the party members must collect information about the true motivations of the monarchs. If they succeed, they learn that:

- ◆ *Isat wants to seize the jewel mines of Alamarce to pay off his debts to Lord Atrabas of Osnar.*
- ◆ *Atrabas wants a war with Alamarce in order to expand his own land holdings.*
- ◆ *Pallas needs more lumber and metal to build ships to fight the coastal pirates, but Atrabas refuses to sell his vast stocks of both resources to Alamarce.*
- ◆ *Lady Benast of Alamarce has been funding the pirates in order to foment a rebellion against Pallas, with the goal of seizing power for herself.*

While investigating, the party members must take care not to draw too much attention—if they do, they may be targeted by spies controlled by Atrabas or Benast.

### THE NEGOTIATION

Once the party members have discovered enough information to form a plan, they must contact both monarchs to arrange a peace conference. One potential peace agreement is for Isat to make a deal to sell Pallas lumber and metal, which will allow the king to satisfy his debts to Atrabas and avert the need to seize Alamarce's mines. Another option is to expose Benast's treachery, which will reveal that Osnar is not behind the pirate attacks. Benast's estate may then be seized and used to pay off Isat's debts.

### RESTRICTIONS

If a peace deal is not reached by a certain date, then the two kingdoms will go to war. If either of the monarchs is killed, then the deed fails as their respective kingdom falls into a bloody civil war for succession.



## KEY ASPECTS

**OSNAR:** As an inland nation rich in resources, Osnar is mostly mountainous. A small part of its territory touches the ocean, and has been known to be a lawless area frequented by smugglers.

**ALAMARCE:** Alamarce is a coastal kingdom that thrives on trade and shipping, but has grown weak in recent years. It has rich mines for sapphires, rubies, and other jewels, as well as plentiful fishing.

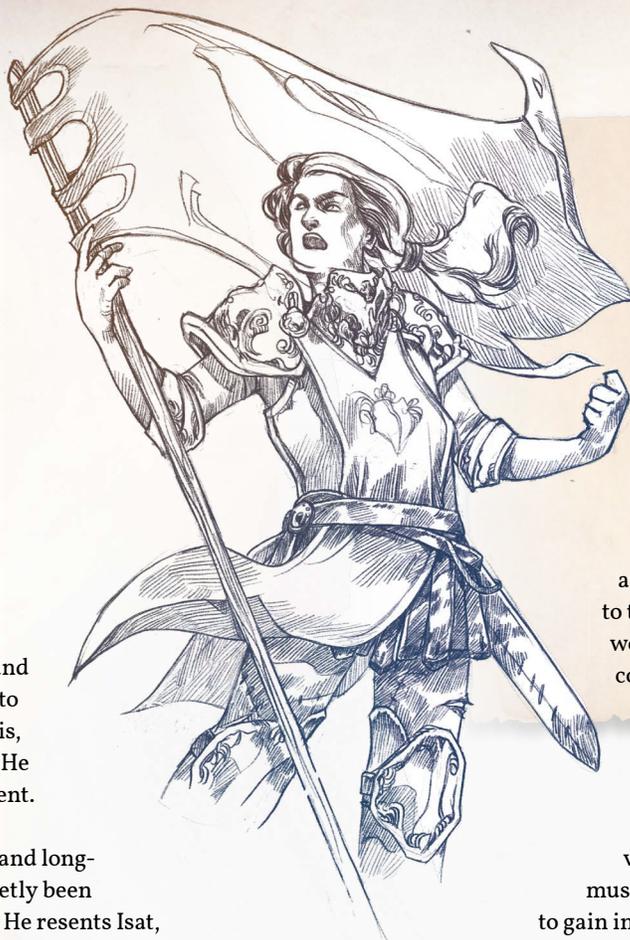
**KING ISAT:** Isat is middle-aged and unambitious. He would prefer to see his kingdom continue as it is, without upheaval or conquest. He is good-humored and complacent.

**LORD ATRABAS:** A consummate and long-lived schemer, Atrabas has quietly been influencing Osnar for decades. He resents Isat, and wishes to see his own house rise in power.

**QUEEN PALLAS:** Young, driven, and fierce, Pallas is committed to pulling her kingdom out of its downward slope. Though not war-like, Pallas refuses to give up any ground to her rivals.

**LADY BENAST:** As the lady of a relatively new house, Benast wishes to establish herself as a force in Alamarce. She is willing to promise anything and betray anyone to seize more power.

**SPIES:** While the party members are gathering information, making allies, and brokering deals, they must ensure that the people they're dealing with are not spies belonging to either Atrabas or Benast.



## LAUNCH A CRUSADE

**ARCHETYPE:** Military

The guild has learned that an army of vampires has taken control of a prosperous region, and they are attempting to turn it into an undead kingdom with mortals serving as slaves and cattle. The party must serve as the spearhead for a crusade to take back the region while working with a small but elite company of guild members.

## CAPTURE KEY LOCATIONS

In order to bring down the vampire army, the party must first work with the guild to gain intelligence. Sending scouts, capturing vampires for interrogation, and speaking to refugees reveals that the vampires' new empire rests on three vital sites: the *Eclipse Tower*, the *Cathedral of Blood*, and the *Shrine of Rebirth*.

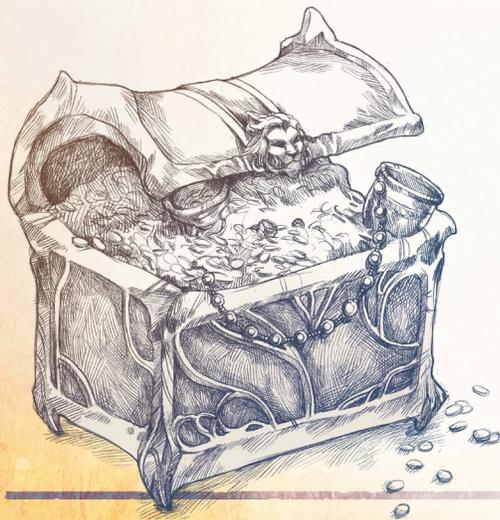
Once the party members have learned about these sites, they can attempt to capture and destroy them by leading their company of guild members on raids. The company can take orders (such as flanking, carrying out an ambush, or distracting the enemy) and carry them out separately from the party members, or fight under their direct command in battles. Depending on the order in which the locations are captured, the company might have certain advantages.

## DUEL THE OVERLORDS

Once the party has captured a key location, one of the vampire overlords will quickly arrive to try to keep it from being destroyed. If all three overlords of the army are destroyed, then the rest of the vampires, who are merely spawn, will turn to dust.

## RESTRICTIONS

The guild has an elite but limited company of soldiers that cannot be reinforced. The more soldiers it loses, the harder battles will become. In addition, the longer the party members take to destroy the three key locations, the greater the number of vampires that they will be forced to fight.



## KEY ASPECTS

**ECLIPSE TOWER:** The Eclipse Tower was once a human wizard's tower dedicated to astrological divination magic. The vampires have altered the tower so that it maintains a permanent eclipse that affects the entire area. If taken, the vampires will only be able to move and fight at night.

**CATHEDRAL OF BLOOD:** The Cathedral of Blood is the headquarters of the vampire army. Here, strange new kinds of vampires can be made, such as vampire hulks, vampire leeches, and vampire shadows. Taking the cathedral means that only normal, weaker spawn can be made.

**SHRINE OF REBIRTH:** The Shrine of Rebirth is where tens of thousands of mortals have been gathered to act as cattle for the vampire army. Victims are drained of blood, and wagons carrying that blood are transported across the region to feed the vampiric soldiers. If the captives are freed, then the army will be weakened from a lack of blood.

**THE VAMPYR TRIAD:** The three vampire overlords are *Trizen*, a master of blood magic, *Guralas*, an armored master of the halberd, and *Yral*, a feral abomination that fights like a blood-crazed beast. The vampire army utilizes new types of enemies: *vampire hulks* are ogre-sized and can swat away a warhorse with ease. *Vampire leeches* can draw blood from their victims from medium range. Finally, *vampire shadows* are vampires without a material form who can stealthily assassinate victims.

## SAVE THE LIBRARY

**ARCHETYPE:** Research

The guild has discovered that an ancient, massive library that it relies on for research, the *Bibliotheca of Eons*, is being threatened by a religious order called *The Order of the White Flame*. The Order wishes to burn the library to the ground in order to destroy its books on alchemy and transmutation, believing that such practices offend their god, *Aruman the White Flame*. The librarians have turned the library into a makeshift fortress to hold off the Order, and the party is sent to defend it, as well as find a way to stave off the intruders.

## BLOCK THE ZEALOTS

While the library has been converted into a fortress, the librarians have not yet managed to stop the incursion of the Order of the White Flame, whose inquisitors are teleporting into the library in bursts of divine light. The party members must stop this if they are to have any hope of saving the library and its books. To stop the teleportation, the party members must turn to the

library's books themselves and locate the ones that contain a fragmented ritual called *The Sigil of Stronghold*.

## SAVE THE LIBRARY

After piecing together the ritual and gathering the necessary materials to enact it, the party must begin carving, painting, or marking four runes at key places on the library's outer wall. While doing this, the party members must stave off attacks by the inquisitors and quench any fires that they find. When all four runes have been placed, the head librarian, *Garian of the Scroll*, can enact the ritual to seal off the library, but the party needs to defend him from *Therese Alabast*, who has personally entered the library to ensure its destruction.

## RESTRICTIONS

If the party allows more than a certain number of chambers to catch on fire, then the blaze becomes unstoppable and the library will be destroyed. If Garian of the Scroll is killed, then the ritual cannot be completed.

## KEY ASPECTS

**THE BIBLIOTHECA OF EONS:** This magical library is circular in shape and stretches for several miles. It contains a vast wealth of knowledge stored in tomes, books, folios, tablets, and other strange receptacles, including bottled memories. Time is warped within the Bibliotheca, meaning that scholars can spend years in the library while only days pass in the outside world.

**GARIAN OF THE SCROLL:** The head librarian of the Bibliotheca is a wise and stoic half-orc who is much older than he appears. Garian can speak with the library itself, which allows him to monitor it and find specific books. Garian knows a number of forgotten and ancient spells, but never uses them for violence.

**THERESE ALABAST:** As the leader of the Order of the White Flame, Therese is a tiefling inquisitor who has become fanatical in her desire to please Aruman the White Flame. Although she was originally kind and patient, Therese's disillusionment with society, and alchemists in particular, has made her cruel and merciless.

**THE LIBRARY** is semi-sentient, and it can come to the aid of its protectors. It may shift passages and aisles so that they lead to new places, create labyrinths to hold intruders at bay, and even lead others to specific books that contain unique spells or pieces of knowledge.



# GUILD SIGNS & SYMBOLS



Signs and symbols related to guilds might serve myriad functions. Primarily, a guild's sign or symbol is displayed as an open show of membership in that particular guild. For example, a blacksmith working with the *Draconic Smiths* might display the guild's dragonflame insignia on a brass plate outside the shop, or wear it on a signet ring. However, these symbols might also denote protected areas, act as morale boosters, serve as trademarks, or be reminders of tenets.

## AN INTRICATE LANGUAGE

Most symbols represent themes or ideas that are central to a guild. For example, a goblet can symbolize diplomacy and harmonious meetings to a guild dedicated to peace-making, but can instead represent revelry to a guild dedicated to entertaining and performing. Symbols also might be linked to religion—a guild that worships a deity of life and light is almost certain to revere sun iconography. Guilds focused on arcane and esoteric pursuits often use complex systems of symbols to represent abstract ideas like truth, power, and arcane ascension.

Though guilds are sometimes guarded about their operations, symbols are one of many ways that a guild may announce its allegiance or presence. A guild's symbol might appear on banners, be carved into walls, or be engraved onto pendants. The intentions of such displays can vary and may include letting rivals know that an area is under a guild's protection, indicating allegiances of different businesses, or even reminding guild members to act in a certain way.

## SYMBOLS OF CRAFT & VALOR

In addition to representing a guild's key ideas or identifying guild members, symbols and signs can be used to communicate. Such communications can range from reassuring commoners to marking secret trails that lead to a guild's safe house. A crown etched into a home's doorframe may indicate that allies live within. A shield carved into a castle wall may mean that the area is protected by a guild's mercenaries.

Guild symbology serves many purposes unique to your world. These may include:

### Purposes of a Symbol

- Marking the homes of allies and/or foes
- Defining territorial boundaries
- Warning about threats such as criminals or monsters
- Reassuring the general public in dangerous certain areas
- Marking a building for protection or observation
- Marking areas of safety for guild members
- Identifying institutions ran by members of the guild
- Indicating equipment caches for guild members
- Marking hidden entrances to guildhouses and/or shrines
- Signaling locations for secret meetings
- Reminding guild members of key tenets
- Labeling a hidden route or trail
- Branding a person for protection or observation
- Serving as a trademark to identify guild-made goods

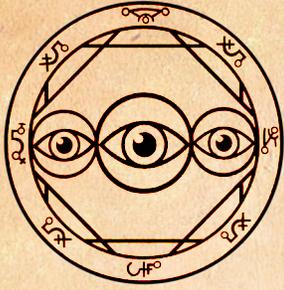
**COMBINATION & VARIATIONS:** Paired symbols can have changed meanings: a snake might symbolize danger, but a snake wrapped around a staff may symbolize healing. Furthermore, a symbol's positioning and orientation may affect its message: a fox may mark a good hiding place, whereas an upside-down fox skull warns of deceit. Color also plays an important role: gold can symbolize glory, while white can indicate purity.

## LAYERS OF MEANING

While some symbols are simple, such as epaulets noting rank or plaques designating allied territory, decoding others can require a greater understanding of the associated guild, such as an elaborate painting depicting figures and scenes allegorical to the guild's objectives; a complex geometrical diagram featuring shapes and connections that mirror the human body and the universe; or the placement of intricate tattoos designating one's progress toward fulfilling the guild's ideals.

In addition, a guild might codify key dates via iconography. For example, the third day of the fourth month may be a guild's founding anniversary. Thus, the date might be symbolized by a three-pronged spear wrapped four times with a ribbon. Likewise, a series of triangles nested within triangles might reflect a guild's hierarchy; the image could also be a map overlay revealing the location of the organization's headquarters.

Complex, multilayered symbols can offer people great insight into a guild's ideals, its structures, or even its plans. Because symbology functions similarly to puzzles, signs and symbols can become a quest's central feature and provide players with opportunities to use investigative skills, both in game and at the table.



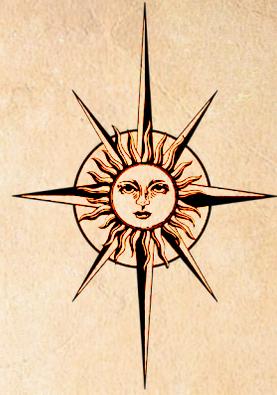
**-ELDRITCH WARD-**

An esoteric symbol meant to protect a person or place from beings beyond space and time.



**-MERCY & ALMS -**

Denotes a place where the destitute and desperate can find succor.



**-DUNGEONEER'S MARK-**

Used to signify safety or the correct path in dungeons and ruins.



**-SYMBOL OF HARMONY-**

Symbolizes the interconnected nature of all things, including the mortal and the eternal.



**- VIGILANT'S MARK -**

Shows that an area is under the watchful protection of lawmen or vigilantes.



**-TRAIL MARK-**

Marks the entrance to a hidden trail or a secret cache of supplies.



**-PERFORMER'S MARK-**

Emblazoned on banners and signs to advertise an upcoming show or festival.



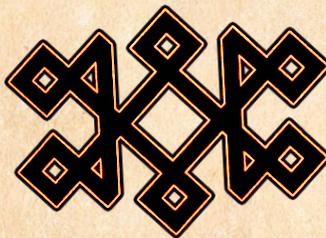
**-MARK OF MASTERY -**

Bestowed only by grandmasters of a craft, it signifies a genuine masterwork.



**-LAMP OF ARCANES KNOWLEDGE -**

Used by scholars and mages to represent profound and hidden knowledge.



**-MARK OF DIPLOMACY-**

A symbol of negotiation and parlay, often used in ceasefires and affairs of state.



## CHAPTER 3

# CREATING YOUR OWN GUILDS



# CREATING YOUR OWN GUILDS

*We are all bound by invisible threads. These threads are connected to our fate, our destiny. They wind around our souls. Societies are tapestries made of individual lives. We are the needle that guides, and the shears that stop threads that would lead people astray. Our looms show the future, and our counsel points toward a better future for all.*

— Charity Kairos, leader of the United Sodality of the Binding Thread

Guilds offer Game Masters the opportunity to fill their worlds with heroic organizations that go beyond the usual power-hungry political factions, mundane merchants, and mercenary companies. Guilds are wondrous forces of good in the world, whether they include crusading paladins or ingenious craftspeople, and they provide player characters with more than just a new place to get wares, quests, and rewards—they can also offer new ways to play the game and influence the world, as well as inspiration to become true heroes.



## GUILD TYPES

The sheer breadth of heroic organizations means that player characters can find guilds anywhere. A circle of spring-worshipping druids, for example, might operate in the depths of an untrodden forest, while a unified company of bardic performers may be found staging plays in the greatest city theaters. Each organization operates in different ways and sets widely varied goals and creeds.

This chapter provides Game Masters with everything needed for creating custom heroic organizations, including goals, origins, headquarters, names, and members. When creating a guild, Game Masters should think about both a guild's purpose and any goals that it wishes to see fulfilled in the campaign narrative and setting. As the Game Master, you could intend for one guild to ally with the party and for another rival guild to tempt player characters into joining its own faction.

The Guild Type table below displays common types of heroic organizations.

### d10 Guild Type

- |    |                            |
|----|----------------------------|
| 1  | Mage League                |
| 2  | Druidic Circle             |
| 3  | Religious Order            |
| 4  | Crafting Guild             |
| 5  | Lore/Research Fellowship   |
| 6  | Exploration Order          |
| 7  | Arts/Performers' Union     |
| 8  | Rebel Organization         |
| 9  | Commercial/Trading Company |
| 10 | Martial Order              |

## MAGE LEAGUE

A mage league is an arcane order of spellcasters that either focuses on a specific type of magic or applies a particular philosophy to a range of magical practices. Its members might be dedicated to transmutation with an eye toward alchemy, or they might wish to find unifying threads that connect destructive and creative magic. Alternatively, the league might be used to organize a group of mages around a goal, such as protecting the world from extraplanar threats or preventing disasters before they occur by using divination.

## DRUIDIC CIRCLE

Druidic circles are usually composed of those who revere and draw power from nature, such as druids, barbarians,

and rangers. These circles exist outside of the laws of civilization and usually obey a wilder, more self-determined code: they might shirk the bonds of society to live more chaotically, but in a way that allows them to better connect with nature. Their goals typically revolve around the protection of the natural world or order.

## RELIGIOUS ORDER

Religious orders can be some of the most well-known guilds, since they usually operate in public and gain followers in a similar manner to other faiths. Some of these guilds, however, are more exclusive and require their members to serve as knights, paladins, clerics, or in other, more specific roles. While religious orders typically venerate a good-aligned deity, they might also worship other kinds of beings, such as an avatar of order or an outsider with strange powers.

## CRAFTING GUILD

Crafting guilds are dedicated to the creation of goods, which can range from automatons to airships. The highest-ranking members of most crafting guilds are capable of creating masterpieces, writing magnum opuses, or putting on virtuoso performances. These guilds often have goals that reach beyond the craft itself though; a smith's guild might seek to outfit the realm's most valiant heroes, while a cobbler's guild may use its shoes as a way to transmit secret messages between kingdoms.

## EXPLORATION ORDER

Seeking adventure and unmapped frontiers, exploration orders focus on travel, wilderness survival, and cartography. They hope to discover wonderful new parts of the world, and might even travel to other worlds or planes. Some wish to bring back artifacts or new flora and fauna, while others may wish to blaze trails that others will follow. Some guilds take contracts to locate rare or exotic resources in the uncharted wilds, but others may be searching lost places, such as ruined empires or ancient archives.

## LORE/RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP

Lore and research fellowships are groups of sages, scholars, and researchers who aim to uncover hidden, lost, or esoteric information. Typically, this information relates to a specific subject such as a fallen empire or a wonderful artifact. While members of these fellowships rarely take on field missions themselves, they might work closely with adventurers and mercenaries who are willing to put their research into practice or confirm the guild's suspicions.

## ARTS/PERFORMERS' UNION

Members of an arts or performers' union may be skilled in more classical arts like painting and sculpture or opera and theater, while newer guilds may focus on arcane artistry or circus skills. These unions put on shows or displays that are typically designed to enlighten, inspire, and entertain audiences. Some guilds of this type use their talents to unite their audiences or galvanize whole cities, rally troops, or protest injustice.

## REBEL ORGANIZATION

Rebel organizations can consist of exiled warriors looking to take down corrupt oligarchs, rightful rulers trying to reclaim their thrones from pretenders, or downtrodden citizens hoping to overthrow their oppressive rulers.

Rebel organizations generally wish to see the downfall of the current authorities, whether via a revolution or a carefully controlled coup. Some rebel organizations may raise armies and fight on battlefields, while others prefer to operate from the shadows.

## COMMERCIAL/ TRADING COMPANY

Trading companies are common, but only those who aim to do good alongside making a profit can truly be called a guild.

These organizations might use their money to build new cities or fund privateers to keep sea lanes free from pirates, or they might form new departments dedicated to charity

works like hospitals. Some of the most ambitious companies seek to change the world by undertaking projects like creating public teleportation networks or replacing the city guard with magical constructs.

## MARTIAL ORDER

Martial orders may be made of valiant knights-errant who seek to uphold a chivalric code, veterans of war who seek to prevent atrocities from being committed, or dedicated warrior monks who seek to capture and rehabilitate criminals. No matter the case, a martial order is defined by its members' skills in combat, mastery of various fighting styles, and code of honor. For many orders, mercy and creed are more important than bloodshed and glory.



# SIZE & WEALTH

**G**uilds can be characterized by size, which measures the number of members, and wealth, which measures access to gold and resources. A guild may have membership in the hundreds, or even thousands, but little actual wealth—perhaps because its members are mostly ascetics. Another guild could have an extremely exclusive membership—maybe comprising only a dozen individuals—but also have immense wealth because each acolyte leads a business.

Game Masters can use the *Organization Size* table below to determine the size of a guild. The wealth levels listed are typical for guilds of the indicated sizes (see the *Wealth & Resources* section for more detailed information), but feel free to adjust as needed to suit your tastes.

## BUILDINGS

Most guilds have physical buildings where they work, plan, rest, and train. Some guilds with immense wealth might have entire temples dedicated to their cause or vast guild halls that can house hundreds of members. On the other hand, a rebel organization with no building of its own may take an abandoned fort as a stronghold. Once you've determined a guild's membership and wealth levels, consult the Typical Wealth Level table below to determine how many buildings it has access to. Buildings are split into two categories: common buildings and strongholds. Common buildings offer some sort of utility, such as an armory, forge, stable, and the like. Strongholds are more elaborate, are usually fortified in some way, and act as a base of operations.

## COMMON BUILDINGS

If your guild has access to common buildings, roll on or choose from the Common Buildings table below to determine the building type(s). Each common building can be used as a meeting place, but it also has an additional feature that can supplement the guild's activities. Some common buildings can increase a guild's defense score; this information is covered later in this chapter.

Common buildings can impact a guild's access to resources, such as armor, potions, or mounts. Refer to the *Guild Resources* section in the chapter *Bringing Your Guilds to Life* to get a full list of resources and rules for determining your guild's *Resource Level*. The entries in the *Common Buildings* table can also be used as additional inspiration for the *Additions* presented in the *Headquarters & Additions* section of the chapter *Player-Operated Guilds*.

## STRONGHOLDS

A stronghold can serve as both a meeting place and a fortified defensive position in times of crisis. Like common buildings, strongholds may have additional features, which are usually tied to the nature of the guild. A lore/research fellowship might maintain a library that, though it publicly seems to be a normal place of study, actually has secret wings that contain arcane lore on a wide variety of more esoteric topics. For each stronghold belonging to a guild, its defense score increases by 1; this information is covered later in this chapter. Roll on the Stronghold table below or choose from the listed options to determine your guild's stronghold.

Organization Size	Number of Members	Typical Wealth Level
Tiny	3-12 (3d4)	⊗
Small	12-48 (6d6 + 6)	⊗ ⊗
Large	50-200 (5d4 × 10)	⊗ ⊗ ⊗
Very Large	200-500 [(1d4 + 1) × 10]	⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗
Huge	500+	⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗

Typical Wealth Level	Number of Common Buildings	Number of Strongholds
⊗	1d4 - 1	0
⊗ ⊗	1d4 + 1	1
⊗ ⊗ ⊗	2d4	1d2
⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	4d4	1d4 + 1
⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗ ⊗	6d4 + 4	2d4



**d20 Common Buildings Feature**

1	Apothecary	Provides access to consumables such as common potions (e.g., potions of healing), enchanted oils, or vials of acid.
2	Armory*	Provides access to common armor, such as leather armor, chain mail, breastplates, and shields.
3	Carpentry Shop	Provides access to wooden goods worth 500 gp or less, such as carts, staves, or crates.
4	Fighting Arena*	Provides training facilities for combat and halves required training time for weapon proficiency.
5	Forge*	Provides access to common weapons, such as shortswords, battleaxes, and warhammers.
6	General Store	Provides access to common goods worth 50 gp or less, such as various adventuring supplies (e.g., climber's kit, explorer's pack), torches, rope, and hunting traps.
7	Granary	Provides access to rations and fresh water.
8	Observatory	Provides the ability to observe the magical or mundane behavior of the stars, the ocean, or the world.
9	Hospital*	Provides access to medical assistance as well as to healer's kits, antidotes, and other medical equipment.
10	Safe House	Provides a safe and inconspicuous place to hide.
11	Inn	Provides rations and alcohol as well as recruitment and rumor-gathering opportunities.
12	Library	Provides access to a range of books, both common and uncommon, and halves required research time for any topic.
13	Sanctum	Provides a secure space for rituals, such as summoning, divination, or enchanting.
14	Dungeon	Provides a secure holding place for prisoners.
15	Shipwright Hall	Provides access to ship repairmen and boatmen for hire.
16	Shrine	Provides access to holy items and allows for communion with a god or other being.
17	Stable*	Supplies mounts, such as saddle horses, worth up to 100 gp and provides more expensive riding options for hire.
18	Tailor	Provides access to tailors and custom guild uniforms as well as disguises, traveling attire, and/or fine apparel.
19	Theater	Provides oratory training and a place for performances.
20	Workshop	Provides access to tools for item repair and/or creation.

\*Increase the guild's defense score by 1. This bonus does not stack with those from other common buildings.



dr2	Stronghold	Feature
1	Encampment	Can be moved to new locations, which may offer benefits such as access to foraging or natural resources.
2	Bank/Guild Hall	Provides access to moneylending, vaults, or a venue for services; increases a guild's wealth level by 1, but does not increase its number of buildings.
3	Subterranean Tunnels	Can be augmented with traps, hidden passages, and secret entrances.
4	Castle	Provides access to significant fortifications, siege equipment, rations, and fresh water; also increases a guild's defense score by 1.
5	College	Provides access to books, artifacts, and scholarly training, and halves required research time for any topic.
6	Docks	Provides access to ships of all kinds and free ship repair.
7	Fortress	Provides access to defenses such as boiling oil, arrow slits, secret passages, and a portcullis; also increases a guild's defense score by 1.
8	Opulent Mansion	Provides a private meeting place for guild members; supplies beds, food, and drink; and adds one common building (of the Game Master's choice) to a guild's total.
9	Hidden Bastion	Provides a specially hidden haven for the guild that is accessible only through certain means, such as a password or ritual, and may be hidden from view and/or divination.
10	Holy Sanctum	Includes ritual chambers that randomly summon extraplanar beings loyal to the guild, such as angels or other celestials.
11	Temple	Provides a place to enlist new converts and commune with deities or patrons.
12	Tower	Provides magical defenses, such as special enchantments, illusions, and/or wards.

## DEFENSE

A guild's defense score is a measure of its ability to defend against and attack enemies. When determining a guild's defensive abilities, think about what forms a guild's defense can take: do the guild members personally fight, or do they summon angels from the heavens to serve on their behalf? Is the guild composed primarily of spellcasters or armored warriors? Does it hire mercenaries or send its own seasoned soldiers into battle? As with wealth and resources, a guild's defense score can be measured on a scale of five stars, with one star representing no effective defenses and five stars representing very thorough defenses. A guild's defense score is derived from its number of strongholds, plus bonuses gained from other resources and buildings.

### Defense Rating

### Examples of Defenses

♥	No fortification or trained warriors of any sort
♥♥	Some trained warriors and mundane fortifications
♥♥♥	One dedicated wing of warriors plus significant mundane fortifications
♥♥♥♥	A small standing army and a mix of magical and mundane fortifications
♥♥♥♥♥	Large standing army, magical warriors, and magical fortifications

d10	Fortification	Effect
1	Traps (Conventional)	May be designed to kill, maim, or slow intruders or alert residents
2	Traps (Magical)	Perform the same functions as above, but are harder to remove and spot. May include magical effects
3	Arrow Slits	Allow ranged weapons to be used against outdoor enemies. Provides a cover bonus
4	Magical Locks	Can only be unlocked with passwords, tokens, or other means specified by the guild. Prevents lockpicking
5	Siege Defense	Adds catapults, portcullis, a moat, or other fortifications against sieges
6	Illusory Appearance	Disguises the exterior of the headquarters
7	Hidden Doors	Allows guild members to move through the headquarters quickly or escape from danger
8	Guard Dogs	Alert residents to intruders and attack trespassers
9	Alarm (Magical)	Warns of intruders. Cannot be disarmed with mundane tools
10	Warding Sigils	Prevents teleportation into, out of, or around the headquarters, as well as scrying

## FORTIFICATIONS

Fortifications are used to secure a headquarters against intruders or outside attacks. They can be as simple as arrow slits cut into the walls, or as complex as magical warding sigils etched onto floors and ceilings. Some headquarters may require protection from sieges and employ moats, catapults, and more. Others rely on subtlety and magic instead of strong walls—an illusory appearance can disguise a headquarters as a ruin or even a cliffside.

If enemies manage to breach the outer walls, Fortifications provide guild members with an additional layer of defense, such as hidden doors that allow movement between key areas, traps that incapacitate attackers, or magical locks that prevent anyone from entering certain rooms without a password.

## BACKSTORY

**I**n some instances, guilds are so old that their history has been lost or mythologized over the centuries. The members of the *Order of the Gilded Banner*, for example, truly believe that their faction was founded by an ancient gold dragon whose spirit is passed from knight to knight through the ages. Others, such as members of the *Virtuous Sodality of Shadows*, point to their supernatural stealth and lack of shadows as signs of their ancient pact with their patron god. In both cases, a guild's origins, goals, traits, and even power source can help capture players' imaginations and make it endlessly memorable.

Once a rough framework is established for a guild, Game Masters can add detail by fleshing out the guild's backstory, just as one might do for a character. Guilds typically have a founder and some kind of origin event—

these can include the first instance of contact with an extraplanar being or the decision to start a secret society after uncovering esoteric arcane knowledge.

A guild must be founded with some motivation or goal in mind, such as to summon a celestial into the Mortal Realm or to overthrow a corrupt monarchy. After goals and motivations are determined, Game Masters can define their guild's power source, a focus or specialty, and a weakness or secret that could be used to bring it down.



## ORIGIN

A guild's beginnings can be humble, grandiose, or even unexpected. The liege of the land might have ordered its formation to curb the effects of a famine, or a temporary alliance of like-minded explorers in uncharted waters may remain long after they tame the local dangers.

If you are uncertain about the origins of your guild or need some help brainstorming, you can roll or pick an origin from the Guild Origin table below.

### d10 Guild Origin

- 1 The guild was founded to keep a dying martial technique alive.
- 2 The guild was founded by bards who wanted to form an intelligence network.
- 3 The guild was created by smithing apprentices to learn how to work with a rare metal.
- 4 The guild was founded by druids who once negotiated with fey to restore nature.
- 5 The guild was created by booksellers who helped one another find rare books.
- 6 The guild was formed by merchants who traded a rare alchemical substance.
- 7 The guild was founded by mages looking to guide those with innate magic.
- 8 The guild was created by a foreign hero who overthrew a local tyrant.
- 9 The guild was founded by archeologists looking to study an ancient relic.
- 10 The guild was formed by inhabitants of a slum who stopped another guild's infiltration.

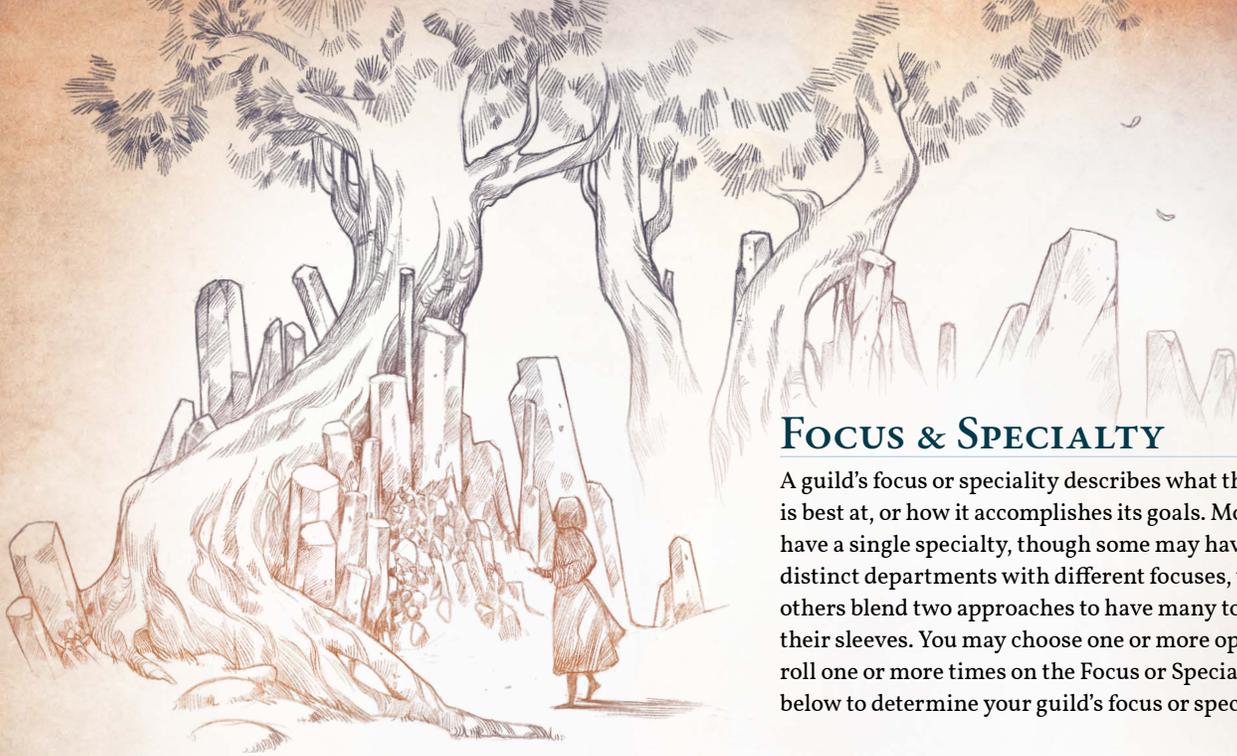


## GOALS & MOTIVATIONS

A guild's current mission may still align with its founding roots, or it may have greatly changed. Scholars who were looking to uncover lost history before may now be working with spelunkers who help explore ancient underground ruins. A martial arts school, meanwhile, may continue to uphold the traditions of its founders. The Goal or Motivation table below has a selection of goals and motivations for you to pick or roll for.

### d20 Goal or Motivation

- 1 The guild seeks to create artistic masterpieces in music, art, or writing.
- 2 The guild works on finding out more about a lost civilization of the past.
- 3 The guild seeks to perfect the art of making impervious armor or deadly weapons.
- 4 The guild explores and documents uncharted waters and lands.
- 5 The guild wants to restore, conserve, and reclaim land for the wilderness.
- 6 The guild keeps a vigil over supernatural anomalies and disturbances in a region.
- 7 The guild works to bring the corrupt to justice and right wrongs.
- 8 The guild works to keep trade of a particular good in the region fair and stable.
- 9 The guild seeks to promote peace between ancient enemies.
- 10 The guild wants to eradicate a universal danger to the living.
- 11 The guild wishes to protect and evacuate those displaced by disasters or warfare.
- 12 The guild wants to be the top entertainer and/or performer troupe of its region.
- 13 The guild keeps watch over an ancient seal of a powerful mystical being.
- 14 The guild studies and invents new devices and technology.
- 15 The guild seeks to record history as truthfully and factually as possible.
- 16 The guild works to prevent crimes before they happen.
- 17 The guild wishes to provide the best training for warriors, whether mundane or magical.
- 18 The guild is working to bring down an oppressive and evil regime.
- 19 The guild wishes to promote a philosophy of virtue or send a message of goodwill.
- 20 The guild wants to provide equal scholastic opportunities regardless of background.



## POWER SOURCE

Many guilds accomplish their goals through the talents and efforts of their members. However, some have the backing of supernatural beings, a wellspring of magic, or some method of letting their recruits tap into a power other than their own. Use the Power Source table below to determine or inspire you in selecting your guild's power source.

### d10 Power Source

- 1 The guild teaches its members how to harness spiritual energy like ki.
- 2 The guild has access to a ley line, a wellspring, or a magical energy node.
- 3 The guild is blessed by a deity that grants the guild members divine abilities.
- 4 The guild can summon and evoke the powers of deceased heroes of yore.
- 5 The guild's leader or leaders are highly powerful figures whose powers extend to the guild members.
- 6 The guild can access the magic of a supernatural species, such as fey or dragons.
- 7 The guild draws power from living things, such as trees and animals.
- 8 The guild knows the secretive language that speaks the true name of all things.
- 9 The guild has an ancient relic that can awaken one's innate powers.
- 10 The guild knows how to apply magical tattoos that invigorate one's physiology based on one's emotional state.

## FOCUS & SPECIALTY

A guild's focus or speciality describes what that guild is best at, or how it accomplishes its goals. Most guilds have a single specialty, though some may have two distinct departments with different focuses, while others blend two approaches to have many tools up their sleeves. You may choose one or more options or roll one or more times on the Focus or Specialty table below to determine your guild's focus or speciality.

### d10 Focus or Specialty

- 1 The guild eschews violence and sees it as a last resort. It specializes in defensive combat forms, protective equipment, or warding magic.
- 2 The guild uses elemental magic and powers to overcome obstacles, and can communicate with elementals.
- 3 The guild uses divination or experts in exotic fields to make shrewd business deals that always pay dividends.
- 4 The guild uses charisma, eloquence, and theatrics when carrying out its missions, allowing members to cultivate a positive image even among rivals.
- 5 The guild relies on its popularity with the common people to assist with its goal, leading to a relationship that the guild regularly cultivates and maintains.
- 6 The guild encourages members to be multi-talented and jacks-of-all-trades, rather than specialize in one particular skill.
- 7 The guild operates in the shadows and strives to be anonymous, untraceable, and uncatchable.
- 8 The guild employs the use of animals in everything it does. Some are trained beasts, while others have a mystical connection with their companions in the guild.
- 9 The guild focuses on physical strength and endurance, and trains its members to become comfortable with brawling and physical activities like swimming.
- 10 The guild prides itself on creating unorthodox solutions to practical problems, especially mechanical or magical ones.

## WEAKNESSES & SECRETS

Despite their heroic deeds, guilds are not immune to scandals or dark secrets. Adding a weakness or secret to your guild can give it more depth, or provide the seed for a long-running conflict. Secrets in particular give player characters something to investigate and uncover, as well as information that can be bought or sold by other, unscrupulous organizations. Weaknesses, on the other hand, may spark quests to help the guild overcome its faults... or quests from rivals to incite the guild's spiral into destruction. Consult or roll 1d10 on the table below to come up with a weakness or secret for your guild.

### d10 Weakness or Secret

- 1 The guild's most potent magic comes at a sacrificial cost from the caster, such as loss of use of a limb or blindness in one eye. The veterans hide these costs as "battle scars."
- 2 The guild's founding is not as heroic as it seems. The true story is devastating, capable of shaking the faith of those who believe in the guild's cause.
- 3 The guild's current leader is retiring, but the top two successors hate one another and refuse to cooperate. Various members have been forced to pick a side.
- 4 The guild's membership is rapidly decreasing as those with the skills or abilities that it's looking for are, for some reason, becoming rarer and rarer.
- 5 The guild made a number of high-status enemies over the years, and these foes recently gained considerable political power that they can use to harm the guild.
- 6 The guild requires their members to have little to no emotional attachments outside of the organization, which has many families resenting the guild for taking away their loved ones.
- 7 The guild had a traitor in its ranks who knows the organization inside and out. They are willing to exchange this information for money or power.
- 8 The guild's initiation ceremony infects the initiates with a parasite that they thought was harmless. These parasites have now begun to cause agony at random times.
- 9 The guild's founders made a deal with a devil once in exchange for peace. Though those founders are long dead, the time has come for the devil to collect.
- 10 The guild needs to constantly pay off corrupted officials or merchants in order to continue functioning without being stopped.

## SYMBOLS & LOGOS

A guild's symbol provides a way for members to identify themselves. Some guilds have their logos out in the open wherever they go, bearing their coats of arms proudly on banners or displaying them on shop signs. Guilds that are more discreet opt for subtler ways of identification, such as small tattoos, easily-hidden apparel, or a decoration on one's weaponry.

The Symbols table below can help you determine your guild's symbol. You may roll or choose more than once, as some guild logos display only a single element while others might have a combination of two or more. For example, a militaristic guild's coat of arms may display a lion in one corner and a flower in another, with the other two corners being simple colors and patterns. Remember to tie your guild's symbol or logo to the organization's or founder's backstory to add more layers of depth to your creation.

### d20 Symbols

- 1 **Wings.** Angel, bird, butterfly, dragonfly, dragon
- 2 **Sky.** Cloud, comet, constellations, moon, planets, stars
- 3 **Farming.** Field, plow, sickle, scythe, wheat, windmill
- 4 **Crafts.** Chisel, hammer, magnifying glass, mortar and pestle, paintbrush
- 5 **Animals.** Bird, cat, hare, horse, mouse, ox, tiger, ram
- 6 **Receptacle.** Box, bottle, crate, chalice, chest, cup, goblet, glass
- 7 **Mythical Beasts.** Drake, dragon, griffon, hippogriff, mermaid, phoenix, unicorn
- 8 **Flora.** Branch, flower, leaf, roots, sprout, tree
- 9 **Light Source.** Campfire, candle holder, chandelier, flame, lamp, lantern, light rays, sun
- 10 **Medical.** Bandage, caduceus, blood drop, knife, herbs, scalpel
- 11 **Warfare.** Bow and arrow, cuirass, cavalry, helmet, knight, shield
- 12 **Landscape.** Cliff, forest, mountain, river, sea, valley
- 13 **Nautical.** Anchor, waves, figurehead, compass, ship, rigging, sails
- 14 **Mystic.** Alchemical symbols, runes, tarot cards, open palm, ritual circle
- 15 **Textile.** Cloak, belt, fabric, dress, glove, shoes, belt, sewing needle
- 16 **Body.** Arm, eye, ear, foot, hand, leg, mouth
- 17 **Machinery.** Cogwheel, gear, armature, furnace, pulley, wheel
- 18 **Wealth.** Coin, gems, ingot, purse, treasure chest
- 19 **Building.** Castle, fortress, tavern, tower, temple
- 20 **Scholastic.** Book, ink pot, parchment, quill, scroll

## GUILD NAME GENERATOR

Names can make or break a guild—they must contain the guild’s essence, or give just enough information to intrigue those who hear it. You can use names as a starting point in your guild creation process, or as a final touch on a guild that you have already created.

Remember that great ideas may come up during the creation process. For example, you might start out with the name *Soldiers of the Adamant Wall* as your springboard, but later find that the guild functions better if it is not restricted to being a military organization. After some consideration, you decide to focus on the vigilant aspect of the organization, and rename the guild *Vigil of the Adamant Wall*. Later on, you may go a step further and condense the name to *The Adamant Vigil*.



### d20 Guild Name Generator

1	Academy/Scholars/Sages	Brighter, Darker, Higher	Fist, Hand, Palm
2	Faithful/Preachers	Dawning, Waning, Waxing	Book, Page, Tome, Codex, Scroll
3	Whisperers/Listeners	Flowing, Racing, Flying	Reflection, Mirror, Prism
4	Dancers/Singers/Performers	Free, Imprisoned, Liberated	Bow, Arms, Blade, Spear
5	Casters/Mages/Sorcerers	Courageous, Fearless, Intrepid	Bank, Coin, Silver, Gold, Treasure
6	Masters/Experts/Journeyman	Forgotten, Hidden, Unknown	Root, Tree, Branch, Soil, Earth
7	Law/Edict/Order, Guardians	Heroic, Knightly, Gallant	Eye, Sight, Heart, Mind
8	Seekers/Pursuers/Hunters	Diligent, Meticulous	Forge, Workshop, Smithy, Hammer
9	Army/Soldiers/Forces/March	Pensive, Contemplative	Road, Path, Trail, Horizon
10	Champion/Knight/Squires/	Red, White, Blue, Green	Fortress, Tower, Castle, Spire
11	Students/Pupils/Apprentices	Diamond, Ruby, Sapphire, Emerald	Ray, Fire, Flame, Sun, Light
12	Scions/Children/Youths	Ten, Hundred, Thousand	Rose, Peony, Lotus, Lily
13	Family/Clan/House/Tribe	Gold, Silver, Bronze, Copper	Spring, River, Lake, Stream
14	Fellowship/Companions	Shaded, Obscured, Shadowed	Forest, Mountain, Valley, Summit
15	Association/Club/Lodge	Empowered, Emboldened, Justified	Falcon, Hawk, Kingfisher, Eagle
16	Union/Alliance/Coalition/League	Fraternal, Brotherly/Sisterly, Bonded	Shield, Gauntlet, Crown
17	Herd/Flock/Pack	Stone, Glass, Wooden, Metal	Word, Truth, Prophet, Chosen
18	Conference/Symposium	Alluring, Beautiful, Glamorous	Song, Tune, Saga, Tale, Fable
19	Party/Gathering/Band	Humble, Modest, Meek	Destiny, Fate, Future, Dawn
20	Workers/Crafters/Artisans	Merciful, Repentant, Forgiving	Hour, Century, Age, Time

### CREATING YOUR GUILD NAME:

**Pick entries from the columns above and finish them with:**  
*the, of, of the, from, from the, against, for, for the, with, without, within.*

**Some examples:** Scholars of the Sapphire Flame, Guardians of Time, Heralds of the White Lotus, Squires of the Dawning Path, The Performers of Heart and Mind, The Kingfisher Academy, The Sunspire Seekers, The House of Tomes



# GUILD MEMBERS

**G**uild members should reflect the many different kinds of people that may be drawn to one mission: an exploration company, for example, may have stoic hunters, beast tamers with a flair for the dramatic, and loud, unruly barbarians in its ranks. Though it's impossible to characterize everyone, Game Masters should pick out a handful (or even a whole cast) of members to give unique personalities and personal aspirations. This section provides Game Masters with tables of traits to help flesh out these guild members.

You may roll or pick more than once on any of these tables to create a person with a layered personality that player characters can discover over time as they interact with the individual.

## CREATING A GUILD LEADER

Special care should be taken when creating the guild's leader. Guild leaders are the face and heart of their respective organizations, and act as inspiration and guides to those both in and outside of the guild. A guild leader's presence alone draws attention and leaves a lasting impression, be it from the way they speak, act, or pose. The tables below can help you pinpoint what makes your guild leader memorable.



Guild leaders may be active leaders, such as commanders who take decisive actions and issue orders on a battlefield while in the heat of combat. Others lead in a subtler capacity, and negotiate with politicians, merchants, and/or common folk to ensure that their agendas run smoothly. You should also consider whether the guild leader's outward image corresponds to or hints at their role in the guild, as well as their backstory.

## APPEARANCE

Many guild members can be recognized by their silhouettes alone. The General Appearance and Body Details tables below will help you determine a guild member's overall physical appearance.

### d10 General Appearance

- 1 Tall and stately, with broad shoulders and an air of command.
- 2 Short and stocky; holds themselves high with their chin jutting out in confidence.
- 3 Muscular, wide, and towering; each step feels like a tree planting down.
- 4 Tanned and weathered, with the solid musculature of a laborer.
- 5 Lean and graceful; walks like a dancer reciting practiced movements.
- 6 Portly, with a double chin, thick arms, a round torso, and a tottering gait.
- 7 Frail, gaunt, and languid, yet their burning eyes draw one's gaze.
- 8 Petite, waifish, and jittery; walks with a skip in their step.
- 9 Athletic and wiry, with every movement carrying momentum and power.
- 10 Tall, with lanky limbs and a long torso; a little hunched over from ducking beneath overhangs.

### d20 Body Details

- 1 Has a prominent tattoo on display that identifies them as a member of a particular clan, culture, or organization.
- 2 Has an unusual hair color (i.e., blue, silver or white, purple) or a tuft of hair that is colored differently. Most likely natural, but might also be dyed.
- 3 Has a distinct animal feature, such as a lion's tail, scaled cheeks, feline eyes, or canine ears. Can be natural or a permanent illusion.

- 4 Possesses a burning halo of glowing light, flickering fire, or shifting arcane runes.
- 5 Has a prominent facial or head scar, which may have a special shape such as a star, cross, or circle. The scar may affect their sense of sight, hearing, or smell.
- 6 Has partial or full heterochromia: one of their eyes is colored differently, or their iris has two distinct colors. Their irises also may have special shapes, or have two irises in each eye.
- 7 Is freckled, lightly or heavily. These freckles can be a normal color, or an unexpected color that is not natural. They can even be metallic.
- 8 Has prominent piercings, scarification, or other bodily modifications, such as a looped ear lobe, lip discs, an elongated neck, or facial implants.
- 9 Is missing one limb or more, or lacks the ability to use said limb(s). They may require a mobility device to move around, opt for a prosthetic, or be fine without.
- 10 Has well-groomed hair and/or facial hair. It might be braided, beaded, or even woven into an intricate pattern.
- 11 Possesses an extra set or several sets of functional arms. These can be a prosthetics modification, actual arms of flesh and bone, or the result of a polymorph spell.
- 12 Has a distinct beauty mark, a patch of skin of a different color (possibly vitiligo), or a birthmark on their face. The pattern may be special and resemble a dragon head or bird talon, for example.
- 13 Whenever their mood changes, a physical feature of theirs also changes, such as eye or hair color. Maybe when they are angry, their hair looks like it's made of fire, but when they are sad, it drapes and flows like a waterfall.
- 14 Their hair drifts around them as if they are underwater.
- 15 Has a comically exaggerated facial feature, such as a large, round nose or wide ears.
- 16 A part of their body is permanently a different color, such as one of their arms being blue or their lips being green.
- 17 The individual is completely hairless, and even lacks eyelashes.
- 18 Part of their body has melded with plants, roots, or another type of flora.
- 19 Their face has prominent veins, cracks, or lines that glow with mystical energy.
- 20 They permanently float in the air, and their feet never seem to touch the ground.

## ATTIRE & ADORNMENTS

Some guilds prefer spotless, elaborate uniforms filled with symbolism and decorations, while others eschew formal dress for what's practical, like heavy, soot-stained aprons or suits of leather armor.

### d20 Attire or Adornment

- 1 **Religious.** Garb or vestments belonging to a particular faith.
- 2 **Rustic.** Simple, undyed, and roughly-spun clothes meant for day-to-day wear.
- 3 **Skin-tight.** Form-fitting clothes or leather that hugs the wearer's figure tightly.
- 4 **Mismatched.** Wrong-colored socks, gloves of different lengths... even the shoes are not from the same pair.
- 5 **Extravagant.** Rich and thick velvet or silk that is intricately decorated with subtle beadwork.
- 6 **Aquatic.** Waterproof or light clothing that allows the wearer to readily dive into the water.
- 7 **Dour.** Black leather or fabric and dark fur combined with dull colors that do not stand out.
- 8 **Armor.** A set of armor made of metal, leather, or another material. May only include a breastplate, pauldrons, or greaves, or include all pieces of the set.
- 9 **Covered.** Clothing that covers every inch of the body from head to toe. The wearer may also go fully masked.
- 10 **Geared.** Functional body armor, complete with many tools and items in belt pouches.
- 11 **Organic.** Rather than being woven or sewn, these clothes appear to have been grown from carefully arranged branches and leaves. The clothing may still be alive while worn.
- 12 **Shadowy.** Dark clothing that allows the wearer to slip into the shadows.
- 13 **Illusory.** While it may seem elaborate, the outfit is actually an enchantment that can change at the wearer's command, layered over a simple set of clothing.
- 14 **Animated.** The cloak, scarf, gloves, and other accessories have a mind of their own, and can readily move and assist their wearer as the clothing sees fit.
- 15 **Wild.** Lots of pelts and leather sewn together, often decorated with bone fasteners or stone decorations.
- 16 **Scholarly.** A set of medium-quality robes and a high collar, usually decorated with geometric patterns or images of the scholar's area of study.

- 17 **Bombastic.** The wearer mixed as many contrasting and bright colors as possible into a single outfit.
- 18 **Wealthy.** High-class material decorated with intricate craftsmanship and rare jewels that catch the light.
- 19 **Restricting.** Uptight, with lots of belts and corsets that force the individual to maintain a rigid posture.
- 20 **Nobility.** Doublets, dresses, or other tasteful, formal attire marked with symbols and patterns associated with a specific noble house or family.

## PERSONALITY

A guild member's personality trait should be obvious when interacting with them, but it doesn't need to be the character's only trait. Sometimes, contrasting personality traits can be more memorable than a single trait. One example is For example a "grumpy" character who reveals their "compassionate" side after warming up to others. after warming up to you.



## d20 Personality

- 1 **Stern.** Principled, controlled, and all business with very little room for levity or fun.
- 2 **Whimsical.** Playful and jovial, with a trick or play on words always at the ready.
- 3 **Stoic.** Laconic, contemplative, determined, and doesn't usually show emotion.
- 4 **Anxious.** Easily worried, overthinks, and is always concerned about the worst scenario.
- 5 **Dedicated.** Persistent, loyal, and uncompromising in their ideals.
- 6 **Diplomatic.** Careful with words, empathetic and thoughtful, and seeks harmony.
- 7 **Gambler.** Reckless, unpredictable, and often irresponsible.
- 8 **Contrarian.** Devil's advocate, provocative, and usually smug and eloquent.
- 9 **Logical.** Trusts rationality over ideals or emotions, and is often cerebral and matter-of-fact.
- 10 **Charismatic.** Articulate, charming, and can always provide an amusing story or inspiring quote.
- 11 **Braggart.** Boastful, egotistical, obnoxious, and talkative.
- 12 **Irreverent.** Approaches all things with calm detachment and a sense of humor.
- 13 **Impassioned.** Easily shows emotion, and is usually single-minded and driven.
- 14 **Grumpy.** Not easily satisfied, easily annoyed, and difficult to please.
- 15 **Relaxed.** Easy-going, calm, and rarely becomes upset or angry.
- 16 **Aloof.** High expectations, distant, coldly confident, and sometimes a little difficult to communicate with.
- 17 **Compassionate.** Caring and concerned about the plight of others, and is always putting others before themselves.
- 18 **Empathetic.** Easily understands another's point of view, and can speak for them.
- 19 **Mysterious.** Generally withdrawn and reveals very little, yet seems to know everyone else's secrets.
- 20 **Blunt.** Speaks whatever comes to mind, and has little tact, patience for niceties, or eloquence.

## MANNERISMS

Those with a unique laugh, a certain voice tic, or a habitual gesture can come to life at the table, giving these individuals something for the players to remember and providing a key performance note for Game Masters to embody when in character.

### d20 Mannerism

- 1 **Nicknamer.** Never addresses another by their name, only by a nickname they created.
- 2 **Silent.** Communicates only via gestures, looks, or written words.
- 3 **Jokester.** Always cracks jokes, even lame ones, at any opportunity.
- 4 **Vigilant.** Constantly looks out for danger; keeps a hand on their weapon at all times.
- 5 **Sprawled Out.** Never sits up straight when seated, and instead slouches or leans to the side.
- 6 **Talkative.** Always needs a conversation, even when by themselves.
- 7 **Clumsy.** Easily drops things, trips over their own feet, or bumps into corners.
- 8 **Hard Stare.** Does not break eye contact with the person they're speaking to.
- 9 **Curt.** Only speaks in sentences that are five words or less.
- 10 **Catchphrase.** Often uses a specific phrase, such as "Ya see..." or "Inconceivable!"
- 11 **Boisterous.** Speaks loudly and laughs often, especially when inebriated.
- 12 **Inner Monologue.** Talks to themselves while thinking through something.
- 13 **Subtle Smile.** Always has a smug or mysterious smile when speaking to others.
- 14 **Stutterer.** Has difficulty speaking without repeating words or sounds.
- 15 **Imperious.** Speaks with a haughty tone and looks down their nose at others.
- 16 **Steepled Hands.** Steeple their fingers when speaking or thinking.
- 17 **Deviant.** Acts contrary to common sense and social norms, such as leaving and entering through windows and balconies instead of using the door.
- 18 **Gesticulates.** Uses a lot of hand gestures while talking to emphasize their words.
- 19 **Gaze.** Looks into the distance, at their hands, or at an object while speaking to others.
- 20 **Distracted.** Derails conversations, often by pointing out a mundane observation that they just made.

## BACKGROUND

A guild member's background determines where they came from, and can include the conditions of their birth, past experiences, and major experiences. A background can be inspiring or tragic, but it doesn't have to define the character—characters with tragic backstories can still develop into idealistic, optimistic people.

### d20 Background

- 1 **Underdog.** The character was not expected to rise above their status or rank, but managed to do so anyway.
- 2 **Cloistered.** The character grew up sheltered in a temple, church, or shrine; they may still have their faith, or have cut ties with the religion.
- 3 **Soul-Searcher.** The character was once part of a community or family with resources, but chose to break away in search of freedom or a differing ideal.
- 4 **Refugee.** The character was displaced against their will by natural disaster, armed conflict, or resource scarcity.
- 5 **Academic.** The character spent much of their life focused on the study of a single subject in a university or scholastic institute.
- 6 **Reformed.** The character was once a criminal, but was given a chance to redeem themselves.
- 7 **Military.** The character used to be (and may still be) part of an army or armed force.
- 8 **Chainbreaker.** The character freed themselves from enslavement or exploitive debts.
- 9 **Cursed.** The character was subject to a curse that they've spent much of their life overcoming.
- 10 **Affluent.** The character was born into wealth, and instructed since youth on etiquette.
- 11 **Titled.** The character inherited their parent's noble status, or earned a noble title through a courageous deed.
- 12 **Mercenary.** The character used to be a sellsword that wandered the realms in search of employment.
- 13 **Disgraced.** The character was once shunned from society, their family, or their community, but managed to redeem themselves.
- 14 **Sole Survivor.** The character's family died in an accident or assassination, but they miraculously lived.
- 15 **Investigator.** The character used to work as a private detective, and managed to break apart a large criminal enterprise or capture a prominent criminal.

- 16 **Selfless.** The character almost sacrificed themselves to save others, but survived the ordeal.
- 17 **Changeling.** The character was raised by fey; perhaps they were kidnapped while they were young, or they were abandoned, then rescued.
- 18 **Street Rat.** The character was left to their own devices from a young age and grew up in the city as a pickpocket.
- 19 **Tormented.** The character's past contains a string of disturbing events that haunt them to this day.
- 20 **Master.** The character became an expert in a particular type of magic, martial art, or craft.

## SECRETS

Everyone has a few skeletons in their closet, and guild members are no exception. Secrets are especially useful for guild leaders, whose hidden pasts or actions may turn into story hooks that player characters can investigate or weaknesses that enemies can exploit to harm the reputation of the guild.

### d20 Secret

- 1 **Family.** The character has a partner and children that others do not know of.
- 2 **Betrayal.** The character's actions led to a close friend of theirs being captured.
- 3 **Scion.** The character is next in line to inherit a crown, title, or wealth.
- 4 **Dying.** The character is dying from an illness or affliction.
- 5 **Assumed Identity.** The character took someone else's identity long ago.
- 6 **Bribery.** The character has been paying off officials for an illicit purpose.
- 7 **Killer.** The character committed a heinous murder that they have not answered for.
- 8 **Disgrace.** The character is affiliated with a disgraced familial line or group.
- 9 **Kleptomaniac.** The character cannot stop swiping small items wherever they go.
- 10 **Phobia.** The character has an unusual phobia that they find embarrassing.
- 11 **Seer.** The character has the ability to see the future, but cannot tell anyone.
- 12 **Alters.** The character has two or more distinct minds sharing a body.
- 13 **Past.** The character's past is not what they say it is.

- 14 **Immortal.** The character cannot die from aging, or is fully immune to death.
- 15 **Lover.** The character is pining after someone who is not aware of their affection.
- 16 **Antipathy.** The character has a strong dislike toward something, such as magic.
- 17 **Accident.** The character caused an accident that harmed others.
- 18 **Contraband.** The character has a stash or collection of banned or forbidden items.
- 19 **Amnesia.** The character cannot remember something important about themselves.
- 20 **Ex-Cult.** The character was once in a cult, either by choice or while mind controlled.

## FLAWS & WEAKNESSES

No matter how much they may be an inspiration to others, guild members are still people with imperfections, flaws, and vices. Some may hide their weaknesses well, while others may not recognize or refuse to acknowledge that they have a problem at all.

### d20 Weakness

- 1 **Unbalanced.** The character's mind has been altered, making their grasp on reality tenuous while enhancing other aspects of their intellect.
- 2 **Spendthrift.** The character spends their money irresponsibly.
- 3 **Gullible.** The character can be easily duped by a scheme or plot, and is too trusting.
- 4 **Non-Combatant.** The character no longer fights and requires others to defend them.
- 5 **Philanderer.** The character toys with the emotions of others, and has multiple lovers.
- 6 **Hot-Headed.** The character easily becomes impatient, agitated, and even violent.
- 7 **Rash.** The character often goes with their gut reaction rather than taking counsel.
- 8 **Bound.** Due to a magical pact, the character cannot physically leave or enter certain places.
- 9 **Soulless.** The character lost their soul a long time ago due to a supernatural side effect that they experienced.
- 10 **Null.** The character cannot benefit from magic, including healing or restorative magic.
- 11 **Prideful.** The character cares immensely about their image, and will not admit their faults or shortcomings.

- 12 **Greedy.** The character has a strong desire for wealth and material security.
- 13 **Jealous.** This character feels bitter over the achievements of others, and may sabotage other people's efforts.
- 14 **Vice.** This character hides a troubling vice that compromises their judgment, such as a love of gambling.
- 15 **Outsider.** This character comes from a different realm or plane of existence, and does not fully understand mortal customs, emotions, or other traits.
- 16 **Fear.** This character is afraid of something, such as a type of beast, a kind of magic, or the prospect of being dismembered.
- 17 **Cursed.** This character is afflicted by a curse that debilitates them physically, mentally, or spiritually.
- 18 **Antipathy.** This character has something that they cannot abide, such as seeing books burned or nature harmed, and this can be used as leverage against them.
- 19 **Possessive.** This character is reluctant to share the things they treasure, including precious items, trusted friends, or the secrets of the guild.
- 20 **Fragile.** This character's self-esteem can be easily wounded, causing them to retaliate or fall into a depression.



## MEMBER ROLES

Depending on the nature of the organization, a guild's membership may be singular, and be composed solely of soldiers, mages, or artisans. Other guilds, meanwhile, focus more on banding various talents together under a unifying ideal. The following tables divide a guild's membership into three tiers: Common, Uncommon, and Remarkable. Use these tables to help you fill the vital roles in your guild, either by rolling the indicated die or by picking them yourself.

### COMMON ROLES

Common roles encompass the majority of positions in the guild. In general, these members are less experienced, have less leadership responsibilities, and may be studying under another member to advance. They are the ones most likely to interact with the party on a regular basis when players first come into contact with the guild. Common roles may include a librarian who can help locate a book, or a weaponsmith apprentice who helps maintain the group's equipment.

d10	Common Role	Specialty
1	Researcher	Conducts basic research into topics such as history, lore, or inventions.
2	Guard	Guards guild buildings and territory from intruders.
3	Mage	Performs low-level magic.
4	Explorer	Heads into the wilderness to discover and/or map sites of interest.
5	Missionary/ Emissary	Extols the guild, enlists new members, and acts as the guild's representative.
6	Warrior	Fights the guild's enemies, usually in battles or raids.
7	Craftsperson	Creates common goods for the guild.
8	Beastmaster	Tames and controls beasts or monsters.
9	Priest	Conducts low-level ceremonies and administers healing.
10	Hunter	Explores the wilds, serves as a scout, and hunts creatures.



## UNCOMMON ROLES

Guild members who have proven themselves or have indispensable skills can take on Uncommon roles. Meeting one of them often requires an appointment or introduction, and the opportunity symbolizes a strong amount of trust between the party and the guild. Quests given by uncommon members tend to require special skillsets. These guild members are great candidates for player characters to receive a mission from or ask a major favor of. For example, the party can make a request to an Enchanter for a particular magic item, or ask for an Investigator to help them learn more about a crime lord operating in a city.

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d10	Uncommon Role	Specialty
1	Artisan	Creates uncommon and rare items and equipment.
2	Knight	Is a highly trained Warrior capable of taking on the guild's foes and monsters.
3	Enchanter	Creates and/or enchants items for the guild's use or for sale.
4	Scholar	Researches historical and/or magical lore.
5	Alchemist	Crafts magical potions, poisons, and other tinctures.
6	Apprentice Wizard	Casts mid-level magic.
7	Spy/Investigator	Conducts espionage, such as spying, sabotage, and gathering information.
8	Performer/Artist	Performs in entertainment acts or creates art.
9	Navigator/Pilot	Pilots vehicles such as ships and airships.
10	Master-at-Arms	Trains guild members in the art of combat.

## REMARKABLE ROLES

Members in the Remarkable category represent the height of mastery. Meeting one of these guild members is often difficult to arrange unless the party's reputation has reached the ears of the guild leader or other prominent members. Remarkable guild members are singular characters who are likely to appear several times over the course of a campaign. Just as the party may rely on them, they might also ask the party to assist in world-changing matters.

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d12	Remarkable Role	Specialty
1	Champion	Fights powerful entities and wields supernatural power.
2	Archwizard	Casts high-level magic.
3	Master Healer	Performs healing and can raise the dead.
4	Loremaster	Manages the research and collection of magical and/or historical lore.
5	Spymaster	Manages Spies/Investigators and espionage activities.
6	Master Performer/ Artist	Puts on legendary performances or creates masterpieces.
7	Master Artificer	Creates powerful items, weapons, and/or constructs.
8	Treasurer	Manages overall finances and resources.
9	Deputy Leader	Manages the guild and other Key Members while the guild leader is absent.
10	General	Leads Warriors and Knights in battle.
11	Savant	Uses their charisma to assist the guild in a variety of quests.
12	Tycoon	Manages the business aspects of a guild to ensure that it turns a profit.



*“My legacy is not measured in gold, or blood, or songs.  
It is measured in lasting peace,  
which is the most precious of all things.”*

*—Myrmadil Tor, Servant of Osanya*



CHAPTER 4

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PLAYER-OPERATED  
GUILDS



# PLAYER-OPERATED GUILDS

*Heed our call! There is a new order founded this day! An order that grins in the face of death and scowls at the wicked. An order that calls no king its master, and no land its home. We are sworn to protect all people, all lands, from the taint of undeath and all its masters. No vampire lord will call you cattle. No necromancer will make you thralls. We are the Knights of the Shining Gate! Our armies march for you, but I ask you now. Will you march for us?*

— Lady Aldren, Herald of the Shining Gate.



## MAKING A MARK ON THE WORLD



After going on countless adventures and collecting a bountiful hoard of treasure, adventurers may feel that their actions alone aren't making a big enough impact on the world at large. Perhaps their ambitions go beyond adventuring, or they wish to build something entirely their own. Whatever the reason, these adventurers may decide to found a guild. These organizations work for the greater good, and provide the player characters with new ways to leave their mark on the realm, from influencing kingdoms and uncovering arcane secrets to leading armies in battle.

This chapter offers rules and gameplay options for players who wish to build and operate their own valiant organizations. Though the challenges are daunting, the opportunities are vast: players might found a commercial guild based on empowering the poor, create a monastic order of fiend-hunting martial artists, uncover magical lore that helps regrow forests, or even overthrow a tyrant. Creating a successful guild comes with its own challenges: the player characters might have to petition for land for their headquarters, persuade doubtful patrons, and recruit talented members into the guild ranks. Along the way, players will have the chance to carve out their own place among the world's factions, carry out quests, and manage their guild's cadre of special members. This gives them the opportunity to make impacts on an entire kingdom or continent, and in time, maybe even on a global or interplanar scale!

## ROLEPLAYING HEROIC CHARACTERS

Being heroic means more than amassing power, wealth, and fame—it's not about how much of something one has, but how they use it. A wealthy noble who hoards all of their wealth or a skilled knight whose sole goal is to acquire magical weapons are respected and maybe feared, but they are not heroic. To truly be regarded as "heroes" in the world, player characters need to play the part, and that means investing themselves in the people and the world around them.

As a Game Master, it's your responsibility to create a world that the players care about. Only by getting the player characters wrapped up in the stakes of the world will they begin to care about its future, and perhaps want to shape it for the better. You'll need to create nations, conflicts, and NPCs that are worth investing in, and that often means going deeper than the usual tropes. Although players may be upfront about what their player characters care about, you need to show them that being heroic involves more than just "going through the motions."

## THE PHASES

To create their own heroic organization, players will have to progress through three phases. As a Game Master, you should guide them through each step and keep detailed notes about their decisions.

**PLANNING.** In the planning phase, the players must make a few big decisions. Firstly, they need to decide what kind of guild they wish to create. Is it an order of knights or a mage's college? What are its goals? Are the player characters themselves the guild's leaders, or have they pledged their service to a powerful patron?

Once these questions have been answered, the players need to consider where they wish to geographically found the guild, plan what the guild's headquarters will look like, and decide whether or not to augment it with workshops, spell forges, and the like. Players should also consider what roles will be filled by NPCs, such as a Quartermaster or Diplomat.

**BUILDING.** Once plans have been drawn up, construction and preparation can begin. This occurs during the building phase. Here, the cost and time required to build the headquarters, acquire supplies, and recruit special members are calculated. This phase also includes random events that can happen while building and recruiting. Finally, the player characters can ask for the patronage of a deity or other entity.

**OPERATIONS.** The operations phase is where the players dive into the challenges and rewards of running their organization. Planning and undertaking quests forms a major part of this phase since quests serve to advance the guild's goals and exert its influence. While operating the guild, players will need to determine their guild's monthly operating costs, manage morale, and try to increase their number of members.

## PLANNING PHASE

**D**uring the planning phase, players choose what kind of organization they wish to create, decide where in the world they intend to found it, and begin to plan out the shape of the headquarters, including its size, additional functions, and fortifications. Once this is done, they can think about which key roles they'll need to fill for the guild to thrive.

## GUILD TYPES

The Guild Type table below provides a list of the basic Guild Types, which are elaborated on in *Creating Your Own Guilds*. Alternatively, your players may choose to create a custom *Guild Type* using the existing types as guidelines. Each has its own *Establishment Cost*, representing the initial investment needed to pay for supplies, weapons, and other necessities, and *Favored Quests*, which are quests that the guild is uniquely suited for carrying out.

### STEP-BY-STEP EXAMPLE

The players decide that they wish to found a *Religious Order* with a large number of knights and/or paladins. Based on their party's funds, they decide to create a *Medium Headquarters* in the *Ruins* of an old castle, and add an *Infirmarium* where they can heal injured members, as well as a *Library* where they can keep their holy scriptures. Since the order will be dedicated to slaying vampires, they decide to invest in defenses and augment their headquarters with *Guard Dogs* and *Warding Sigils*. The players also decide that they need to recruit a *Missionary*, *Warrior*, and *Beastmaster*.

d10	Guild Type	Establishment Cost	Favored Quests
1	Mage League	10,000 gp	Explore, Craft, Research, Ritual
2	Druidic Circle	3,000 gp	Commune, Protect, Cultivate, Ritual
3	Religious Order	5,000 gp	Commune, Inspire, Cultivate, Missionary/Promotion
4	Crafting Guild	11,000 gp	Craft, Gather Resources, Research, Trade
5	Lore/Research Fellowship	4,000 gp	Retrieval, Investigation, Inspire, Research
6	Exploration Order	6,000 gp	Craft, Investigation, Explore, Retrieval
7	Arts / Performers' Union	10,000 gp	Missionary/Promotion, Inspire, Diplomacy, Perform
8	Rebel Organization	7,000 gp	Missionary/Promotion, Inspire, Protect, Battle
9	Commercial/Trading Company	20,000 gp	Diplomacy, Craft, Trade, Gather Resources
10	Martial Order	9,000 gp	Battle, Retrieval, Protect, Rescue

# GUILD LOCATIONS



gents of the guild, clad in their winged dragonscale armor, move through the bustling floating city and make their way toward the towering temple at the center of the cloud-filled metropolis. Here, preaching to the masses, is a young dragon, golden scales burning bright in the beams of the setting sun. Rising high into the sky behind the dragon itself is a gigantic temple held aloft by dragon bone columns, with awe-inspiring golden statues on display.

The location where players choose to found their guild has a significant impact on its cost and growth. There are also more complicated effects that are harder to quantify. For example, establishing an Exploration Order in the wilderness usually fares better than doing so in a city, whereas a Trading Company might prosper as easily in a city as in a port.

## CITY

Cities offer a large pool of potential recruits, access to shops and services, and a number of political connections. They also provide access to services and trades that can help guilds get up and running. Unfortunately, they come with a serious downside: competition. Player characters may find themselves competing with other guilds for influence, recruits, and territory, while less scrupulous organizations may sabotage or destroy any guild that has too much influence.

## TOWN

Between a village and a city in terms of size, a town usually gives a guild a moderately sized pool of recruits. Towns are generally centers of commerce and may have skilled artisans or trained warriors, meaning that a nascent guild will have plenty of opportunities to attract skilled members. Still, towns have fewer shops and services than

larger settlements, fewer connections to the rich and influential, and fewer defenses to call upon in times of crisis.

## VILLAGE

Villages present unique difficulties and opportunities. Their leaders are more easily influenced and recruited to a cause, but funding is scarce, the recruiting base is small, and the risks can be great. Each villager tends to know all of the others, and information moves swiftly along the grapevine, so one wrong move can cause a guild to gain a bad reputation. The reverse of this is also true; if the guild can start off strong, it'll likely become favored for the wealth that its members bring in, the protection they offer, or the other good deeds they'll do.

## PORT

Ports provide an excellent recruiting pool, thanks to a steady supply of travelers or sailors looking for new berths. Ports also attract those from foreign lands, who may be more receptive to a guild's messages or offers of help. Ports are also hubs for trade and commerce, ensuring that the wealth is passed around between different companies and guilds, creating a healthy economy. In addition, ports provide easy transportation, so guild members can travel across the world more easily on their quests. However, ports are often rife with bribery, scandal, piracy, and other criminal activities that may threaten a guild's operations.

## WILDERNESS

The wilds are lonely, but they offer bountiful opportunities for exploration and discovery. The cost of establishing a guild out in the wilderness is relatively low, but so is the potential for recruitment—wanderers, travelers, and nomads might be the only people who pass by. However, setting up a headquarters near a road or trade

d10	Location Type	Establishment Cost Modifier	Recruitment Bonus
1	City	+8%	+3
2	Town	+6%	+2
3	Village	+4%	+1
4	Port	+6%	+3
5	Wilderness	-2%	0
6	Subterranean	-4%	-1
7	Ruins	0%	0
8	Island	+2%	+1
9	Alternate Plane	+10%	0
10	Nomadic Encampment	+4%	+2

route might provide a strong source of income, as well as a small stream of new members. For Druidic Circles and Exploration Orders, the wilderness might be a far better location for a headquarters than a city or town.

### ALTERNATE PLANE

Establishing a heroic organization on another plane of existence can be risky, but the rewards can be immense. Building a stronghold in the Celestial Realm may offer the guild a flock of angels ready to serve alongside the paladins and clerics of the guild. On the other hand, establishing a foothold on a moving cloud in the Elemental Realm of Air may give the guild an unassailable base of operations that can only be reached through powerful magic. The plane's residents may be receptive to the organization, but others may be outright hostile. Players should perform extensive research before attempting to establish their guild in one of these planes.

### SUBTERRANEAN

Subterranean locales are usually lightless, remote, difficult to access, and lacking resources. What they lack in convenience for recruitment opportunities, however, they more than make up for in secrecy and security—few enemies may be able to find a guild's underground headquarters, and even fewer may be willing to delve into the dark. Naturally occurring cave systems may provide a guild with ready-made chambers to fill, while veins of ore or vast reservoirs of groundwater may offer resources that can be exploited.

### ISLAND

Many islands tend to be sparsely populated, making recruiting and financing difficult. Still, because islands are generally more difficult to reach and contain relatively small communities, they offer a greater level of security and chances to influence the local population. Islands also offer a measure of privacy from the outside world, making them well-suited for secretive Mage Leagues or Martial Orders. Sailing and shipping are inextricable from islands, so guilds will need to figure out how they fit into the tapestry of travel and trade.

### RUINS

Ruins provide a neutral space for a guild to establish itself. They are usually remote, but their crumbling architecture can provide the foundation for a new headquarters. They might also have special significance to the guild, as its members might be attempting to restore a fallen temple or rebuild an ancient stronghold, for example. Depending on the ruin itself, the guild may be able to take advantage of tunnels, vaults, or other structures. Whether an abandoned monastery or crumbling castle, most ruins should be cleared of monsters and traps before a guild moves in.

### NOMADIC ENCAMPMENT

Instead of choosing a fixed location, a guild may choose to be nomadic. This usually involves traversing the wilderness, but as long as a guild can find food and supplies, it can travel anywhere. This might mean setting up outside a city's walls, traveling between ports, or crossing seas. Nomadic guilds may use tents, yurts, or magical shelters like houses built on chicken feet or a moving castle. Nomadic guilds may find recruits along their path, or seek out places to recruit from.



# HEADQUARTERS & ADDITIONS

**M**ost guilds establish some sort of headquarters—a place where members of a guild can come together for meetings, rituals, assignments, and other vital operations. These headquarters range from elaborate mansions to simple warehouses to subterranean complexes, and are typically tailored to the guild's purpose. A guild dedicated to recovering and protecting long-lost lore is unlikely to meet in a sewer, for example.

As well as serving as meeting places and accommodations, guild headquarters might have *Additions*. Such features are optional buildings or rooms that bestow benefits, such as being able to craft items or conduct research. Some additions can even produce *Resources*, such as a blacksmith's forge creating weapons and armor. See the *Gaining Resources* section for more details about special resources.



Wealth Level	Headquarters Type	Number of Additions	Establishment Cost
1	Tiny	1–2	3,000 gp
2	Small	3–4	5,000 gp
3	Medium	4–5	7,000 gp
4	Large	6–7	9,000 gp
5	Huge	8–10	12,000 gp

dcz	Addition Type	Establishment Cost	Special Resources Created
1	Spell Forge	2,500 gp	Spell Scrolls
2	Blacksmith's Forge	1,000 gp	Arms/Armor, Special Materials
3	Alchemist's Laboratory	2,000 gp	Potions/Poisons
4	Ceremonial Chamber	1,000 gp	Magic Items
5	Artificer's Workshop	3,000 gp	Magic Items
6	Training Room	500 gp	-
7	Library	1,500 gp	Lore
8	Vault	1,200 gp	-
9	Divination Chamber	1,000 gp	Intelligence/Secrets
10	Infirmery	3,000 gp	-
11	Stables	1,500 gp	-
12	Prison	500 gp	-

## SPELL FORGE

These chambers are often decorated with arcane sigils and warding symbols designed to protect those within. They are magical workshops where new spells can be created or old ones perfected, though they can only be used by player characters who already have at least some skill in arcane spellcasting. Spell forges can be dangerous places even for the most careful spellcasters, and thus should be built away from meeting rooms or dormitories.

**Function.** Using a spell forge decreases the amount of time, difficulty, and/or gp required to learn a new spell by half and allows for the creation of spell scrolls, which can be activated by a creature to cast the spells inscribed upon them. High-level arcane spellcasters can use the forge to create new spells, though the Game Master will decide what can be created and what is required to do so.

## ALCHEMIST'S LABORATORY

Filled with vials, flasks, decanters, alembics, and cauldrons, alchemist's laboratories are dedicated spaces for the creation of potions, tinctures, and other magical substances. They can only be used by trained individuals who are already proficient in alchemist's supplies or an equivalent, and may be second only to spell forges in terms of danger—an experiment gone wrong may create deadly gasses or unexpected explosions.

**Function.** A proficient player character or NPC can use an alchemist's laboratory to make potions, poisons, and the like.

## BLACKSMITH'S FORGE

Blacksmith's forges enable metal ores to be melted down into refined bars and used to create items such as armor, weapons, or metal items like grappling hooks, caltrops, horseshoes, and other such items. They can also be used to refine and prepare special, metallic materials from raw ore, such as adamantium or mithril. The forges can only be used by trained individuals who are already proficient with smith's tools or an equivalent.

**Function.** A proficient player character or NPC can use a blacksmith's forge to make metal items, including weapons and armor, as well as smelt bars of metal.

## TRAINING ROOM

Training Rooms are large spaces kitted out with straw dummies, wooden weapons, cushioned mats, and hanging bags with which guild members can undertake training in melee or ranged combat. Though having a trained **MASTER-AT-ARMS** can increase their efficacy, these rooms ensure that guild members become more skilled with their weapons and armor.

**Function.** Guild members who use a training room gain temporary bonuses to quests that involve combat, such as Battle, Protect, and Rescue. For each week spent training, NPC guild members gain +1 to those quests, up to a maximum of +3.

## CEREMONIAL CHAMBER

Often decorated with tapestries, altars, braziers, and statuary, ceremonial chambers are places where summonings and magical offerings can be performed. They are magically infused spaces designed to accommodate ritual casting of all kinds, from holy devotions to arcane enchantments.

**Function.** Provided that there is at least one ritual caster present, these rooms can be used by multiple individuals to conduct a magical ceremony, such as summoning a celestial or gaining a blessing. Enchantments for magical items can also be performed in this room. Rituals and enchantments cast in this room have a higher chance of success and decreased risk.

## ARTIFICER'S WORKSHOP

Whirring gears, clanging hammers, whizzing equipment, and smoking furnaces typify artificer's workshops. These workshops are custom built to allow for the creation of magical or mundane inventions, such as clockwork guardians, siege equipment, or exotic weapons. They can only be used by trained individuals who are already proficient with tinker's tools or an equivalent.

**Function.** A proficient player character or NPC can use an artificer's workshop to make new inventions. The amount of time and gold required to create such a project is halved. Enchantments for certain magical items can also be performed in this room.

## LIBRARY

Whether they consist of wooden shelves of esoteric tomes and leather-bound grimoires or beautifully carved marble alcoves filled with gilt-edged books, libraries can be used by any guild member to conduct research on different topics, ranging from metaphysics to history to the deeds of past empires. Most libraries come stocked with titles spanning a range of topics, though more rare, esoteric, or arcane areas of study might not be included.

**Function.** Guild members, including player characters, can conduct research using a library. The cost and time to research is reduced by half, provided that the subject is likely to appear in the guild's library.

## VAULT

Built from solid stone or brushed steel and guarded by mundane or magical locks, traps, alarms, or wards, vaults are the best places for a guild to store treasures, including coin, artifacts, magical items, and sensitive information. They can range in size from small, carefully crafted rooms to immense caverns sculpted from the surrounding limestone. Guardians, whether mortal or magical, may be recruited to protect these vaults.

**Function.** Allows a guild to store valuables with greater security. Vaults can evade detection by authorities and are extremely difficult to break into.

## DIVINATION CHAMBER

Divination chambers are used by spellcasters, whether arcane, divine, natural, or eldritch, to gain information that they might not otherwise have access to. They can use these chambers to see other parts of the world, look into the past or future, and surveil other people from afar. They're often warded against counterspying and other magical influences, such as illusions.

**Function.** A spellcaster can use this chamber to improve their divination spells, gaining more valuable information, or look into the guild's future.

## STABLES

Stables usually have stalls, a roof, and an attached paddock. Most come with a supply room to store food and supplies, such as saddles and ropes. The most common mounts are horses, ponies, and donkeys. For more unusual mounts such as elephants or dire wolves, increase the cost by 50%. For magical mounts such as griffons or pegasi, increase the cost by 100%.

**Function.** Stables allow for the upkeep of around a dozen mounts, irrespective of their size or form. If a mount dies, it takes 1d4 months to find and train a replacement.

## PRISON

Prisons are used by guilds to hold captured enemies or to seal away evil creatures such as fiends and vampires. In the case of the former, they're probably mundane, and include stone cells with iron-barred doors, basic beds and furniture, and similar features. For the latter, they might include pillars of sunlight that cannot be evaded, or even magical ice into which prisoners are frozen. These kinds of magical precautions can increase the cost of a prison by 50 to 100 percent.

**Function.** Prisons can hold between 4 and 20 creatures. They may not always be magically warded, so prisoners who can use magical abilities to change their forms, walk through walls, or open locks may be able to escape.

## INFIRMARY

Infirmaries are chambers dedicated to healing and medicine. They might be magical, mundane, or a mix of both. Typically, there is one chamber for emergency treatment, one chamber filled with beds for recovering patients, and one room for surgery or magical healing. Infirmaries are usually stocked with bandages, antidotes, healing salves, and other medicine.

**Function.** Guild members, including the player characters, recover twice as fast in an infirmary, and can be cured of poisons or diseases by spending one full day resting there. Difficult medical operations, such as restoring a severed arm or healing terrible burns, is easier at an infirmary.

## FORTIFICATIONS

As well as adding additional rooms or areas to a headquarters to expand its functionality, players might want to fortify their headquarters. These **Fortifications** are distinct from **Additions** in that their benefits are solely defensive, making it harder for enemies of the guild to get into, out of, or around the headquarters.

dro	Fortification	Cost	Effect
1	Traps (Conventional)	250 gp	May be designed to kill, maim, or slow intruders or alert residents.
2	Traps (Magical)	2,500 gp	Same as above, but are harder to remove and spot. May include magical effects.
3	Arrow Slits	100 gp	Allow ranged weapons to be used against outdoor enemies. Provides a cover bonus.
4	Magical Locks	2,500 gp	Can only be unlocked with passwords, tokens, or other means specified by the guild. Prevents lockpicking.
5	Siege Defense	3,000 gp	Adds catapults, portcullis, a moat, or other fortifications against sieges.
6	Illusory Appearance	2,500 gp	Disguises the exterior of the headquarters.
7	Hidden Doors	250 gp	Allows members to move through the headquarters quickly to escape from danger.
8	Guard Dogs	100 gp	Alert residents to intruders and attack trespassers.
9	Alarm (Magical)	1,000 gp	Warns of intruders. Cannot be disarmed with mundane tools.
10	Warding Sigils	2,500 gp	Prevents teleportation into, out of, or around the headquarters, as well as scrying.

# CHOOSING A GUILD LEADER



A guild leader has an outsized effect on the guild as a whole: they are usually the public face of the faction and its representative in formal and important matters, such as negotiations or meetings with other guilds and leaders. This includes leaders of temples and even realms. For example, the glorious *Adrenne d'Orberge* of the *Order of the Flaming Lances* was renowned for her ability to quell the zealous passion of her guild members and negotiate truces with even the most war-hungry tyrants. The mechanical impacts of a guild leader are significant, especially for guild morale.

Depending on how the players have set up the guild, one of the player characters might choose to become the leader, or they might all serve as a council of leaders. They might also choose one or more NPCs to take on the role. Alternatively, the player characters might feel that simply choosing a leader isn't appropriate, and may instead decide to allow a vote to elect a leader, run a tournament to decide who is best suited, or host some other competition that grants the victor leadership. It's important to remember that a guild leader's actions can affect the entire guild. If a guild leader becomes embroiled in scandal, it can affect the reputation of the entire faction. If they perform a heroic deed, the entire organization might also receive a benefit through increased funding or popularity.

How a player roleplays the leader might have its own influence: a Martial Order whose guild members fight many battles may show more loyalty to a leader who is decisive and pragmatic, while a Religious Order's acolytes might be happiest under a leader who is contemplative and gentle. If a leader's behavior, actions, or personality cause friction among guild members, then that leader may find themselves deposed...

## KEY MEMBERS

All guilds have members, but *Key Members* are different. Amidst the sea of squires, apprentices, and students, Key Members have skills and expertise that set them apart. They might be trained Warriors, talented Mages, or crafty Tradespeople. While normal members can generally be sent into trade negotiations or to battles, Key Members are more likely to achieve success in their areas of expertise.

Key Members are typically NPCs that must be recruited, and they can be difficult to find depending on the rarity of the skills they offer.

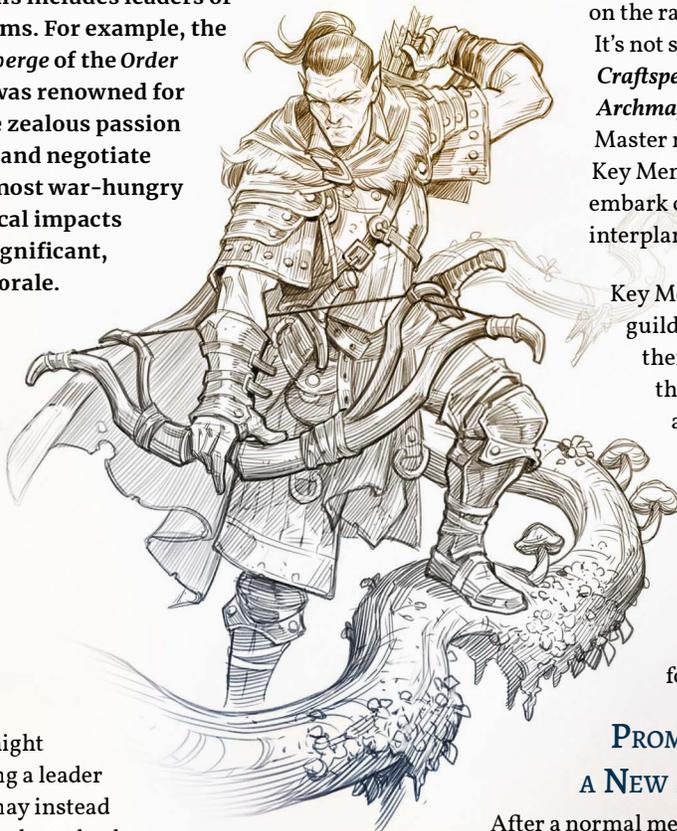
It's not so hard to find an *Emissary* or *Craftsperson*, but a skilled *Champion* or *Archmage* requires more work. A Game Master may determine that to find a new Key Member, the player characters must embark on a quest or pay someone with interplanar connections to set up a meeting.

Key Members are a great asset to any guild, and must be paid monthly for their services. In return, they offer the guild bonuses to specific Quests, access to new items or spellcasting, or the ability to uncover hidden pieces of lore. For example, a *Master-at-Arms* can train guild members so that they are more competent at Battle or Rescue quests, while a *Master Artificer* can create clockwork guardians for the guild's headquarters.

## PROMOTING OR TRAINING A NEW KEY MEMBER

After a normal member of a guild takes part in a successful quest (see the Guild Quests section), the Game Master may decide that the member has gained enough experience to become a Key Member. If the players accept the promotion, then they may add that member to the ranks of their Key Members. Alternatively, player characters may task an existing Key Member with training another guild member to master their skills. This usually requires an investment of 50, 100, or 150 gp, and takes 1 to 3 months, depending on whether the Key Member is Common, Uncommon, or Remarkable. At the end of the training period, the member becomes a Key Member of the same type that trained them.

If a player character has the appropriate skills, then they may train a guild member as if they themselves were a Key Member, though the time and cost involved are the same.



## COMMON KEY MEMBERS

Common guild members include individuals working in the capacity of guards, craftspeople, and priests, for example. These members usually have a basic set of skills related to their roles, as well as some access to specialized guild knowledge or tools. Though they represent the lowest ranks of the guild, they are often the most numerous, and even a low-ranking guild member usually outclasses an uninitiated person in a similar role.

### RESEARCHER

Provides a +2 to Research and Investigation quests. Researchers with access to a library or other vast store of knowledge are granted an additional +1.

### GUARD

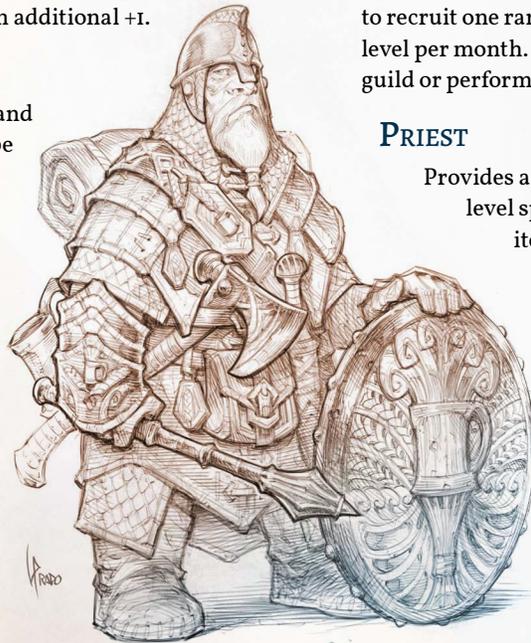
Provides a +2 to Protect and Rescue quests. Can be equipped with weapons and/or armor to fight enemies, which grants them an additional +1.

### MAGE

Provides a +2 to Ritual quests and can cast low-level spells. Can be equipped with magical items or allowed access to a library to conduct research, which grants them an additional +1 to Ritual or Research quests, respectively.

### EXPLORER

Provides a +2 to Retrieval and Explore quests. Can be equipped with dungeoneering equipment, wilderness gear, or other supplies, which grants them an additional +1.



### MISSIONARY/EMISSARY

Missionaries provide a +2 to Missionary/Promotion quests, while Emissaries provide a +2 to Inspire and Diplomacy quests.

### WARRIOR

Provides a +2 to Battle and Protect quests. Can be equipped with weapons and armor to aid in combat, which grants them an additional +1.

### CRAFTSPERSON

Allows the guild to create common items and equipment for their own use or for sale. Provides a +1 to Craft, Trade, and Gather Resources quests.

### BEASTMASTER

Provides a +1 to Cultivate quests. Allows the organization to recruit one random beast or monster of appropriate level per month. The beast may fight alongside the guild or perform services like being a mount.

### PRIEST

Provides a +1 to Ritual quests and can cast low-level spells. Can be equipped with magical items or allowed access to an infirmary to conduct healing, which grants them an additional +1 to Ritual or Inspire quests, respectively.

### HUNTER

Provides a +1 to Cultivate, Explore, and Gather Resources quests and enables the guild to access some resources that it might choose to sell, such as wolf pelts or basilisk teeth.

d10	Common Role	Specialty	Monthly Cost
1	Researcher	Conducts research into topics, such as history, lore, or inventions.	5 gp
2	Guard	Guards guild buildings and territory from intruders.	5 gp
3	Mage	Performs low-level magic.	30 gp
4	Explorer	Heads into the wilderness to discover and/or map sites of interest.	20 gp
5	Missionary/ Emissary	Extolls the guild, enlists new members, and acts as the guild's representative.	20 gp
6	Warrior	Fights the guild's enemies, usually in battles or raids.	15 gp
7	Craftsperson	Creates common goods for the guild.	20 gp
8	Beastmaster	Tames and controls beasts or monsters.	20 gp
9	Priest	Conducts low-level ceremonies and administers healing.	20 gp
10	Hunter	Explores the wilds, serves as a scout, and hunts creatures.	10 gp

## UNCOMMON KEY MEMBERS

Uncommon guild members are individuals with more specialized, powerful, or rare skills and training. These individuals have most likely undergone extensive training within the guild, and have now become professionals in their roles. These guild members strongly distinguish themselves from outsiders through their unique techniques, hidden knowledge, or special, guild-specific equipment.

### ARTISAN

Provides a +3 to Craft quests. Can be equipped with better tools or resources to aid in their quests, which grants them an additional +1.

### KNIGHT

Provides a +3 to Battle, Protect, Inspire, and Rescue quests. Must be outfitted with heavy armor and a mount in order to function.

### ENCHANTER

Provides a +3 to Craft quests that deal with magically enchanting an item. Can be provided with a ritual chamber for an additional +1.

### SCHOLAR

Provides a +4 to Research and Explore quests. Can be equipped with a library to aid their research, which grants them an additional +1.

d12	Uncommon Role	Specialty	Monthly Cost
1	Artisan	Creates uncommon and rare items and equipment.	60 gp
2	Knight	Highly trained warrior capable of taking on guild foes and monsters.	60 gp
3	Enchanter	Creates and/or enchants items for guild use or for sale.	50 gp
4	Scholar	Researches historical and/or magical lore.	40 gp
5	Summoner	Conducts rituals to summon extraplanar creatures and entities.	60 gp
6	Alchemist	Crafts magical potions, poisons, and other tinctures.	60 gp
7	Apprentice Wizard	Casts mid-level magic.	40 gp
8	Spy/Investigator	Conducts espionage, such as spying, sabotage, and gathering information.	50 gp
9	Performer/Artist	Performs in entertainment acts or creates art.	50 gp
10	Navigator/Pilot	Pilots vehicles such as ships and airships.	50 gp
11	Master-at-Arms	Trains guild members in the art of combat.	30 gp

d12	Remarkable Role	Specialty	Monthly Cost
1	Champion	Fights powerful entities and wields supernatural power.	200 gp
2	Archwizard	Casts high-level magic.	200 gp
3	Master Healer	Performs healing and can raise the dead.	180 gp
4	Loremaster	Manages the research and collection of magical and/or historical lore.	160 gp
5	Spymaster	Manages Spies/Investigators and espionage activities.	150 gp
6	Master Performer	Puts on legendary performances or creates masterpieces.	150 gp
7	Master Artificer	Creates powerful items, weapons, and/or constructs.	200 gp
8	Treasurer	Manages overall finances and resources.	250 gp
9	Deputy Leader	Manages the guild and other Key Members while the guild leader is absent.	200 gp
10	General	Leads Warriors and Knights in battle.	175 gp
11	Savant	Uses their charisma to assist the guild in a variety of quests.	100 gp
12	Tycoon	Manages business aspects of a guild to ensure that it turns a profit.	140 gp

## ALCHEMIST

Provides a +3 to Craft quests that deal with creating potions or consumable magical items. Can be equipped with an alchemist's laboratory, which grants them an additional +1.

## APPRENTICE WIZARD

Provides a +3 to Ritual quests and can cast mid-level spells. Can be equipped with magical items or a library to conduct research, which grant them an additional +1 to Ritual or Research quests, respectively.

## SPY/INVESTIGATOR

Provides a +3 to Investigation and Retrieval quests. Can be equipped with disguises or magical items that grant stealth, which grant them an additional +1.

## PERFORMER/ARTIST

Provides a +3 to Craft, Inspire, and Perform quests. Must be outfitted with supplies (such as paints or instruments) in order to function.

## NAVIGATOR/PILOT

Provides a +3 to Explore, Retrieval, and Rescue quests. Must be outfitted with a vehicle of some sort in order to function.

## MASTER-AT-ARMS

Trains guild members in combat, ranging from swordsmanship to archery to exotic weapons. Guild members gain a +1 to Battle quests. Can be equipped with a training room, which grants the Master-at-Arms an additional +1.

## REMARKABLE KEY MEMBERS

Remarkable guild members are those who are wonderfully rare and incredibly talented. These individuals might rival the player characters themselves in power, and have dedicated their lives to perfecting a specific set of skills that make them virtuosos. In addition to their skills, they usually have decades of experience in what they do.

## CHAMPION

Provides a +2 to Raid/Battle quests. When sent to fight powerful enemy Warriors or monsters alone, the Champion provides a +4 bonus to the quest instead. Can be equipped with magical weapons or armor to aid them in combat, which grants them an additional bonus of up to +2. If the guild possesses a Master-at-Arms and/or a training room, the Champion may benefit from one or the other, but not both.

## ARCHWIZARD

Provides a +4 to Ritual quests, and can cast high-level spells. Can be equipped with magical items or a library to conduct research, which grants them an additional +1 to Ritual or Research quests, respectively.

## MASTER HEALER

Heals injured guild members and/or player characters with magic or surgery. Allows player characters to heal from otherwise deadly injuries or diseases, undergo limb or organ transplants, or change their physical appearances.

## LOREMASTER

Provides a +5 to Research quests. Can be equipped with a library to aid their research, which grants them an additional +1.

## SPYMASTER

Provides +3 to Investigation quests. Requires at least one Spy/Investigator employed by the guild. Each time an Investigation quest is successful, the guild gains an additional piece of intelligence or a secret (see the "Gaining Resources" section).

## MASTER PERFORMER

Provides a +4 to Perform or Inspire quests. Can be equipped with masterwork musical instruments that improve their skill, which grants them an additional +1.

## MASTER ARTIFICER

Provides a +4 to Craft quests that deal with creating magical or mechanical items (including clockwork devices and weapons). Can be equipped with an artificer's workshop, which grants them an additional +1.

## TREASURER

Reduces the organization's monthly costs by 20% and generates 1d4 x 50 gp per month.

## GENERAL

Provides a +4 to Battle/Protect quests, but requires at least five Warriors and/or Knights to command. If the number of Warriors and/or Knights under the General's command exceeds the number of enemies, then the quest gains an additional +1.

## DEPUTY LEADER

Oversees the guild's operations while the normal leaders are absent or indisposed. Provides a +2 Leadership bonus and continues the guild's agenda while the leaders are away.

## SAVANT

Provides a +2 to Diplomacy, Inspire, Missionary/Promotion, and Perform quests. Adds a +2 bonus to the leader's charisma score for the purposes of the Morale Roll.

## TYCOON

Provides a +3 to Trade and Gather Resources quests. Provides a 10% increase to any profit that the guild makes each month.

## BUILDING PHASE

**I**n the building phase, the players' plans are put into action. The construction of their headquarters gets underway, along with any additional buildings. Any modifications they've requested in terms of defenses or fortifications are made once the building is complete and, once the headquarters is finished, the player characters can begin recruiting guild members to fill the Key Member roles of their heroic organization.

This stage of the process involves some bookkeeping as costs are worked out, time requirements calculated, and other notes made. This can be done on behalf of the players by the Game Master, or by the players themselves.

### TOTAL ESTABLISHMENT COST

Once the players have determined the type of guild that they want to create and the headquarters that they wish to build, they need to determine the total cost of establishing the organization.

Add together the *Establishment Costs* for (1) the guild Type, (2) the *Headquarters size*, (3) any *Additions*, and (4) any *Fortifications*. Once added, multiply the sum by the Location's *Establishment Cost Modifier*. Add that amount to the previous total to create the *Total Establishment Cost*.

Here's an example of tabulating the costs of establishing a guild:

## HEADQUARTERS CONSTRUCTION AND PREPARATIONS

Building the guild's headquarters and assembling the supplies to run the guild always takes a minimum of 1 month and progresses at monthly intervals per 1,000 gp of total cost. Looking at the previous example cost of 22,472 gp, this guild will take 22 months to build and prepare. The players can either pay the cost up front, or spread the cost over the full 22 months.

Unless the players pay the entire sum up front, the Game Master should roll once for each month to determine if a random event occurs. Roll a die—on an odd result, a positive event occurs, while on an even result, a negative event occurs. Then, roll a d10 and consult the Positive Event table or the Negative Event table below to see what impacts the preparation of the guild.

If the players want their guild to be ready more quickly, they can pay an additional 500 gp for each planned month of construction. This extra payment cuts the construction and preparation time in half (rounding down) by hiring more workers and paying a premium to get essential supplies delivered quickly. So, if a guild is estimated to take 22 months to construct and prepare, the players can pay roughly 33,000 gp instead of 22,000 gp to shorten the time to 11 months.

		Establishment Cost	Cost Modifier
Guild Type	Martial Order	7,000 gp	
Headquarters Size	Large	9,000 gp	
Additions	Dungeon, Blacksmith's Forge	1,050 gp	
Location	Wilderness	-	-2%
Fortifications	Magical Locks, Conventional Traps	2,750 gp	
Establishment Cost:		19,800 gp	
Establishment Cost Modifier: (based on Location)		-2% (equals -396 gp)	
<b>Total Establishment Cost</b>		<b>19,404 gp</b>	



**d10 Positive Event****Effect**

- |    |   |   |
|----|---|---|
| 1  | A powerful being bestows a gift upon the guild's founders.  | Total Establishment Cost reduced by 10%.  |
| 2  | Inspiration drives workers and merchants to focus all of their attention on the guild's preparations. | Preparation time reduced by 1 month.  |
| 3  | Members dismantle a nearby ruin and bring the stones to the building site.                            | Total Establishment Cost reduced by 10%.  |
| 4  | A guild member summons or creates beings to help with preparations and construction.                  | Preparation time reduced by 1 month.  |
| 5  | A wealthy noble is converted to the cause and makes a generous donation.                              | Total Establishment Cost reduced by 20%.  |
| 6  | Newly recruited members volunteer to help build the headquarters.                                     | Preparation time reduced by 2 months.   |
| 7  | A wandering transmuter offers to transform stone into gold in exchange for a favor.                   | Total Establishment Cost reduced by 30%.  |
| 8  | A dragon, giant, or massive sentient beast offers to help with construction.                          | Preparation time reduced by 3 months.   |
| 9  | Workers discover an ancient, treasure-filled tomb beneath the site of the headquarters.               | If excavation is successful, reduce Total Establishment Cost by 5,000 gp.                 |
| 10 | A sage offers to cast a spell that speeds up time for the player characters.                          | Player characters lose 6 months of their lives, but building time is reduced by 6 months. |

**d10 Negative Event****Effect**

- |    |  |  |
|----|--|--|
| 1  | A local gang demands that the guild pay protection fees to continue building.                              | Players must pay a fee equal to 10% of the Total Establishment Cost.                                   |
| 2  | A rival guild sabotages the construction site or a shipment of supplies.                                   | Preparation time increased by 1 month.   |
| 3  | Local merchants don't support the guild's goals, and charge you more for goods.                            | Total Establishment Cost increased by 10%.   |
| 4  | A worker is injured in an accident; they and several of their fellow workers quit.                         | Preparation time increased by 1 month.   |
| 5  | Corrupt authorities must be paid off in order to pass an inspection of the headquarters.                   | Players must pay a bribe equal to 20% of the Total Establishment Cost.                                 |
| 6  | A powerful entity curses the building site, turning it into a swamp. It must be drained.                   | Preparation time increased by 2 months.  |
| 7  | A rival organization intercepts one of the guild's shipments and destroys it.                              | Total Establishment Cost increased by 30%.   |
| 8  | A strange star rises in the daytime skies, sending the workers entirely mad.                               | Preparation time increased by 3 months.  |
| 9  | The guild's patron or a local spirit is dissatisfied with the headquarters and must be appeased.           | A ritual sacrifice or offering must be made. Total Establishment Cost increased by 2,000 gp.           |
| 10 | A disguised devil tries to undermine the guild by tempting the workers into signing a mysterious contract. | The workers are turned into fiendish spawn and must be killed. Preparation time increased by 6 months. |

# RECRUITING KEY MEMBERS



ey members are essential for a guild to carry out specialized tasks, especially quests. However, they may need some persuading to join the new guild. Some might require favors, while others might need a large sum of gold upfront to cover their costs. Game Masters can use the Key Member Description table to add an extra twist to recruiting a key member, which usually makes it trickier to enlist their help.

Depending on their rarity (Common, Uncommon, or Remarkable), Key Members usually take 1 to 3 months to locate and recruit. Once they've agreed to join the organization, their monthly cost must be paid, either by the guild or by the player characters themselves.

## GAINING A PATRON

Some guilds may want a magical or god-like patron to grant them assistance or boons. If the player characters don't already have direct contact with their chosen patron, then they will need to make contact with the being and earn their patronage. This is usually accomplished in two steps. The player characters must first perform a ceremony or ritual to summon the patron. After this has been accomplished, the player characters will usually be asked to demonstrate their worthiness, which might involve undertaking a test or making a significant offering. If the offering is accepted or the test passed, then the player characters can work out an arrangement with the entity.

These deals almost always push the player characters to do heroic deeds. For example, a celestial patron might ask the player characters to reclaim a temple from roaming hordes of undead that have desecrated the land.

Below are some examples of different kinds of patrons, how the player characters might summon them, and what proof of worthiness they might provide to gain the entity's assistance.

### d10 Description

- 1 This person holds opposing beliefs to those of the guild.
- 2 This person has been targeted by an evil organization and needs help escaping.
- 3 This person has already been hired by another employer.
- 4 This person is wary about the guild's plans, and must be persuaded.
- 5 This person has connections that try to stop their recruitment into the guild.
- 6 This person is interested in helping, but requests a favor.
- 7 This person wishes to join, but first needs help finishing a job.
- 8 This person is trying to pay off debts, and asks to be paid one year's wages upfront.
- 9 This person agrees to join, provided that they're given certain comforts costing 500 gp.
- 10 This person wholeheartedly believes in the guild's goals and eagerly joins.

### Type of Being

### Summoning Method

### Proof of Worthiness

God	Erect a temple in the deity's name and conduct a ceremony exalting them.	Petitioners must carry out the will of the deity and obey their creed.
Star Being/Celestial	Build an altar of stone or silver under the stars and call to the being.	Petitioners must allow the being to inspect the souls of its petitioners to judge their intentions.
Archfey	Recite a song or rhyme at midnight in a wild place, such as a forest.	Petitioners must answer riddles or solve a puzzle to prove their wit.
Dragon	Seek out the dragon's lair and gain entry.	Petitioners must make an offering of a rare, powerful item or vast sums of gold.
Primordial Being	Creating a ritual circle and calling the being by its myriad of titles, then burning a token.	Petitioners must speak to the being in its own tongue, which is inherently magical and powerful.
Elemental	Recite the elemental's true name three times in a place where the element is strong, such as a lake or volcano.	Petitioners must withstand the fury of the being's element.
Spirit/Ancestor	Seek out the spirit's place of death and call to it.	Petitioners must help the spirit resolve something from their life.
Beast/Plant	Seek out the being in the wilds and kneel before it.	Petitioners must help the being to grow stronger or fight it to a standstill.

## OPERATING PHASE

**D**uring the operating phase, the guild begins to enact its plans and exert its influence on the world. The organization undertakes heroic quests, gains valuable resources, gains and loses members, and deals with misfortunes and windfalls. Months, perhaps years of devout planning has culminated to this day.

During this phase, player characters need to pay the monthly costs of their Key Members, plan quests, and monitor their guild's morale. To start, figure out the guild's starting size (see the Guild Size table below). Most organizations start with only the player characters, so it's not unusual to begin as Tiny. However, if the player characters have already gathered a following of people ready to become official members of the new guild, it might start as Small or even Large.

Guild Size	Number of Members
Tiny	3–11
Small	12–49
Large	50–199
Very Large	200–499
Huge	500+

## GAINING RESOURCES

Resources are special assets that don't include gold or jewels. These resources may make the guild or its members more powerful (such as armor or spell scrolls), assist the guild in creating things (like ingredients or clockwork parts), or serve as offerings for the guild's patron (such as rare metals or blessed incense). These resources can be acquired through use of the guild's Additions or by the player characters themselves.

Another way for a guild to gain resources is through *Gather Resources* quests. The Game Master should determine the cost, time, risk, and difficulty class of the quest based on the rarity or difficulty of acquiring the desired resource. For example, gathering spell components or ingredients may only take 1 week and 20 gp, but searching for a useful artifact or magic item might take up to 8 weeks and cost 5,000 gp.

Some resources cannot be gathered through Additions or Gather Resources quests—Intelligence, Secrets, and Lore may require an Investigation or Research quest, while divine items might require a Commune or Missionary/Promotion quest.

d10	Resource Type	Description	Uses
1	Spell Components	Natural items such as bat guano, sulfur, or newt eyes.	Can be used to create spell scrolls, carry out normal spells, or assist in ritual casting.
2	Special Materials	Materials can include adamantine ore, dragon scales, and clockwork parts.	Can be used to create weapons and armor, magic items, and the like.
3	Ingredients	Natural ingredients such as dried plants or animal parts.	Can be used to create poisons, potions, or other consumables.
4	Arms/Armor	Weapons and armor suitable for use by the guild members.	Can be used to arm guild members as well as stock training facilities and armories.
5	Magic Items	Special magical objects, such as enchanted mirrors, trinkets, or clothing.	These can serve a wide range of uses, from assisting in combat to enhancing stealth.
6	Artifacts/Relics	Mysterious items with unusual, one-of-a-kind powers.	These can serve a wide range of uses, from providing glimpses of the future to enslaving the minds of enemies.
7	Offerings	Rare or exotic materials that are associated with a god or powerful being.	Can be used in rituals to please a god or patron, as well as commune with them.
8	Intelligence/Secrets	Information about the guild's enemies or allies.	Can be used to form plans or learn the weaknesses of rivals.
9	Potions/Spell Scrolls	Single-use magic items that have a limited benefit.	These can serve a wide range of uses, from enhancing the strength of guild members to granting invisibility.
10	Lore	Information about the world's history.	Can be used to locate lost sites, learn where to harvest rare ingredients, or discover the weakness of a creature.

## GUILD QUESTS

*Guild Quests* can consist of daring heists to steal a shard of a dark god from a subterranean vault, clandestine spy operations to discover the weakness of a crime lord, or clever propaganda campaigns designed to rally the common folk against their tyrannical rulers. Each one can bring a guild closer to its ultimate goal... or spiral into disaster.

Quests are the primary way that player characters command their guild members and advance the guild's agenda. Typically, player characters assign guild members and *Key Members* to undertake these *quests* without the player characters' direct involvement. This means that the guild can take on multiple quests at once while the player characters deal with other issues.

The Quest Type table below details different quest archetypes, which range from crafting items to interrogating prisoners. If the players come up with quests that don't fit the ones listed here, then the Game Master can improvise. The chance of success for some quests can be increased by having certain *Key Members* or *Additions*, such as a *Loremaster* for a *Research quest* or an alchemist's laboratory for a *Craft quest*.

Each quest has an associated amount of time and cost to carry out, a risk level that shows how much the quest's success or failure impacts the guild's *morale*, and a difficulty class that determines the success or failure

of the quest. These can be adjusted by the Game Master based on the specifics of the quest; a *Battle Quest* to fight off thirty goblin raiders isn't as difficult or dangerous as a battle against a hundred-strong vampire army.

You can find descriptions of each of these quest archetypes in the *Guild Quests* section of the "Bringing Your Guilds to Life" chapter.

### QUEST ROLL

The success or failure of a quest is determined by a 1d20 roll, which may have bonuses or penalties applied to it. If the total of the roll meets or exceeds the difficulty class of a quest, it succeeds. Use the following to calculate the Quest Roll:

Any *Key Member* bonuses + *Guild Type* bonus + any additional bonuses/penalties + 1d20 roll vs. *Quest Difficulty Class*

More than one key member may be assigned to a quest to grant additional bonuses, up to a maximum of +8.

*Guild Type* also adds a bonus to the roll, as shown in the *Guild Type* table in the "Planning Phase" section of this chapter. The listed quest types in the guild type table gain a +2 bonus to the roll. For example, *Exploration Orders* gain a +2 bonus to Quest Rolls for *Investigation* and *Retrieval* quests.

Quest Type	Time	Cost	Risk Level	Difficulty Class
Trade	–	–	1	8
Battle	4 weeks	1,400 gp	5	16
Commune	1 week	200 gp	2	10
Craft	3 weeks	600 gp	1	12
Diplomacy	2 weeks	200 gp	4	14
Gather Resources	1 week per 50 gp	varies	1	8
Inspire	3 weeks	1,000 gp	3	12
Investigation	4 weeks	500 gp	4	12
Missionary//Promotion	4 weeks	500 gp	4	12
Perform	1 week	100 gp	1	10
Explore	4 weeks	1,500 gp	5	16
Protect	4 weeks	800 gp	5	16
Cultivate	2 weeks	200 gp	1	12
Rescue	3 weeks	200 gp	4	14
Research	3 weeks	200 gp	1	12
Retrieval	3 weeks	500 gp	3	12
Ritual	2 weeks	500 gp	3	14

## PLAYER-LED QUESTS

Though quests are usually led by NPCs, player characters can choose to lead quests, either as a group or individually. For these quests, the Game Master can choose to use the rules for “Absent Players” (see below) and summarize the quest after determining success or failure using the Quest Roll, or the Game Master can craft an encounter that fits the quest and run it like a normal session, with any Key Members or normal members accompanying the player characters as NPCs.

## PREPARING FOR QUESTS

Taking steps to prepare guild members for an upcoming quest can increase their chances of success. If the player characters provide their guild members with detailed information about their objectives, potential tactics, routes, or other important details, then the Game Master can grant a +1 bonus to the Quest Roll to reflect this. If the player characters equip their guild members with appropriate gear, such as vials of poison for assassinations, climbing ropes and grappling hooks for spying, or thieves’ tools for a heist, then the Game Master can grant a +1 bonus to the Quest Roll to reflect these preparations. Characters can take preparatory measures themselves to assist with the quest’s progress, such as casting scry to keep an eye on the target location or enchanting the guild members with spells such as enhance ability, then the Game Master can grant a +1 bonus to the Quest Roll to reflect their assistance.

## STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

Depending on the quest, the Game Master may decide that a minimum number of guild members must be sent on a quest to avoid a penalty to the Quest Roll. Alternatively, the Game Master may grant a bonus to the roll if extra members are sent on the quest.

For example, the player characters may decide to undertake a Perform quest to gain the favor of a local lord. However, catching the lord’s attention might be difficult to do with only three members assigned to the quest, which means that the Quest Roll would be made with a -2 penalty. Sending twenty members, on the other hand, might earn a +4 bonus to the roll.

## ABSENT PLAYERS

If a player is absent from the game for a session, then they can let the Game Master know that their player character is willing to participate in a quest while they’re gone. This allows absent players to contribute to the success of the organization even if they’re not able to play normally. An absent player can identify one of their relevant skills, such as History or Stealth, and ask the Game Master to add its modifier to the Quest Roll. If the character has special equipment or abilities that may be useful for the quest, then the Game Master may grant additional bonuses.

If a character doesn’t have a relevant skill, then they can instead grant a bonus based on the character’s level, according to the Level Bonus table below:

Level	Bonus
1–4	+1
5–9	+2
10–14	+3
15–20	+4

## UNEXPECTED OUTCOMES

After a quest is completed, the Game Master can choose to roll 1d10 on either the Fortunate Outcome table or the Unfortunate Outcome table. These tables provide twists to a quest that may either benefit or harm the guild.

### d10 Fortunate Outcome

- 1 One of the guild members on the quest managed to recover an additional piece of loot.
- 2 Additional information about a rival was gained during the quest.
- 3 The guild members gained a single-use magic item while on the quest.
- 4 The guild members managed to inspire others with their work.
- 5 The guild members gained information that grants the guild’s next quest a +1 bonus.
- 6 One of the guild members on the quest gained a significant skill, turning them into a Key Member.



- 7 The guild members managed to gather some additional useful resources.
- 8 The guild members managed to recruit an additional 1d4 guild members.
- 9 The guild members' performance pleased the guild's patron, who bestows a boon.
- 10 The guild members made an important contact during the quest.

**d10 Unfortunate Outcome**

- 1 One of the guild members on the quest was killed.
- 2 One of the guild members on the quest was imprisoned by a cult or a rival faction.
- 3 One of the guild members on the quest did something that damaged the guild's reputation.
- 4 1d4 of the guild members on the quest lost faith and deserted the guild.
- 5 One of the Key Members on the quest deserted or was killed.
- 6 The guild members brought a cursed item back to the headquarters.
- 7 The guild members were compromised on the quest, and gained a -1 penalty to the next quest.
- 8 The guild members brought something contagious back with them (such as a plague or curse).
- 9 The guild members angered someone, who then becomes a rival of the guild.
- 10 The guild members gained the ire of a monster, which then attacks the guild.

## LEADERSHIP & MORALE

Each month that the guild is in operation, a **Morale Roll** must be made. This roll represents how confident the guild members are in the organization, its agenda, and its leaders. Has their fervent faith in the guild's patron waned, or are they still as devoted as ever? Have successful quests boosted their resolve, or are they starting to become frustrated after a string of failed operations?

When making a **Morale Roll** for the guild, the guild's leader should add up the **risk** results of all quests undertaken that month, with successful quests adding to the total and failed quests subtracting from the total. From there, add the guild leader's charisma modifier (or equivalent). This number is added to a 1d10 roll.

$$\text{Quest Risk Total} + \text{Leader's Charisma Score} + 1d10 = \text{Morale Roll}$$

If the result of the roll is ten or lower, then the guild's morale drops by one **Morale Level**. If the result is eleven or above, then the guild's morale rises by one level instead.

If the player characters wish to raise the guild's **Morale Level** outside of the morale roll, then they may spend 3,000 gp once per month to raise it by one Level. Alternatively, they may declare that the guild's members may rest for one month and undertake no quests, which also raises the **Morale Level** by one.

*At its outset, a new guild begins at **Morale Level 3**.*

A Game Master can also use the High Morale Effect table below. Use the **Morale Level** table below to generate additional effects for a successful morale roll.

Morale Level	Description	Effect
5	Guild members are devoted toward the organization's goals and have full confidence in its leaders and vision.	The guild gains a +2 to Recruitment Rolls.
4	Members trust the guild's leadership and are determined to achieve the guild's goals.	The guild gains a +1 to Recruitment Rolls.
3	A few members are dissatisfied, but their doubts are minor. The guild's goals are still seen as attainable.	The guild gains no bonuses or penalties.
2	A large portion of the guild's members doubt the organization's success and its leaders.	The guild takes a -1 to Recruitment Rolls. The guild loses members.
1	Members have little confidence in the organization's leadership or direction, and expect the guild to fail.	The guild takes a -2 to Recruitment Rolls. The guild loses members.

### d10 High Morale Effect

- 1 The guild immediately gains a number of new members equal to its Recruitment Die (see the “Gaining & Losing Members” section).
- 2 The guild receives a donation of 500 gp.
- 3 The guild leader gains a magical boon from the guild’s patron.
- 4 The next quest undertaken has a +2 bonus.
- 5 A guild member makes a research breakthrough.
- 6 A guild member discovers a critical piece of intelligence.
- 7 The guild attracts a new, random Key Member.
- 8 One of the guild’s rivals offers to sign a truce.
- 9 The guild gains a new ally.
- 10 The guild gains 1d10 of a random resource.

A Game Master can also use the Low Morale Effect table below to generate additional effects for a failed Morale Roll.

### d10 Low Morale Effect

- 1 A member secretly becomes a spy for an enemy of the guild.
- 2 A member defects to join a rival organization.
- 3 The guild leader becomes cursed by a dark power.
- 4 The next quest undertaken has a -2 penalty.
- 5 The location of the guild’s headquarters is revealed to an enemy.
- 6 A guild member gives up guild secrets to a disguised rival.
- 7 One of the guild’s Key Members abandons the guild.
- 8 One of the guild’s rivals launches a new attack on the guild.
- 9 The guild gains a new rival who wishes to exploit the guild’s weakness.
- 10 Something valuable in the guild’s vaults or inventory goes missing.

## GAINING & LOSING MEMBERS

Each month, there is a chance that membership in the guild rises or falls. This is mostly dependent on the guild’s morale level—guild members might become disillusioned with their roles, the guild’s patron, or the guild’s goals, and decide to leave. Alternatively, they might be spreading word of the guild far and wide or gaining fame among the artisans of the world, thereby attracting new members.

After making the Morale Roll for the guild, make the Recruitment Roll. The guild gains a number of members equal to:

**Location Recruitment Modifier + Any Morale Bonuses/Penalties + Recruitment Die** based on the guild size

The guild only loses members when they are killed or if the guild’s Morale Level drops below 3. In the latter case, the guild loses a number of members equal to its Recruitment Die.

Organization Size	Number of Members	Recruitment Die
Tiny	3–11	1d4
Small	12–49	1d6
Large	50–199	1d8
Very Large	200–499	1d12
Huge	500+	1d20



## FORTUNE & MISFORTUNE

Over the course of operating a guild, misfortunes and lucky breaks will inevitably befall it: foes of the guild might seek to undermine it, or even assault the headquarters. New contacts established by the guild might come through, providing the organization with priceless information. Game Masters may use the Positive Event and Negative Event tables below to randomly generate an event, choose an event, or use the entries as inspiration to create custom events.



d10	Positive Event	Description
1	New Recruit	A remarkably talented recruit seeks to join the guild. This may be a Key Member.
2	Heroic Patron	A heroic being or group admires the organization's goals or methods and offers aid.
3	Powerful Ally	The guild forges a pact with a powerful ally, who might be a noble, a sage, or another valuable individual.
4	Good Tidings	Good tidings inspire or embolden the guild members, granting them +1 to their next quest.
5	Surge of Faith	Impassioned speeches and powerful tactics cause a rise in membership, giving a +3 bonus to Recruitment Rolls.
6	Generous Donation	A guild member or ally gives a large donation to the guild, ranging from 500 to 5,000 gp.
7	Discovery	The guild makes a breakthrough of some kind, giving access to a new spell, magic item, or something similar.
8	Festivities	The locals host a festival in the name of the guild's patron or leader, giving a +2 bonus to Morale Rolls.
9	Strange Talents	Each guild member gains a small, temporary benefit thanks to the work of the guild's patron or a magical spell.
10	Information	The guild discovers information regarding the location of an artifact or a rival's headquarters.



d10	Negative Event	Description
1	Shakedown	In order to avoid persecution, the organization is forced to pay a significant sum to an authority figure or rival organization.
2	Foolishness	A trusted member is found to have made a big mistake in their work, resulting in a loss of money or resources.
3	Secret	One of the guild's most closely guarded secrets has been discovered.
4	Warning	The organization receives a warning that the guild is in imminent danger.
5	Wrath	A guild member does something that incurs the wrath of a powerful extraplanar entity, possibly the guild's own patron.
6	Territory Incursion	Another organization has intruded into the guild's territory, threatening its recruitment.
7	Assassination	Members of the guild, potentially even the player characters, are marked for death.
8	Infiltration	The organization is infiltrated by spies, informants, or saboteurs.
9	Captives	Some of the guild's leading members, possibly even the player characters, are taken captive by a rival.
10	Dismantlement	A rival of the guild has taken it upon themselves to see the organization dismantled or dissolved.

# THE END GAME

**W**hile some guilds become victims to powerful rivals or fail to live up to their goals, others may survive to see the player characters leave of their own accord. Perhaps the players and their player characters are tired of the dedication that must be put into running such a heroic organization, they've grown tired of the bureaucracy of guild management, or they want to pass on their legacy to another leader to oversee day-to-day affairs while they return to adventuring.

This section contains advice for what to do when the players have had enough of running a guild, and want to either disband it or pass it on to another. It also includes the consequences of a guild's failure and/or destruction.

## DISBANDING

If the players decide to disband their guild, they may create an opportunity in which ambitious former members rise to form a new guild from the remains of the old one. Former members might set up their own shops, mercantiles, bases, or forts as a replacement for the security that the guild once offered. Player characters should ensure that rivals and less-than-scrupulous people do not gain control of the remains of their guild, and that guild members leave the organization on good terms. Even then, former members may still be disillusioned as the guild dissolves, and some may decide that the guild's mission must continue, no matter the cost...

## PASSING ON THE LEGACY

If the player characters want to cease their association with the guild, but aren't necessarily interested in seeing it dissolved, then they might pass the guild's leadership on to another individual. Typically, this will be a Key Member of the guild, though it could also be another NPC that they are close with, or an existing member of the guild who is chosen by the guild members themselves. In order to successfully pass on their legacy, the player characters must appropriately train and brief the new leader and ensure that the guild itself has a good Morale Level before they leave. Otherwise, the guild could refuse their new leader or devolve into a power struggle, both with disastrous results.

## FAILURE

Not every organization, even one set up by clever players, can endure the test of time. A guild can fail for any number of reasons, from internal betrayal to magical disasters. The Consequence table below gives some ready-made outcomes for a guild's failure or fall into ignominy.



d10	Consequence	Description
1	Prohibition	The main focus of the guild, whether tied to a certain deity or a particular craft, is prohibited.
2	Bankruptcy	The guild and members are stripped of all of their assets, from cash to estates to their personal magic items and treasure.
3	Cursed	A powerful curse is imposed on the guild members, whether by an extraplanar entity, a powerful archwizard, or a divine being.
4	Blacklisted	Society rejects the guild; members' reputations are ruined, so they can't join societies, engage in trade, or even gain full citizenship.
5	Marked	The guild members are technically free citizens, but each has been tattooed or branded with a mark of shame that tells everyone of their misdeeds.
6	Hated	The guild members are free to do as they like, but the common people know them on sight and loathe what they see, spitting on them and cursing their names.
7	Recalled	Something the guild worked hard on is found to be flawed. Maybe certain items have to be bought back by the guild, or an action they took must be undone.
8	Stripped of Power	The guild members' abilities are painfully stripped away, making them no better than farmers.
9	Exile	The guild members are forced into exile, sending them far from their previous lives into a rough-and-tumble frontier where even daily survival is a struggle.
10	Imprisoned	The guild members are imprisoned, either in a mundane jail or an interplanar prison, for a span of years—or even indefinitely.

## OPTIONAL MECHANICS

Consider implementing some of the optional rules below to make gameplay more complex or interesting. These can come into play during the Planning, Building, or Operations Phases.

### SKILLS

Player characters involved in the Building and Operations Phases may be allowed to use their skills to enhance certain activities. For example, player characters with a proficiency in mason's tools might be able to speed up the construction process while player characters with high Charisma or proficiency in Persuasion might be able to increase the number of people recruited by the guild each month. While some skills are likely to be less obviously useful, such as proficiency in Nature or History, Game Masters should work together with players to come up with ways in which the player characters can help out, if they so desire.

### CONNECTIONS

Player characters who own or are already at the Location where the player characters wish to set up their headquarters might be able to drastically reduce the building cost during the Building Phase. For example, if they're friends with the nobility, then they might be gifted with a mayor's second home to serve as a headquarters, or if they have connections with a local mercenary company, then they might be allowed to build a training room at a highly reduced cost. If the player characters are getting most of their costs reduced by connections, Game Masters should consider what those individuals would want in return instead of money. Perhaps a local wizard who creates a spell forge doesn't want payment in gold, but would like the first pick of any new magic items that the player characters find while adventuring.

### REQUIREMENTS

As a Game Master, you might require certain guild Types to have specific Key Members, Additions, or a patron to move onto the Operations Phase. For example, you might decide that a Druid Circle is not allowed to have a headquarters building, but must instead have a sacred grove in a wilderness location that can only host Additions like a ritual chamber. Perhaps a Mage League is required to have a library and a Loremaster to function, and must gain a certain number of spell components each month.

### ACTIVE VS. PASSIVE LEADERSHIP

If the player characters do not plan to manage their guild's day-to-day operations, then they need to hire another Key Member to do so (most likely a Deputy Leader). If the guild is not being actively led by a player character or an NPC, then the Game Master may reduce or remove the Leadership Bonus for Morale Rolls, or roll more random events from the Positive Event and Negative Event tables above.



*“Put a lockpick in a street-kid’s hand, he becomes a thief. Put a saw in his hand, he becomes a carpenter. People seize the opportunities you give them. So give them a chance to do good and the world will sing.”*

— Yono, *Pilgrim of the Sisterhood of the White Glove*

# APPENDIX I: CREATING EXALTED ITEMS

**L**egends abound of heroes and their storied magical items, but while heroes fade, their treasured artifacts can persist, appearing again and again throughout history. *Alieth, the Sand Queen of Alitar*, is said to have used the branch of an ashwood tree to command her elemental legions. Now, that once simple bough is a powerful staff, long sought after by monarchs and wizards. However, not all magical items are legendary artifacts. Some now walk the world in the hands of paupers, their power still nascent, while others endure dragon's breath and dwarven hammer, waiting to be born.

This chapter provides resources for Game Masters and players to create custom items, either by modifying existing items or by creating new ones from scratch. When reading this chapter, Game Masters should keep in mind that its contents can be used in three different ways:

**PLAYER CRAFTING.** The players may approach a guild for help in crafting an item. The help provided may range from enchantment to forging a totally new item. The Game Master should guide players throughout this process.

**LOOT CREATION.** The Game Master may use this chapter to create unique loot for players to find during their adventures. In this case, time and cost requirements can be ignored.

**NPC KIT CREATION.** The Game Master may use this chapter to create special equipment, weapons, or other items for key NPCs, such as guild members. In this case, time and cost requirements can be ignored.

## CREATING CUSTOM ITEMS

The flowchart details the process of creating a custom item from start to finish. In most cases, it is a simple, linear process with only three steps: pick an item, pick a major or minor enchantment, and calculate the cost and time required. Other options, such as alternate materials, power sources, motivations, and so on, can be used to add additional flavor and new dimensions to an item.

### BASE ITEMS

Initially, the Game Master or player must pick a base item to modify. This item could be created from scratch by a player or NPC, or it could be an existing item. Typical base items include weapons, armor, robes, shields, and the like. The item might require specific equipment (such as a forge for



a suit of plate armor), specific skills (such as smithing), and certain tools (such as smith's tools). If a player character has the necessary skills or tools, then they can assist in making the item. Game Masters can ignore these requirements when creating custom items for loot or for NPCs.

At this stage, take note of the base item's cost (for example, plate armor might cost 1,500 gp). Record this somewhere, as you will need to refer to it later. Also note the weight of the item, especially if its original material is likely to change. Again, Game Masters can ignore these requirements when creating custom items for loot or for NPCs.

### ALTERNATE MATERIALS

At this stage, the Game Master or player may wish to change the base item's material. The new material could reflect some aesthetic element of a guild, or it might have a more practical use. Sometimes the material change has no significant impact on the item (for example, a cloak made of leather versus one made of silk). However, exotic materials like stellavine or blessed vellum usually influence the item significantly. Obviously some materials are not appropriate for all uses—plate armor cannot be made from silk.

The Material table below presents a variety of materials and the additional properties that they grant to items. The additional property might apply to only a certain kind of item; this is denoted by the italicized item category at the start of the entry.

Material	Special Property	Cost
Adamantine	Armor: protects the wearer from critical hits; Weapon: increases damage dealt to objects	3,500 gp
Stellavine	Worn item: glows gold when evil is near	200 gp
Angel Feathers	Clothing: protects the user from infernal or demonic spells and weapons	4,500 gp
Cold Iron	Armor: fire resistance; Weapon: deals additional damage to fey and fiends	500 gp
Copper	Worn item: protects against minor diseases	50 gp
Gemstones	Increases value; Spellcasting item: can be used in place of some spellcasting equipment	4,500 gp
Gold	Increases value	1,000 gp
Iron	None	1 gp
Ivory	Increases value	500 gp
Leather	None	1 gp
Mithral	Armor: lightweight, improves stealth	1,200 gp
Sunstone	Weapon: deals additional radiant damage	550 gp
Stained Glass	Spellcasting item: enhances divine magic	500 gp
Silk	Worn item: decreases weight, increases value	100 gp
Silver	Increases value; Weapon: damages lycanthropes	250 gp
Blessed Vellum	Worn item: protects the user from fear and charm effects	500 gp
Steel	Increases durability	10 gp
Stone	None	1 gp
Ash	Worn item: repels undead and resists necrotic damage	600 gp
Wood	None	1 gp

## MAJOR & MINOR ENCHANTMENTS



any guilds employ strange and powerful magical items, but none more so than the *Draconic Smiths*. That revered guild lent *Cyril Blackforrest* the *Verdict of Fire* when he repelled *Satath the Leopard Lord's* cataclysmic invasion. The guild's brilliant minds engineered the lightfire beacons that shine like the sun in the starless sea between the planes. Items like these often harbor powerful enchantments.

Depending on the system, Game Masters will have to determine what category the enchantment falls into: common, uncommon, rare, very rare, or mythical. Remember that an item might be single-use, which makes it less rare than a version with infinite uses. Refer to the Enchantment Rarity (Major) and Cost table below to gauge prices when a player commissions a new magical item.

Enchantment Rarity (Major)	Cost
Common	50–100 gp
Uncommon	101–500 gp
Rare	501–5,000 gp
Very Rare	5,001–15,000 gp
Mythical	15,001 gp and higher



Game Masters creating a custom item for an NPC can consult the Enchantment Rarity and Guild Member Rank table below to determine the ranks of the guild members able to wield it. The most powerful items can be wielded only by high-ranking members of a guild, whereas more common enchanted items might be usable by members of lower ranks.

Enchantment Rarity	Guild Member Rank
Common	Any rank or associate
Uncommon	Apprentice and higher
Rare	Journeyman and higher
Very Rare	Leader and higher
Mythical	Patron only

## MAJOR ENCHANTMENTS

**W**hen an angel blesses a blade, what boon does she bestow? The blade might glow gold and throw lightning, or sling light like water, burning devils and other evil creatures. What of a helm with silver eye-shaped symbols unearthed from the ancient tomb of a wizard? It could reveal creatures' secret thoughts or shoot rays of ice from its visor. The world is filled with strange and exciting enchantments that are woven into weapons, armor, or other items that grant thrilling new abilities.

A major enchantment typically allows an item to do something that impacts the game system mechanically, such as offering bonuses to damage rolls, hit rolls, armor classes, saving throws, skill checks, ability scores, hit points, or the like. The Major Enchantments tables below provide examples of major enchantments of different rarities. Each additional major enchantment of a certain rarity increases the item's overall rarity. For example, an item with three common major enchantments becomes a rare item.

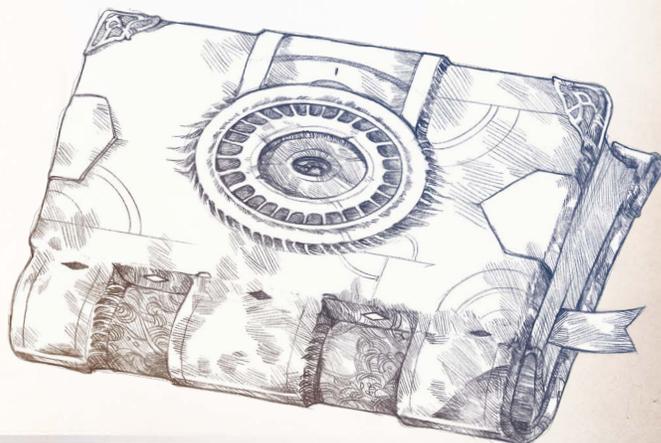
### COMMON MAJOR ENCHANTMENTS

Enchantment Name	Effect
Arcane	Provides a small bonus to magical skills.
Puppet Troupe	Allows the user to summon a number of puppets that can act and dance.
Magic Trace	Allows the user to sense ley lines and other fonts of magic power.
Peacemaker	Provides a small bonus to diplomacy.
Delver's Eye	Provides a small bonus to finding traps and secret doors.

Illusory Record	Plays back recorded images and sounds as illusions.
Luminescence	Produces light that grows stronger as the darkness grows deeper.
Sun Drinker	Grants a bonus to attacks or spells when in sunlight.
Crafter's Mark	Provides a small bonus to crafting magical items.
Never Thirst	Enchants a non-magical drink so that it never runs dry.

### UNCOMMON MAJOR ENCHANTMENTS

Enchantment Name	Effect
Hero's Heart	Grants immunity to fear and charm.
Nature's Sense	Grants the ability to commune with the environment.
Automatic Observer	Summons a clockwork spider that can record or transmit sound and vision.
One For All	Links individuals' senses, including sight, hearing, and smell.
Prayer	Grants the user the ability to bless themselves and nearby allies.
Planar Compass	Guides the user towards a known, named location.
Visitors' Bane	Deals extra damage to outsiders, including aberrations, nightmares, and fey.
Angel's Charge	Deals extra radiant damage to nearby enemies when the user charges.
Truthtongue	Grants the user the ability to compel someone to speak only truth.
Banishing	Banishes outsiders with low hit points.

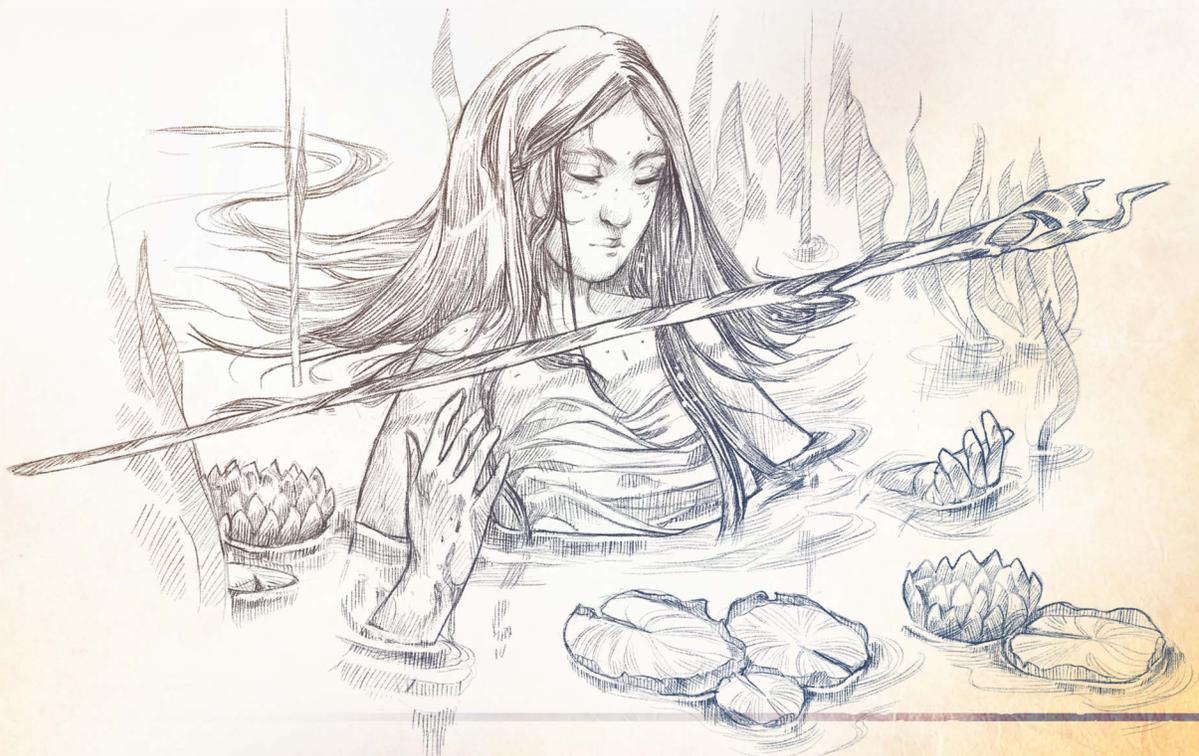


## RARE MAJOR ENCHANTMENTS

Enchantment Name	Effect
Elemental Surf	Grants the ability to “surf” on a specific element (i.e., stone, air, lava) and ignore any damaging/slowing effects.
Volition	Frees the target from any magical restraints or compulsion.
Angelic Summons	Summons a minor angelic ally.
Swirling Petals	Grants the ability to transform into a cloud of petals, which can travel for a short distance and cannot be damaged.
Whispering Aura	Deals psychic damage with each attack, with a chance to cause confusion.
Elemental Ally	Summons an air, fire, water, or earth elemental.
Holy	Deals a large amount of extra radiant damage and weakens undead.
Saint's Burden	Grants the ability to negate damage to a nearby ally and instead damage the user.
Oathbinder	Grants the ability to bind someone to a magical oath that cannot be broken.
Interdiction	Grants the ability to teleport the user between a nearby ally and harm.

## VERY RARE MAJOR ENCHANTMENTS

Enchantment Name	Effect
Clemency	Pushes back all enemies in a large radius and heals allies.
Bell's Toll	Summons a magical bell that deals sonic damage to nearby enemies and repels undead when struck.
Martyr's Blood	When wounded, the user can heal a nearby ally.
Divine Physique	Transforms the user's body into bronze, granting them immunity to disease.
Lion's Tenacity	Grants the user a lion's bestial strength and speed and causes wild hair growth.
Unrelenting	Grants resistance to magical damage and fatigue.
Latent Investigation	Grants the ability to magically reconstruct crime scenes.
Sojourn	Grants the ability to hide inside the item for a short time, becoming undetectable.
Elemental Morph	Transforms up to half of the user's body into an air, fire, water, or earth elemental.
Myrmidon Link	An enemy struck by the item cannot move out of melee range of the user.



## MYTHICAL MAJOR ENCHANTMENTS

Enchantment Name	Effect
Angelic Avatar	Temporarily transforms the user into an angel of radiant light.
Tranquility	All damage inflicted in the surrounding area is non-lethal.
Moral Reorder	Forces a soul to confront its own choices, potentially leading it to seek redemption and change alignment.
Miracle Sunrise	Causes the sun to rise for a brief time, dealing radiant damage to undead and evil outsiders.
Revive	Allows the user to bring the recently dead back to life.
Mandate	Compels all individuals to behave according to the predilection of the user's patron or deity for a short time.
Mind Construct	Summons a small to medium-sized automaton based on the user's imagination.
Eternal Circle	Guides the user through reincarnation upon death, allowing them to choose their new body and retain their memories.
Shrink	Grants the ability to shrink creatures to the size of a mouse until the effect is dispelled.
Radiant Shield	Grants the ability to envelop the immediate area in a holy shield that negates all magic.

## MINOR ENCHANTMENTS

In addition to major enchantments, an item can have up to three minor enchantments. These tend to have only a minor mechanical effect on the game system and sometimes manifest as unintended properties that reflect the guild or guild member that created it. For example, the *Shields of Osanya* may create items that give off light, turn one's eyes to pure gold, or heal minor wounds and scars.

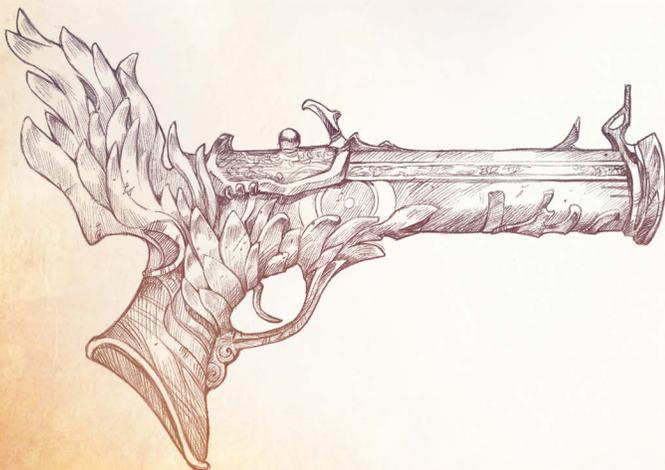
The Enchantment Rarity (Minor) and Cost table below can be used to determine the price of an item with a minor enchantment.

Enchantment Rarity (Minor)	Cost
Common	25–50 gp
Uncommon	51–250 gp
Rare	251–2,500 gp
Very Rare	2,501–7,500 gp
Mythical	7,501 gp and higher

The Minor Enchantments tables below present examples of minor enchantments, including their names and effects.

### COMMON MINOR ENCHANTMENTS

Enchantment Name	Effect
Transitory Calm	Suppresses sound in the immediate area for a short time.
Fanfare	Amplifies the user's voice to carry over crowds.
Trace	Pale light follows behind the item, growing brighter as the item moves quicker.
Root Growth	Grows roots that can crack stone and charge the item's other enchantments.
Return	The item returns to the user on command if they are within a short distance.
Speech to Script	Allows the user's thoughts or speech to appear as illusory words that float in the air.
Homeward Bound	Always points home.
Doves' Flight	Creates an illusory flock of doves.
Gold Blood	The user bleeds liquid gold.
Wild Heart	Allows the user to adapt their body in minor ways to suit the environment.



## UNCOMMON MINOR ENCHANTMENTS

Enchantment Name	Effect
Counterfeit Silence	Sounds produced by the item are inaudible to most creatures.
Cartographer	Automatically records maps of where the user has been.
Phase Chronicle	Grants the user the ability to touch an item to recall an important moment in its history; repeated use turns the user's eyes blue.
Bloom Walk	Causes minor flora to bloom where the user walks.
God's Eyes	Turns the user's eyes to molten gold, preventing blindness.
Light Cascade	Light pours off of the item like shimmering water.
Information Gathering	Copies text or images to a book in another location.
Cherub Wings	The item sprouts wings to follow its owner when not worn or held.
Primal Charged	Produces a constant elemental effect (i.e., wind or fire).  Allows a few creatures to telepathically communicate.

## RARE MINOR ENCHANTMENTS

Enchantment Name	Effect
Steadfast	The item cannot be forcibly removed from its owner.
Angel Sight	Allows the user to see through shape-changing or illusions that change a person's appearance.
Cloud Skate	The user can skate across empty air for short distances.
Light Locked	The item is only visible when in view of a certain celestial object (i.e., the sun or the moon).
Succor	Passively gives allies in a small radius minor health regeneration.
Transient Repair	Briefly repairs a broken item so that it can be used.
Obol Sight	The user can relive a dead creature's last moments.
Sanctity	The user may sanctify an area, harming undead.
Arcane Ward	Has a chance to repel low-level magic spells.
Heroic	Grants constant, slow regeneration; heals small wounds and scars.



## POWER SOURCES

Automata, clockwork gear, magic items, and other wondrous items may be powered by something more exotic than just plain magic. Guild items are often powered by primal energies, arcane rituals, and noble deeds.

For example, a *sun-draped scepter of hope* might be powered by chanting pilgrims, and a *leafed lightning rapier* might only gain bonus damage when fed blessed flower petals. If an item is powered by the ideals or actions of creatures, then they might become exhausted, but their motivations are not compromised. For example, an item that is powered by hope may take an emotional toll on its user, but their hope is not extinguished. Even though a guild member may know how to power an item, player characters and other NPCs might not. In addition,

See *Power Sources* table on the following page.

## d50 Power Sources

- 1 **Nature.** The item must be buried in the earth to charge between uses.
- 2 **Justice.** The item can only be charged by performing just acts and other good deeds.
- 3 **Divinity.** Using the item requires prayer between uses.
- 4 **Memory.** The item can only be charged by sacrificing a memory.
- 5 **Astral Currents.** The item charges faster when its star is in ascendancy.
- 6 **Martyr.** The item charges when its user takes a blow in place of another.
- 7 **Heroism.** The item's abilities are most powerful when its user is acting bravely.
- 8 **Change.** The item has limited charges and only replenishes after changing owners.
- 9 **Aberrant.** The item is charged by vanquishing aberrations.
- 10 **Moon-Touched.** The item's power waxes and wanes with the moon.
- 11 **Music.** The item charges when exposed to music, whether performed by an instrument or a voice.
- 12 **Primordial.** The item can only be charged in rituals involving willing elementals.
- 13 **Fire.** The item must be routinely bathed in searing fire.
- 14 **Odyssey.** The item only charges when its user discovers new vistas or explores new lands.
- 15 **Ether.** The item must be charged in the Spirit Realm.
- 16 **Tithe.** The item must be fed material wealth, such as gold or gems, to charge.
- 17 **Shrine.** The item is linked with a shrine or monastery and must return there to charge.
- 18 **Glyphs.** The item must be ritually inscribed with sigils or runes before each use.
- 19 **Redemption.** The item is charged whenever its user redeems a fallen or corrupt creature.
- 20 **Poetry.** The item charges when its user recites poetry aloud.
- 21 **Snow.** The item charges when buried in snow for more than an hour.
- 22 **Ley Energy.** The item must be charged along a ley line.
- 23 **Might.** The item gains charges after its user defeats a large or powerful enemy.
- 24 **Lightning.** The item can be recharged only by being struck by lightning.
- 25 **Lodestone.** A new lodestone must be inserted into the item each time it is used.
- 26 **Sun.** The item must be routinely charged by focused sunlight.
- 27 **Puzzle.** The user must solve a puzzle or riddle generated by the item between uses.
- 28 **Mental Energy.** The item mentally exhausts its user to gain charges.
- 29 **Mesmeric Power.** Energy is drained from those who look upon the item.
- 30 **Sandstorm.** The item can only be charged by subjecting it to the thrashing winds of a sandstorm.
- 31 **Seeded.** This item must be planted and allowed to bloom to recharge.
- 32 **Planar Guardian.** This item recharges when its owner closes a planar tear or rift.
- 33 **Psionic Energy.** The item drains the power of its user's psionic abilities to charge.
- 34 **Quintessence.** The item feeds on the fifth magical element, *arcana*.
- 35 **Radiance.** Requires willing celestials, which grant the item radiant power.
- 36 **Patronage.** The item must be placed on the altar of a patron or deity to charge.
- 37 **Sky.** The item can only charge when atop a mountain or in other extreme altitudes.
- 38 **Dance.** The item is charged by performing a complex dance with it.
- 39 **Hunt.** The item is charged with the blood of an animal hunted and killed by its user.
- 40 **Starlight.** Charging the item requires starlight threaded through gemstones.
- 41 **Strength.** The item drains the physical might of its user to charge.
- 42 **Time.** Activating the item drains time from its user's lifespan, aging them.
- 43 **Extraplanar.** The item charges passively when it moves between planes.
- 44 **Clockwork.** The item is powered by complex internal clockwork structures that require frequent maintenance.
- 45 **Silence.** The item only charges when surrounded by perfect silence.
- 46 **Meditation.** The user must commune with the item and pass its trials to charge it.
- 47 **Depths.** The item is linked to a body of water and must return to its depths to charge.
- 48 **Willpower.** The item draws power from constant concentration, exhausting its user.
- 49 **Spirits.** The item recharges when immersed in vintage wine or strong spirits.
- 50 **Secrets.** The item charges when fed esoteric information or secrets.

# THE FINISHED ITEM



At this stage, write down a visual description of the item, as well as its materials and enchantments, both major and minor.

Make sure to include plenty of details so that the item feels unique and flavorful.

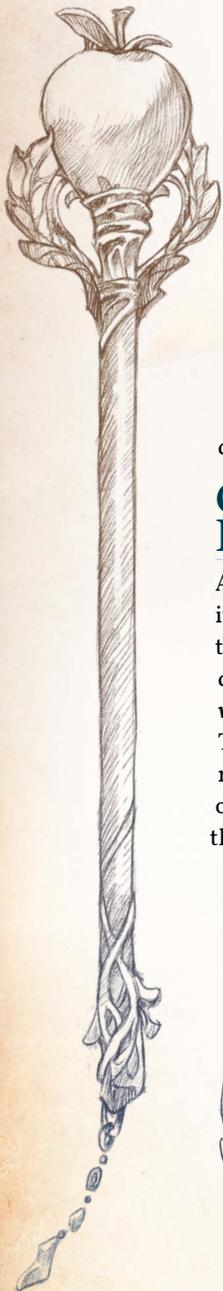
You might also wish to name it at this stage, drawing inspiration from the table entries or from the commissioned guild. If the item was commissioned by a player, then the Game Master or the player should total its overall costs and ensure that any requirements for creation (such as unusual materials, specific tools, or the ability to cast spells) are met.

## FINAL COST OF CREATION

If the item was commissioned by a player, then the Game Master or the player should add together the various costs (i.e., base item, alternate materials, enchantments, curses) and divide the total by five. The resulting number is how many workdays are required to create the item. If multiple people are working on a single item, then divide the number again, this time by the number of individuals. All individuals must meet the item's skill requirements in order to create it. Once a character pays for the item, the craftspeople can begin work and will deliver it after the determined number of workdays has elapsed.

## OPTIONAL ITEM DETAILS

A few special details can transform magical items into wondrous works more memorable than even artifacts of great power. These details can elevate a mundane *shield of warding* into an inspiring *bulwark of litanies*. The following optional item details include restrictions, origins, motivations, and other intriguing features. Feel free to use the sections that follow as inspiration.



## RESTRICTIONS

Guild members and characters alike seek out powerful magical items, yet great power rarely comes easily. Restrictions can introduce inspiring roleplay opportunities or help balance the item's power.

### d20 Restriction

- 1 **Warden.** This item cannot be sheathed or let go of until it has slain an evil creature.
- 2 **Complicated.** The item requires intense focus to use.
- 3 **Song.** The item requires the user to sing before each use.
- 4 **Righteous.** The item cannot be used to harm mortal creatures.
- 5 **Star Set.** The item can only be used when a certain star or constellation is visible.
- 6 **Ancient Blood.** The item can only be used by those with the blood of dragons in their veins.
- 7 **Light.** The item can function only in bright light.
- 8 **Planar Slip.** The item can only be used by someone who has traveled to another plane.
- 9 **Environment.** The item only functions properly when in a certain environment (i.e., forest, sea, plains).
- 10 **Wild Earth.** The item can only be used by someone favored by a nature spirit or fae.
- 11 **Oathbound.** This item can only be used by someone who swears an oath to it.
- 12 **Aid Bound.** The item can only be used to help others.
- 13 **Soul Key.** The item can only be used by someone who understands the nature of their own soul.
- 14 **Just.** The item can only be used by someone who strives for justice in all matters.
- 15 **Allelopathy.** The item can only be used once per location.
- 16 **Holy.** The item can only be used by someone who can channel divine magic.
- 17 **Martyr.** The item can only be used immediately after shielding someone from harm.
- 18 **Judgment.** The item can only be used if its creator deems the user worthy.
- 19 **Purity.** The item can only be used by someone who is pure of heart.
- 20 **Knowledge.** The item requires deep insight into arcane magics.

## ORIGIN & PAST EVENTS

Some items are newly forged while others are carefully preserved relics. The latter may have been involved in strange events, ancient myths, or grand journies. Glimpses into an item's origin can intrigue players or even serve as a new quest hook. A two-handed adamantine warhammer, for example, might have helped the half-giant barbarian *Grivnir the Gorechief* wipe out a three-thousand strong army of ice raiders in the desperate *Battle of Bloody Pass*, only to be abandoned in the snow once Grivnir vowed that she would never take another life. Or perhaps the player characters come across a strange, powerful shield made from a scale belonging to the first dragon and undertake a quest to discover the long-lost dragon's name and fate.



### d20 The Item was Originally...

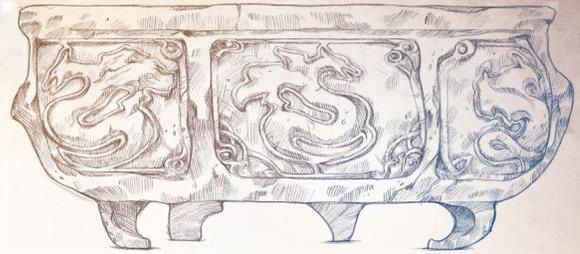
- 1 Birthed from the last divine spark of a dying god.
- 2 Forged by a dwarf and dragon working in concert.
- 3 Coalesced from the psionic run-off from a planar tear.
- 4 Formed from the soul of an angel who walked with mortals.
- 5 Wielded by a warrior who turned to pacifism after slaughtering an army.
- 6 Used to guard a deity's hidden library from thieves.
- 7 The heart of an elder treant that had lived for over a millennium.
- 8 A streaking star that fell from the sky.
- 9 The treasure of an ancient civilization.
- 10 Brought back by a reincarnated person from a realm beyond the living.
- 11 The ideals of a people given form by a miracle.
- 12 Bestowed on a long-forgotten hero by a fae queen.
- 13 Slipped through the cracks between worlds.
- 14 A divine relic that protected an ancient palladium.
- 15 A scale from the first dragon.
- 16 A nature spirit that wished to defend its home.
- 17 A sliver of the sun coaxed into a bottle.
- 18 The fang of a redeemed fiend.
- 19 The bone of a saintess.
- 20 The last law of a wise monarch made manifest by their court wizard.

### d20 In the Past, the Item...

- 1 Was bequeathed to a chosen successor.
- 2 Was buried and forgotten in an ancient tomb.
- 3 Was magically sealed inside of a painting.
- 4 Was gifted to a river nymph as a token of affection.
- 5 Was whisked into a maze as a prize by a mischievous god.
- 6 Was on loan to a warden who perished on a distant planar battleground.
- 7 Was the sole possession of an esoteric monk.
- 8 Caused a forest to grow in the middle of a desert.
- 9 Bathed in the tears of a sorrowful god.
- 10 Was guarded by a monastery or a temple.
- 11 Cut open a portal to another plane.
- 12 Guided a hero back from the underworld.
- 13 Was owned by a devil who found redemption.
- 14 Was sealed away at the end of a great war.
- 15 Shielded a town from a cataclysmic event.
- 16 Was the heart of a masterwork arcane invention.
- 17 Appeared across the world, and became depicted in myriad artworks over the years.
- 18 Was a symbol of hope for an outcast people.
- 19 Was lost, found, traded, and forgotten a hundred different times.
- 20 Was carried on an interplanar expedition.

# ADORNMENTS

All craftsmen make, but artisans create. Through the mastery of their skills, they strive to transform raw materials into wondrous art. It is not enough to hammer hard metal into swords—items must encompass both form and function to become a unique expression of the artisan's imagination.



## d10 Weapon Adornments

- 1 **Tassels.** Knotted cloth or colored threads hang from the pommel or grip and sway with each strike.
- 2 **Etching.** Etchings in the material form an inspiring image or script.
- 3 **White Lion.** Leather from an albino lion is wrapped around the hilt or sheath.
- 4 **Incense.** The weapon is coated in incense or perfume, giving off a distinct fragrance.
- 5 **Filigree.** Fine metal wire runs along the hilt and sheath.
- 6 **Inset.** A gem has been inserted into the weapon. It refracts light and seems to glow.
- 7 **Stone.** A stone statuette with finely carved features is attached to the weapon.
- 8 **Jade.** Jade is laid into the structure of the weapon, accenting the handle or blade.
- 9 **Trophy.** The bone, hide, or other body part of a ferocious beast is attached to the weapon.
- 10 **Gold Dust.** Gold is sprinkled onto the weapon so that it glitters in the light.

## d10 Armor Adornments

- 1 **Vellum.** Religious scrolls and verses are pinned to the armor.
- 2 **Jerkin.** A jerkin is fitted over the armor, and is either plain or emblazoned with a crest.
- 3 **Bells.** Numerous bells are strung from the armor and chime like voices raised in song.
- 4 **Ribbons.** Long strips of cloth that flutter in the wind are pinned to the armor.
- 5 **Damascening.** Intricate inlays of different colored metals create vivid designs on the armor.
- 6 **Embossed.** An image or pattern is carved in striking relief on the armor.
- 7 **Fretted.** Images or patterns are cut out of the armor.
- 8 **Root-Run.** A tree's roots curl and intertwine with the armor.
- 9 **Constellation.** On dark nights, a constellation appears on the armor.
- 10 **Wordfall.** Illusory script flows from the armor like water and vanishes.

## d10 Clothing Adornments

- 1 **Fur.** The garment is lined with warm fur.
- 2 **Moonvine.** The garment is threaded with moonvine and glows silver at night.
- 3 **Metal Thread.** Verses in shining script or important imagery are woven into the garment.
- 4 **Plumage.** Feathers are sewn into the garment, possibly accenting the shoulders or neck.
- 5 **Barkcloth.** Pressed strips of bark are sewn together with the fabric onto the garment.
- 6 **Lion Mane.** A lion's mane is sewn into the collar or cuffs of the garment.
- 7 **Silk.** Lustrous, colored silk has been added to the garment.
- 8 **Silver Gossamer.** Translucent material, with woven silver designs to accent it, has been added to the garment.
- 9 **Lace.** Silk, cotton, or linen woven into delicate patterns form tasteful accents.
- 10 **Velvet.** Rich, soft fabric bundles and falls like running water.

## d10 Magical Implement Adornments

- 1 **Silvered.** Silver ink glimmers even in soft light.
- 2 **Moonstone.** A moon-silver gem glows stronger as the moon is more full.
- 3 **Sun Finch Feathers.** A tuft of gold feathers flutters even when there's no wind.
- 4 **Magnolia.** A living branch of magnolia twines around the item and blooms in spring.
- 5 **Leafing.** Pressed flowers or leaves line the implement.
- 6 **Sigil.** A rune or unique marking is carved into or painted onto the implement.
- 7 **Silk.** The implement is bound with or wrapped in a decorative strip of silk.
- 8 **Crackling.** Vertebrae from a cloud snake are shaved and set into the implement, causing it to spark and crackle.
- 9 **Etherfly.** An ethereal butterfly is attuned to the implement and flutters around it.
- 10 **Machina.** Clockwork and gleaming metal complete the structure of this implement.

## d10 Amulet or Ring Adornments

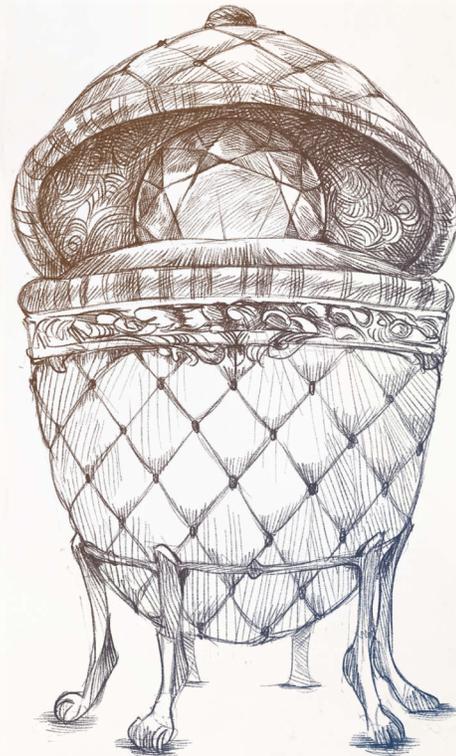
- 1 **Script.** A special message or vow is inscribed on the metal.
- 2 **Signet.** A profile, crest, or other important image is pressed into the metal.
- 3 **Faerie Dust.** Metallic dust is set into the item, and periodically makes musical sounds.
- 4 **Living Metal.** The metal constantly shifts, changing color and shape.
- 5 **Church Bell.** A grand bell, shrunk and set, gives off light when it chimes.
- 6 **Hamlet.** A diorama of an idyllic pastoral village is worked into the metal.
- 7 **Air.** A sliver of an air elemental has been set into the item, causing it to float in the air.
- 8 **Arcane Filament.** Spell residue is smelted into a gossamer strand that wreathes the metal and burns blue when the owner uses magic.
- 9 **Moonstone.** A white-gray stone depicts a particular constellation.
- 10 **Liquid Lightning.** Crackling lightning has been shaped and bound to this item.

## d10 Mount Adornments

- 1 **Engraving.** Motifs are carved into the tack or armor.
- 2 **Elemental Steps.** The mount's feet leave a trail of flames, ice, crystals, or dust devils.
- 3 **Briar.** Small thorns run over the tack or coat of the mount.
- 4 **Paint.** Vibrant colors run over the fur or hide of the mount, forming shapes or patterns.
- 5 **Cloth Blanket.** Long sheets of colored cloth are draped over the mount, and are possibly emblazoned.
- 6 **Braid.** The mount's mane or tail is braided and entwined with cloth, flowers, or other materials.
- 7 **Overgrown.** Lichen or moss grows on the mount's hide, hanging down in sheets.
- 8 **Antlers.** Resplendent antlers from an elk are mounted at the back of the saddle.
- 9 **Hallowed Oil.** Rubbed into the mount's hide to make it shine and smells of cedar and rose.
- 10 **Hollow Statues.** Wooden statues carved in the likenesses of heroes, saints, or other notable figures dangle from the saddle, connected by twine.

## d10 Instrument Adornments

- 1 **Faerie Petals.** Petals inlaid into the instrument glow myriad colors based on the notes played.
- 2 **Illusionist's Glaze.** The instrument reduces bright, illusory notes that float in the air when played.
- 3 **Ibex Horns.** Sanded until smooth and then fitted and glued to the instrument as a handle or headstock.
- 4 **Patron.** The instrument's keys or screws are carved in the likeness of a notable figure.
- 5 **Silicate Silk.** This woven silk from underground spiders that feed on crystal formations sparkles when plucked or vibrated.
- 6 **Painted.** The instrument is covered in a mesmerizing design, vivid painting, or other colorful display.
- 7 **Paradise Feathers.** The instrument is fitted with the rainbow feathers of an exotic bird.
- 8 **Barb's Bell.** A magical plant is hung from the instrument and blossoms whenever music is played.
- 9 **Crystal Keys.** Glittering crystals have been cut and then screwed into the headstock as tuning keys.
- 10 **Sun Stag.** The hide produces explosions of gold light when struck or vibrated.



# MOTIVATIONS

**P**owerful magic items are exciting, but an item with its own mind is something more. Such items are said to appear only rarely, but they can serve as mentors, guides, and even instruments of destiny. These items are sentient and have unique personalities, motivations, and goals all their own. Although such items are undoubtedly powerful, not all of them have equally grand goals. Some seek companionship, others embark on noble quests, and a few are content to work their crafts.

The *Lily of Queens* was one such item. According to legend, this silver flower once held the imprisoned soul of a fae queen who whiled away her confinement by playing muse to the greatest storytellers and musicians of the time, motivated by a desire to savor the most beautiful music mortals could make. When her devotees' fingers grew stiff or their voices hoarse, she moved on to the next one, whittling away the decades until she heard a street corner lyrist play a tune so bittersweet that she fell in love. She found her way into the poor woman's possession and the two played a duet in such perfect harmony that they blurred the lines between the fae and mortal worlds. Now, a great oak towers high in both worlds, and if you press your heart close to the bark, you can hear the two playing for each other still.

## d20 Motivation

- 1 This item wishes to collect lost arcane knowledge.
- 2 This item wishes to save an endangered species or habitat from extinction.
- 3 This item won't rest until it has cut down 1,000 evil beings.
- 4 This item wishes to meet its creator.
- 5 This item wishes to spread hope and justice to the people.
- 6 This item seeks to redeem a fallen paladin, evil warlock, or tainted priest.
- 7 This item wishes to create wondrous inventions.
- 8 This item seeks to end suffering in the world.
- 9 This item wishes to bring salvation to a doomed person.
- 10 This item wishes to restore the spark of divinity to a forgotten deity.
- 11 The being within this item wants to find their original body and return to their life.

- 12 This item wishes to free the wrongfully imprisoned, including its previous master.
- 13 This item searches for a person worthy of taking up the crown of a distant kingdom.
- 14 This item wishes to destroy a certain powerful, sentient, and evil item.
- 15 This item seeks a worthy student so that it can impart a forgotten martial arts style.
- 16 This item wishes to foster peace by telling stories and sharing their morals.
- 17 This item abhors the undead and wants to lay their tortured souls to eternal rest.
- 18 The being within this item searches for a magical phrase or tune to reclaim their lost memories.
- 19 This item wishes to defeat a certain powerful aberration, outsider, or dark god.
- 20 This item wants to sanctify corrupted ground and restore harmony there.



## APPENDIX II: FABLED RELICS

Throughout history, a handful of masterworks have emerged from the vaulted halls of guilds and found their way into myth and legend. The world will never see the like of these items again, and those who possess them often find themselves drawn into strange and epic destinies.

**W**oven into tapestries hanging in the headquarters of the *Frontier Greenmounts* is an imposing figure: a half-orc ranger with a thick coil of braided hair topped by a white crown, mounted on a majestic giant eagle. This figure of legend is *Urgan Tol*, the founder of the guild. Look closely, and anyone can see that the crown she wears is no ordinary accessory, for it twinkles with bright moonlight. This is the *Lunar Crown*, gifted to Urgan by Severina, Mother of the Pack, a goddess whose favored wolf pack was saved by the ranger during her epic expedition across the *Indrutian Peaks*.

The *Lunar Crown* is but one of many such items that have been bestowed to various guild members and have come to have stories of their own. They are passed down from guild leader to guild leader and inspire valiant deeds in their users until they fade into obscurity or are lost to time. Others include the *Whirlwind Nunchaku* that was gifted by a djinn to *Farah, Grace of the Crane* of the *Order of the Serene Fist*, who saved the djinn's consort from a band of brigands, or the *Blade of the Crowned Falcon* that was made by the smiths of *Thunderspire Forge* and gifted to the *Shields of Osanya*, where it has been used time and time again by the goddess's chosen paladins to strike down those who thrive on cruelty and destruction.

These fabled relics are both immensely powerful and cautious with their abilities; they all have at least a low level of sentience and can decide whether their users are worthy of their strength. They might require their wielders to be pure of heart, have a commitment to protecting the natural world, have demonstrated incredible performance ability, or have done other noble deeds in order to unlock their true power. Furthermore, if the relics feel that they are not being used properly or treated well (or if the user otherwise loses the relic's favor), then the items can cease to function altogether or even disappear.

Each item has a Might and Utility rating, which give a general idea of the item's usefulness in battle and outside of battle, respectively. Items with a high Might rating are powerful tools of destruction, while those with a high Utility rating offer other benefits, such as healing or transformation.

### AKASHIC RECORD

**ITEM TYPE:** Wondrous Tome, 256,500 gp

**SPECIALTY:** Time Manipulation

**POWER SOURCE:** Memory

**MIGHT:** *N N N N N*

**UTILITY:** *N N N N N*

The Akashic Record is a platinum-bound tome with silver-leaf pages that cannot be marked, altered, or damaged in any way. The platinum cover of the book displays an embossed hourglass that slowly spins, despite it all being a single piece of metal. The tome was created by the *Most Trustworthy Order of Principled Chronomancers* of the *Gleaming Akashic Empire* after they beseeched *Aevumia*, goddess of time, to let them right the wrongs of the empire's previous leader. The goddess agreed, but decreed that the record's power would not be absolute: if changing an event would disrupt the current timeline too drastically, then the tome would refuse the command. Etched onto the silver pages of the book are deeds of the past that have been altered.

**REWRITE THE PAST:** The owner of this item can perform a ritual that lasts 10 hours and requires the user to surrender one of their own memories. At the end of the ritual, the user can rewrite one minor or moderately significant event from the past, as long as it does not cause monumental changes to the current timeline. The event must have occurred within the past century.



**FICKLE POSSESSION:** The Akashic Record contains a chronicle of each and every event that it was used to change, as well as what the change was. If the record is used to change an event for selfish reasons or personal gain, it disappears after it has been used and reappears somewhere else in the world to be rediscovered.

## BLADE OF THE CROWNED FALCON

**ITEM TYPE:** Weapon, 312,145 gp

**SPECIALTY:** Combat

**POWER SOURCE:** Divinity

**MIGHT:** 

**UTILITY:** 

This steel longsword has a pommel shaped like a falcon's head with emerald eyes and a golden crown, as well as a large crossguard that has been wrought to resemble wings. The blade has a pattern etched upon its surface that is reminiscent of feathers, and it cuts through the air like a swooping raptor. It can even transform into a falcon should the wielder desire. The blade was forged by the smiths of Thunderspire Forge as a gift for the Shields of Osanya, who helped defend the forge against evil storm giants who had hoped to claim it for themselves. Since its creation, it has been passed down through the ranks of Osanya's chosen knights-errant, who are called upon to undertake dangerous solo missions. Some believe that the sword contains a portion of Osanya's divinity, and that while in its falcon form, the goddess sees whatever the falcon sees. Should she witness the blade being used for foul acts that she deems inappropriate, she can recall the blade from its current user and bestow it upon another.

**FLYING BLADE:** By speaking a command word, the wielder of the Blade of the Crowned Falcon can cause wings to fold out from the crossguard, allowing the blade to fly. While flying in such a manner, the blade can attack alongside its wielder, who may wield other weapons while simultaneously commanding the blade.

**FALCON TUTOR:** When the blade would be sheathed for a long period of time, it can instead be commanded to transform into a brilliantly shining falcon with feathers of steel. The falcon serves as a familiar to the sword's wielder, and can also teach the wielder new blade techniques, allowing them to learn new fighting styles with abilities that change the way they fight. The fighting styles that the falcon teaches can be changed once per day.

## CLOAK OF EQUILIBRIUM

**ITEM TYPE:** Magical Garment, 245,000 gp

**SPECIALTY:** Combat & Protection

**POWER SOURCE:** Damage

**MIGHT:** 

**UTILITY:** 

This cloak of shifting, scale-like patterns was created centuries ago by the *Draconic Smiths* when *Greta Gundred*, a dwarven master smith, used the flames of the dragon *Gemaryl* to melt down a hoard of diamonds and mix them with pure mithral to create a metal that could be woven into strands like silk. Upon being examined by an alchemist, the metal was declared to be prima materia, a legendary substance that embodies one of the primal forces of creation—in this case, the principle of equilibrium. After arduously working the metal into tens of thousands of threads, Greta managed to weave a cloak from the material. The newly completed cloak became the envy of alchemists everywhere, but Greta granted it instead to a frail mage named *Resenda*. Resenda was the only hero willing to undertake the task of healing a massive realm rift called *The Maw of G'tah*, a mission that cost the mage his life.

**DAMAGE ABSORPTION:** The cloak absorbs all damage from exterior sources, but does not protect against damage from sources like psionic energy, poison, or falling. The absorbed damage is stored within the cloak, up to its maximum capacity (to be determined by the Game Master). While wearing the cloak, the wearer cannot wield weapons and any damage that they attempt to inflict becomes zero.

**DAMAGE PROJECTION:** If the cloak has stored damage, then its wearer can speak a command word and cause a portion of the absorbed damage to be released as force damage. This released damage can be dealt by the wearer in the form of melee touch attacks, or it can be released in a shockwave around them. The projected damage is split between creatures caught in the radius of the effect.

## TALISMAN OF SPRING

**ITEM TYPE:** Magical Trinket, 379,000 gp

**SPECIALTY:** Shapeshifting & Boons

**POWER SOURCE:** Sunlight

**MIGHT:** 

**UTILITY:** 

Carved into the shape of a beautiful dryad's face, this talisman is also engraved with numerous primordial symbols of protection and growth, and the back is inlaid with the waxed seeds of a hundred different fruiting trees. Legend has it that when the world was born, many gods chose champions to fight in their names. Terrified by the fearsome champions chosen by the *Lord of Winter* and other deities of the earth, the *Mother of Spring* searched for a mortal warrior who could ensure the arrival of spring. During her quest, she came across a peaceful young druid who decorated himself with blossoming flowers. When approached by the Mother of Spring and asked to fight for her, the druid told her that "Spring needs no warriors—only the enduring love of growing things." The Mother of Spring saw the wisdom in their words, and granted the Talisman to the druid to mark them as her champion.

**TREE TRANSFORMATION:** The wearer of the talisman can speak a command word, causing them to magically transform into a large tree that is roughly 40 feet tall. While in this form, which can last up to 1 hour, the wearer is invulnerable to all damage and entirely immovable. There are three actions that the wearer of can take while in their tree form:

**Fruits of Restoration:** The tree can produce a single fruit on one of its branches. When consumed, this fruit heals vast amounts of damage, cures poison and disease, and can restore exhausted creatures to their former vigor. The fruit lasts until eaten, or until the wearer leaves their tree form.

**Barkskin Blessing:** The tree can reach one of its long branches down and touch a creature that is within 10 feet of it. The creature's skin takes on a bark-like quality, increasing their natural armor. This barkskin blessing lasts until the start of the tree's next turn.

**Swiping Bough:** The tree can use one of its branches to attack a creature within 10 feet of it. If hit by the attack, the creature takes bludgeoning damage and must make a save in order to keep its footing.

## TALEWEAVER HARP

**ITEM TYPE:** Wondrous Instrument, 385,000 gp

**SPECIALTY:** Transmutation & Illusions

**POWER SOURCE:** None

**MIGHT:** 

**UTILITY:** 

This beautifully carved bow harp has ethereal strings that only the most talented musicians can play, and is capped with golden engravings of a vast, flowery plain. The wood itself has carvings of fey creatures upon it, most notably dancing satyrs with pipes and harps, and pixies who flit through the skies above them. A single touch of the strings plays enchanting chords that paint vivid pictures in the mind's eye. The Taleweaver Harp once belonged to the founder of the *Company of Living Tales*, *Andante Pinto*. The Company claims that Andante earned the right to play the harp by outperforming a fey noble while in the Fey Realm. Upon seeing the harp's full abilities, Andante understood the power that tales could have, and started the guild. When they died, no other member of the guild was yet talented enough to take up the harp, and it disappeared back into the Fey Realm.

**TALES MANIFESTED:** The wielder of the harp can activate it by singing a certain magical phrase that causes the eyes of the fey creatures carved upon it to gleam with a lustrous glow. For the next minute, anything that the wielder sings about while playing the harp becomes an illusion (either visual or auditory). During that time, those illusions become reality for as long as the wielder can concentrate on them, before

eventually dissipating. The wielder must be able to exactly picture the thing, person, or scenery that they wish to summon and hold it clearly in their mind for the duration of the performance. While the harp can create the semblance of life and the illusory appearance of a magic item, it cannot actually create living creatures or magic items.

## HELENA'S HELM

**ITEM TYPE:** Magical Armor, 210,000 gp

**SPECIALTY:** Boons & Protection

**POWER SOURCE:** Friendship

**MIGHT:** 

**UTILITY:** 

This brilliant armet helm completely encloses the head of its wearer, and features a movable visor. It is inlaid with adamantine decorations and is adorned with the image of a wolf. The wolf's back sports a white crest that runs down the back of the helm. Those near the helmet feel courage stirring within themselves, and the helmet itself seems to glow slightly in the dark when worn.

It was uncovered in a ruined barracks by the *Scholars of Antiquity*, whose research into the helmet revealed that it once belonged to *Helena Siegebrieker*, a valiant warrior from the long-destroyed city of *High Estrenna*. Helena was legendary for her leadership over her small army of knights, called the *Company of the Wolf*, which was known to defeat armies two or three times its size. She always fought alongside her partner and bodyguard, *Calista of the Oath*, who carried an 8-foot-tall tower shield to protect her allies. The pair had been asked to save High Estrenna from a marauding army of beastfolk, but after the city guard failed to heed Helena's commands, the city fell. Helena crafted the helm soon after to signify her new post as the protector of High Estrenna's survivors. It's said that the helm still carries her undying bravery.

**AURA OF FELLOWSHIP:** When worn, this remarkable helm emits an aura that extends outward from the user in a 10-foot radius. This aura cannot be seen, but it can be felt in the hearts of the user's allies. Provided that the allies stay within 10 feet of the user, they may reroll saves to avoid status effects. They also gain damage resistance and gain temporary hit points at the start of each of their turns.

**INDOMITABLE:** A creature that can see an ally while they wear the helmet is imbued with confidence and strength of purpose. For as long as an ally remains within line of sight, the wearer of the helm cannot be frightened or charmed, and has advantage on any saving throw against

an effect that would take away their free will, such as fear, confusion, or control spells.

## LUNAR CROWN

**ITEM TYPE:** Magical Garment, 253,000 gp

**SPECIALTY:** Spellcasting & Boons

**POWER SOURCE:** Moonlight

**MIGHT:** *★★★★*

**UTILITY:** *★★★★*

Over a century ago, the wandering ranger Urgan Tol disappeared into the ancient and unexplored forest known as the *Keldwood*. Stories of her adventures there abound, including her triumph over the cunning tyrant of the forest, a rootwurm named *Yvala*, as well as her slow, persistent taming of a giant eagle, who eventually trusted Urgan enough to allow her to fly on its back. Urgan eventually made her way to the heart of the Keldwood, where a savage chain of mountains stood.

While soaring high above the peaks, Urgan spotted a wolf pack being hounded by wild elves. She swept down to save them, scattering the hunters with gusts of wind and her own arrows. That night, she was approached by Severina, Mother of the Pack, goddess of wolves and lycanthropes. The wolf pack Urgan had saved was favored by Severina, who had been watching Urgan's exploits. As a sign of her favor, Severina crafted the Lunar Crown from moonlight, and gifted it to the ranger.

**MIDNIGHT MAGIC:** While worn at night, this shining crown allows the wearer to levitate several feet off the ground, thereby avoiding hazardous terrain. Furthermore, it allows the wearer to manifest two magical abilities:

**ENTRANCING CORONA:** The wearer can emit a bright aura of silver moonlight that surrounds them in a wide corona. Any beast that looks upon this light must succeed on a saving throw or become enthralled by the wearer, even if it was previously hostile. While obeying the wearer, all beasts enthralled this way become more powerful and gain resistance to magical damage and magical effects.

**LUNAR RAYS:** The wearer can summon a beam of moonlight from the night sky. This beam can shine upon a single creature that the crown's wearer can see. If the beam hits a friendly creature, then that creature is turned into a large wolf. If it hits a foe, then the foe is transformed into a harmless deer. Creatures who wish to resist this effect must make a successful saving throw. These effects wear off after 1 minute.

The crown must be bathed in moonlight for 8 hours before either magical ability can be used again.



## SPELLSHAPER AMULET

**ITEM TYPE:** Magical Amulet, 245,000 gp

**SPECIALTY:** Spellcasting & Metamagic

**POWER SOURCE:** None

**MIGHT:** *★★★★*

**UTILITY:** *★★★★*

This glass amulet looks like a smooth, eight-pointed star and has a flowing mote of pure sorcerous energy within it. This mote comes from the soul of *Algrazan Wishcaster*, who was one of the first mages to have studied at the *Hermetic University*. Algrazan was a master of metamagic, and was one of the first students to transform into a being of pure magic. Though their material body had gone, they continued to drift around the colleges of the University.

Over the years, Algrazan's wandering essence took on a reputation for being a masterful (if irreverent) tutor. If a student caught their eye, Algrazan would manifest themselves and offer their wisdom, though they were often fickle and prone to boredom. Unwilling to let Algrazan abandon their tutoring, one unknown student managed to trap a piece of Algrazan's essence in an amulet, which retained some of the old wizard's mastery of metamagic.

**MAGICAL ALTERATIONS:** This item has ten charges stored within it. When the wearer of the amulet sees a creature cast a spell at another creature that is within 10 feet of the wearer, they can then spend charges to alter the spell in some way. The incoming spell can be modified in the following ways:

**Reduced Potency (Two charges):** The wearer of the amulet uses its magic to dull the power of the spell, reducing its damage by half.

**Target Swap (Five charges):** The wearer of the amulet causes the spell to change targets immediately after it has been cast. The new target must be within 20 feet of the original target, and cannot be the original caster of the spell.

**Arcane Alteration (Four charges):** The wearer of the amulet causes the spell's effect to change to a random, minor magical effect instead of its normal effect.

The amulet regains 100 charges daily at dawn.

## RELIQUARY OF SOLACE

**ITEM TYPE:** Magical Trinket, 305,000 gp

**SPECIALTY:** Boons & Protection

**POWER SOURCE:** Souls

**MIGHT:** *⚔ ⚔ ⚔ ⚔ ⚔*

**UTILITY:** *⚔ ⚔ ⚔ ⚔ ⚔*

This small, silver pyramid contains a lock of hair that belonged to *Saint Mardolyn the Ascendant*, a holy woman who became a martyr by standing alone against a demonic horde that came to destroy her homeland. When she was overcome, she transformed into an angel and defeated the demonic incursion. Within the reliquary is a pocket dimension of peace and solace, where Mardolyn comforts those who enter. Creatures can willingly enter this dimension if they die within 30 feet of the reliquary.

**BLESSINGS OF THE DEPARTED:** For each soul that willingly enters the reliquary, the item's effects increase in potency. When the reliquary is passed on to another, its potency is reset to its lowest level, and the souls within find peace in the afterlife. The potential effects of the reliquary are as follows:

**Balm of the Spirits (One or more souls):** For each soul contained within the reliquary, the item's user can restore a small number of hit points to any creature they touch. This number increases linearly for each subsequent soul that enters the reliquary.

**Purification of the Spirits (Ten or more souls):** The user of the reliquary can place their hands upon a creature or object (such as a meal or a well) and purify it, removing any poison or disease contained within it.

**Armor of the Spirits (Fifty or more souls):** The user of the reliquary can place their hands upon another creature and grant them a shroud of spiritual armor that lasts for 1 hour. This increases their normal armor rating by a moderate amount, and any creature that damages the shrouded creature while the shroud persists takes radiant damage. Only one creature can be shrouded at a time in this way.

**Restoration of the Spirits (One hundred or more souls):** Shimmering wings appear on the user's back, a gleaming halo hovers above their head, and their eyes burn with radiant light. They gain a fly speed akin to that of an angel, their attacks are considered magical, and they can emit a revivifying pulse from their halo in a small radius around themselves that brings dead creatures back to life.

## TOTEM OF THE WILDMAN

**ITEM TYPE:** Magical Trinket, 198,000 gp

**SPECIALTY:** Shapeshifting & Combat

**POWER SOURCE:** None

**MIGHT:** *⚔ ⚔ ⚔ ⚔ ⚔*

**UTILITY:** *⚔ ⚔ ⚔ ⚔ ⚔*

This small wooden statuette is carved to resemble a large, ape-like creature with long arms, short legs, and a thick coat of dark hair. None but the most ancient nature spirits know the name of this creature, but contained within the totem is a tooth belonging to that same creature. The totem was created by the *Pact of the Wildmen*, a secretive druidic order that was rumored to hide the existence of many creatures who are considered to be merely legends by the wider world. It's said that the creature depicted by the totem, an unknown deity who is neither humanoid nor beast, is the Pact's patron. More recently, the totem has been carried by barbarians who have come to worship this nameless being, though none dare reveal its name or true nature.

**CRYPTID METAMORPHOSIS:** Twice per day, the totem's user can transform into a large, sasquatch-like creature. They gain a fast swimming and climbing speed, their fists become powerful bludgeoning weapons, and all spells cast on the user have a 50 percent chance to fail.

**WOODLAND WILES:** While within a forest, the totem's user cannot be detected by divination magic or perceived via magical scrying sensors. They also gain a large bonus to hide and stealth checks and leave no tracks or other traces of their passage.

## SMOKE RING

**ITEM TYPE:** Magical Ring, 260,000 gp

**SPECIALTY:** Shapeshifting

**POWER SOURCE:** Fire

**MIGHT:** *⚔ ⚔ ⚔ ⚔ ⚔*

**UTILITY:** *⚔ ⚔ ⚔ ⚔ ⚔*

This delicate onyx ring seems to have ash-colored smoke trapped within it that swirls constantly. It was created by a member of the *Bureau of Mysteries* to help the guild carry out missions, though it's rumored that the investigator's mind eventually passed into the ring upon their capture and murder. Since then, the ring has passed through the hands of thieves, spies, and criminals of every sort, though

most have found that the ring refuses to work for them. Some veteran crooks joke that the ring attempts to reform its criminal owners by ceasing to work when it's needed most, resulting in the owner's capture and imprisonment.

**WISPY DISAPPEARANCE:** The wearer of the ring can speak a command word to turn this ring into a thin wisp of smoke that clings to their finger. This wisp is much harder to perceive than the ring itself, making it essentially hidden from view.

**MISTY TRANSFIGURATION:** The wearer of the ring can speak a command word to transform into smoke. While in this form, they gain a rapid flying speed, cannot be damaged by non-magical attacks, are resistant to magical damage, and can fit through any space that air can move through. Furthermore, the wearer is treated as a medium area of gas that heavily obscures anything within it. If they engulf another creature, that creature must succeed on a saving throw or become blinded by the smoke until the end of their next turn. To use this ability again, the ring must be placed in an open fire for at least 1 hour.

## SOLAR CROSSBOW

**ITEM TYPE:** Magical Weapon, 315,000 gp

**SPECIALTY:** Combat

**POWER SOURCE:** Sunlight

**MIGHT:** *★★★★*

**UTILITY:** *★★★★*

This wonderfully ornamented crossbow is made of brass and gold, but has been magically enhanced so that it is as hard as steel, as flexible as wood, and as light as a feather. Engraved on the foregrip of the bow are three glaring suns, each inlaid with a cut ruby and surrounded by nacre sunbeams. Legend has it that the weapon was crafted by a vampire hunter, aided by a servant of the sun god *Erano*. The crossbow was supposedly used against vampire lords, whose armies swept across the kingdom of *Urtar* under the cover of night.

When left in direct sunlight for 1 hour, the crossbow gains one charge and one of the rubies magically illuminates. The crossbow can store a maximum of three charges total, but can be recharged at any time by bathing it in sunlight once more.

**SOLAR BOLT:** The crossbow can store up to three charges. As an action, the wielder of the bow can expend a charge, causing a bolt of searing radiance to fly from the crossbow

at a target within range. These bolts are extremely accurate, and a creature hit by it suffers the following effects:

**Melting Armor:** If the target is wearing metal armor, the armor melts. Any benefit given by the armor is reduced by half until it is repaired, and the wearer takes a large amount of fire damage due to the heat.

**Radiant Burst:** The bolt explodes in a ball of blinding light when it hits the target. The target and each adjacent creature takes a large amount of radiant damage, and must succeed on a saving throw or become temporarily blinded by the light.

## OCTOPUS CHARIOT

**ITEM TYPE:** Magical Vehicle, 340,000 gp

**SPECIALTY:** Locomotion

**POWER SOURCE:** Lightning

**MIGHT:** *★★★★*

**UTILITY:** *★★★★*

This peculiar vehicle consists of an iron throne with leather straps attached to the top of a circular plinth, from which eight mechanical, jointed legs emerge. The vehicle looks like something akin to a giant octopus with a chair strapped to its back. The chariot is one of the numerous

dungeoneering inventions of the *Scholars of Antiquity*, though only one was ever successfully completed—while being constructed, the guild's artificers discovered that the Octopus Chariot began to move on its own, and apparently possessed some unintended intelligence. Because of this, they declined to create any more.



The Octopus Chariot allows creatures to navigate dungeons and other difficult terrain with ease, provided that it is kept well charged. This can be accomplished by removing the power source (a large copper cylinder) and allowing (or causing) lightning to strike the cylinder. When its charge is low, the Octopus Chariot becomes sluggish and weak.

**ENHANCED LOCOMOTION:** While sitting in the throne, a creature can cause the chariot to move around at will, as if it were an extension of their own body. The chariot can speedily walk on walls and ceilings with ease, carry a small

quantity of cargo (such as a heavy backpack), and leap up to 15 feet in the air. It also has a spool of strong silk rope in a rear compartment that can be used to rappel down cliffs.

**BLUDGEONING LIMBS:** As an action, a creature sitting in the chariot's throne can control the forelimbs of the vehicle, causing them to lash out at adjacent foes. The limbs deal moderate bludgeoning damage if they hit their target.

## STAFF OF CHRONOMANCY

**ITEM TYPE:** Magical Staff, 345,000 gp

**SPECIALTY:** Time Manipulation

**POWER SOURCE:** Time

**MIGHT:** *⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡*

**UTILITY:** *⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡*

This whirring staff of creaking gears and ticking hands was first created by the famous inventor *Lizza Cogsworthy*. Lizza was obsessed with prolonging her life, but was appalled by the actions that others took to do so (such as trying to acquire lichdom). Instead of pursuing these darker paths, Lizza tried to create a magic item that would allow her to de-age herself. It's rumored that Lizza managed to create the staff, but that it was quickly stolen by a version of herself from the future.

**BORROWED TIME:** The staff can contain an unlimited number of charges. It must be charged by aging living creatures in a ritual that takes 1 hour and requires at least one willing creature. For every year that a creature ages during this ritual, the staff gains ten charges that can be used to activate the following effects:

**AUGMENTED AGING:** The staff can be used to either age or de-age objects and creatures as an action, making them more fragile or weak. For each charge expended from the staff, the creature or object can be aged or de-aged ten years. Objects and creatures aged beyond their natural "lifespans" fall apart or die, and those who would be de-aged to a state before their creation instead remain in their youngest possible forms.

**TIME TRAVEL:** As an action, the bearer of the staff can transport themselves and up to six willing creatures back in time. For every ten charges expended from the staff, the creatures travel back or forward in time by 1 hour. When used this way, no fewer than ten charges can be expended, and

the charges can only be spent in multiples of ten. After performing the ritual to charge the staff, the same creature who was aged by the ritual cannot use the staff to de-age themselves.

## WHIRLWIND NUNCHAKU

**ITEM TYPE:** Magical Weapon, 290,000 gp

**SPECIALTY:** Combat

**POWER SOURCE:** None

**MIGHT:** *⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡*

**UTILITY:** *⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡ ⚡*

Made from bamboo reinforced with silver bands and decorated with ornate carvings of clouds, these nunchaku were created by *Azuna, Paragon of the Winds*, a legendary martial artist who preferred to exhaust and confuse her opponents rather than harm them. It's said that she was once a deadly and elegant swordswoman, but after becoming drenched in the blood of countless foes, she created the nunchaku to reflect her decision to eschew killing for good.

A creature that picks up the nunchaku becomes surrounded by a gently swirling breeze and cannot be pushed or knocked off balance by gusts of wind. The wielder of the nunchaku must take care never to kill a creature with them—if a killing blow is struck, then the weapon disappears in a burst of wind.

**AERIAL ACROBATICS:** The nunchaku can be used in numerous ways to enhance the wielder's natural agility: they can be spun like a propeller when falling to reduce damage from the fall to zero, they can be used to enhance acrobatics checks, and they can be spun to aid their wielder's jumping ability, allowing the wielder to reach a height or distance of 40 feet.

**DAZING BLOW:** Each time the wielder of the nunchaku hits a foe with an attack, there is a 10 percent chance that the target is stunned until the end of their next turn.

**PROTECTIVE GALE:** Once per day, the wielder of the nunchaku can speak a command word, causing the weapon to emit a spherical gale around the wielder. Any ranged missile attack made against the wielder from outside the gale is deflected.





*“Build a vault with thick walls, paralysis traps, and a complicated lock that needs three keys. Then, while the thieves are busy with that, keep your loot in a box under your bed.”*

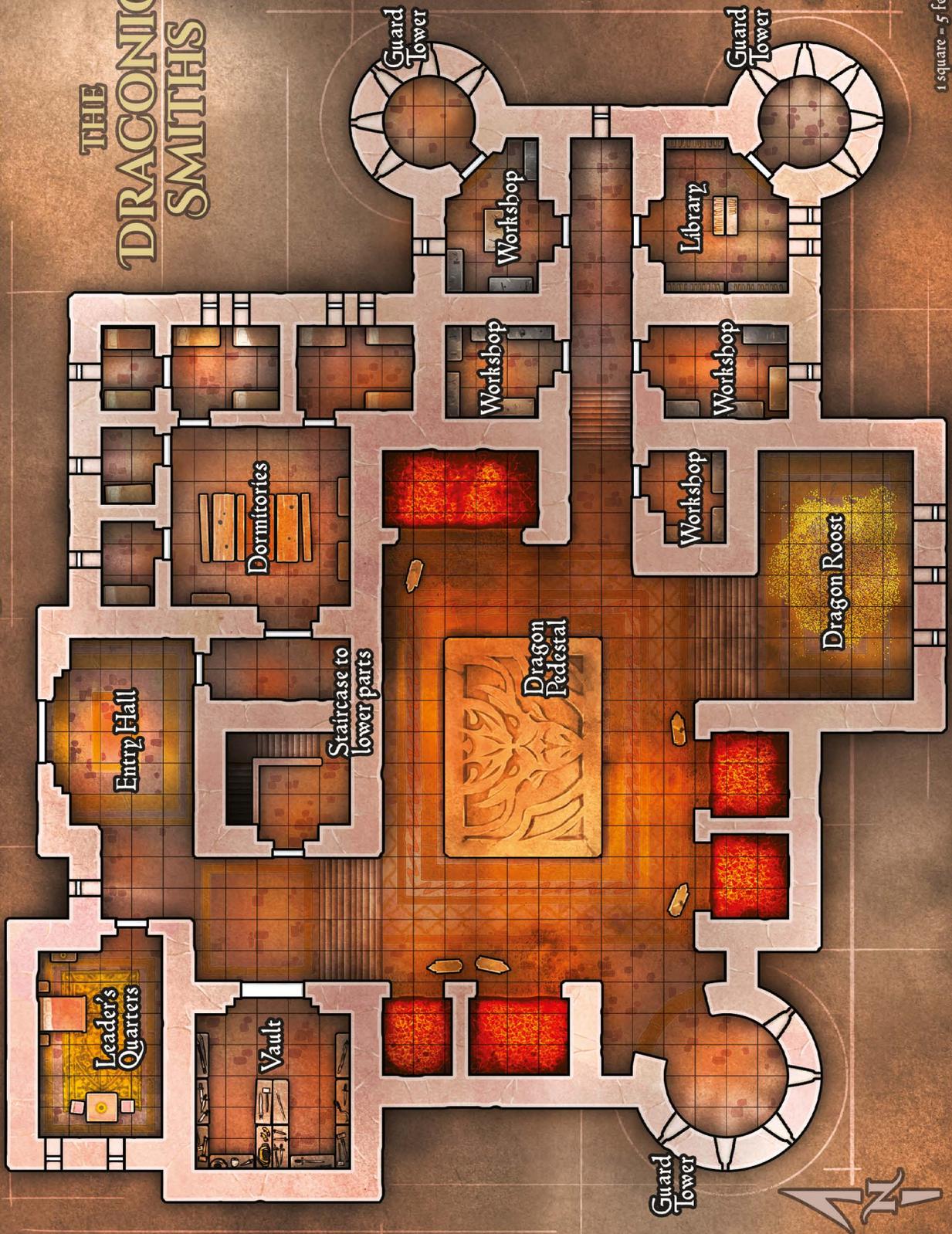
*—Haskins the Nord, adventurer extraordinaire*

APPENDIX III:

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GUILD HEADQUARTERS MAPS

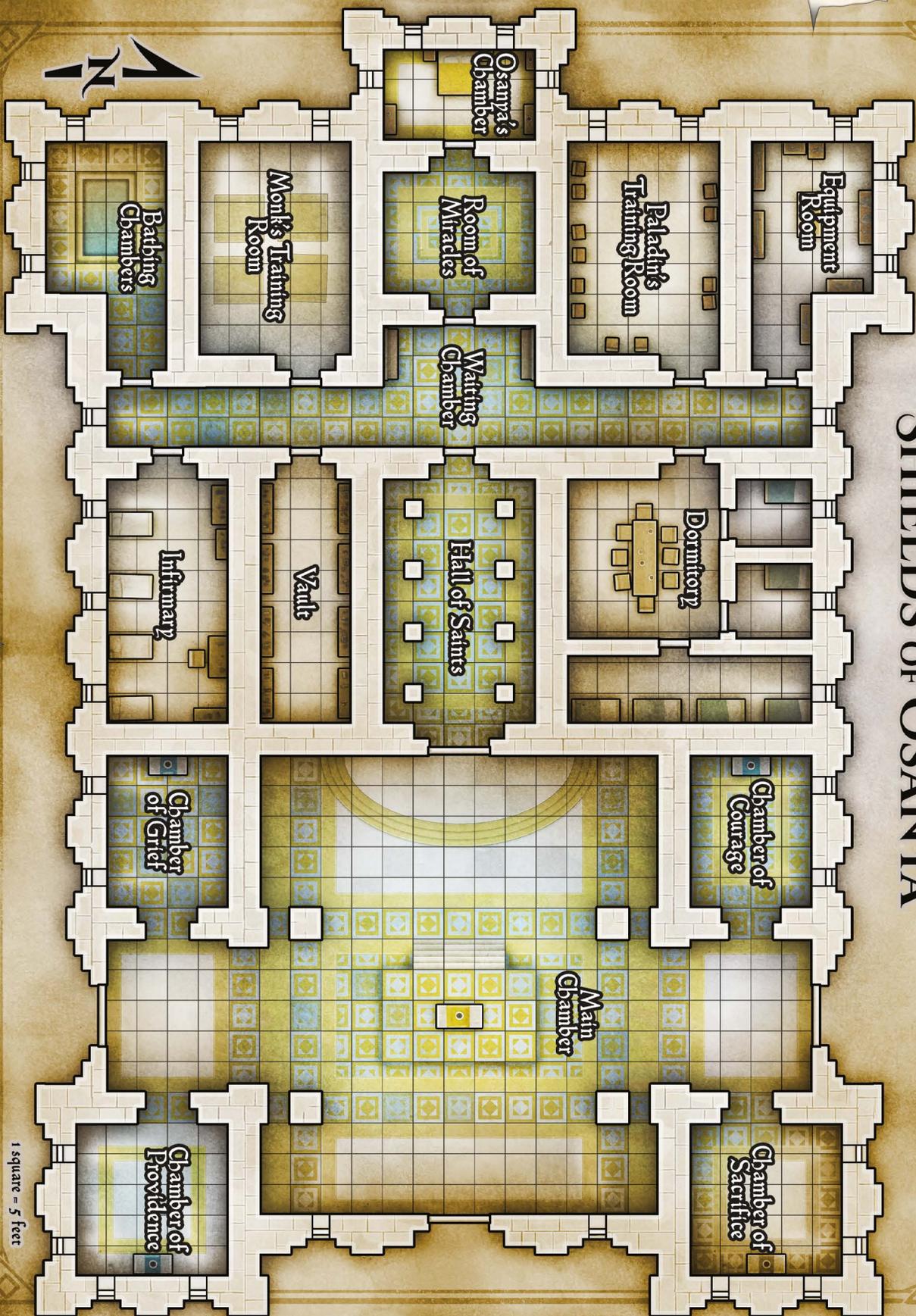
# THE DRAGONIC SMITHS



1 square = 5 feet



# SHIELDS OF OSANYA



1 square = 5 feet

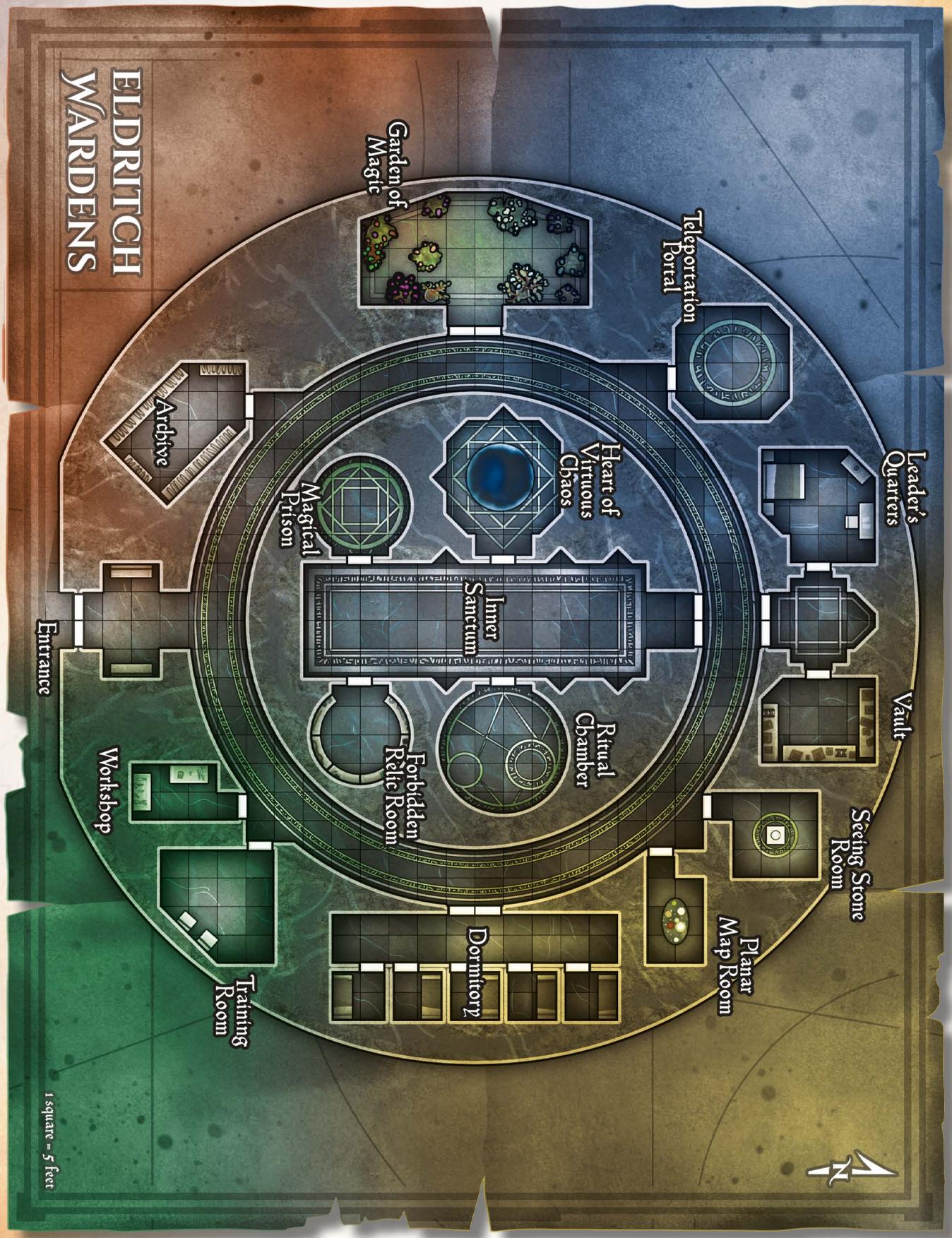


1 square = 5 feet

# SCHOLARS OF ANTIQUITY



# ELDRITCH WARDENS



Garden of Magic

Teleportation Portal

Leader's Quarters

Vault

Seeing Stone Room

Planar Map Room

Dormitory

Training Room

Workshop

Entrance

Archive

Magical Prison

Inner Sanctum

Ritual Chamber

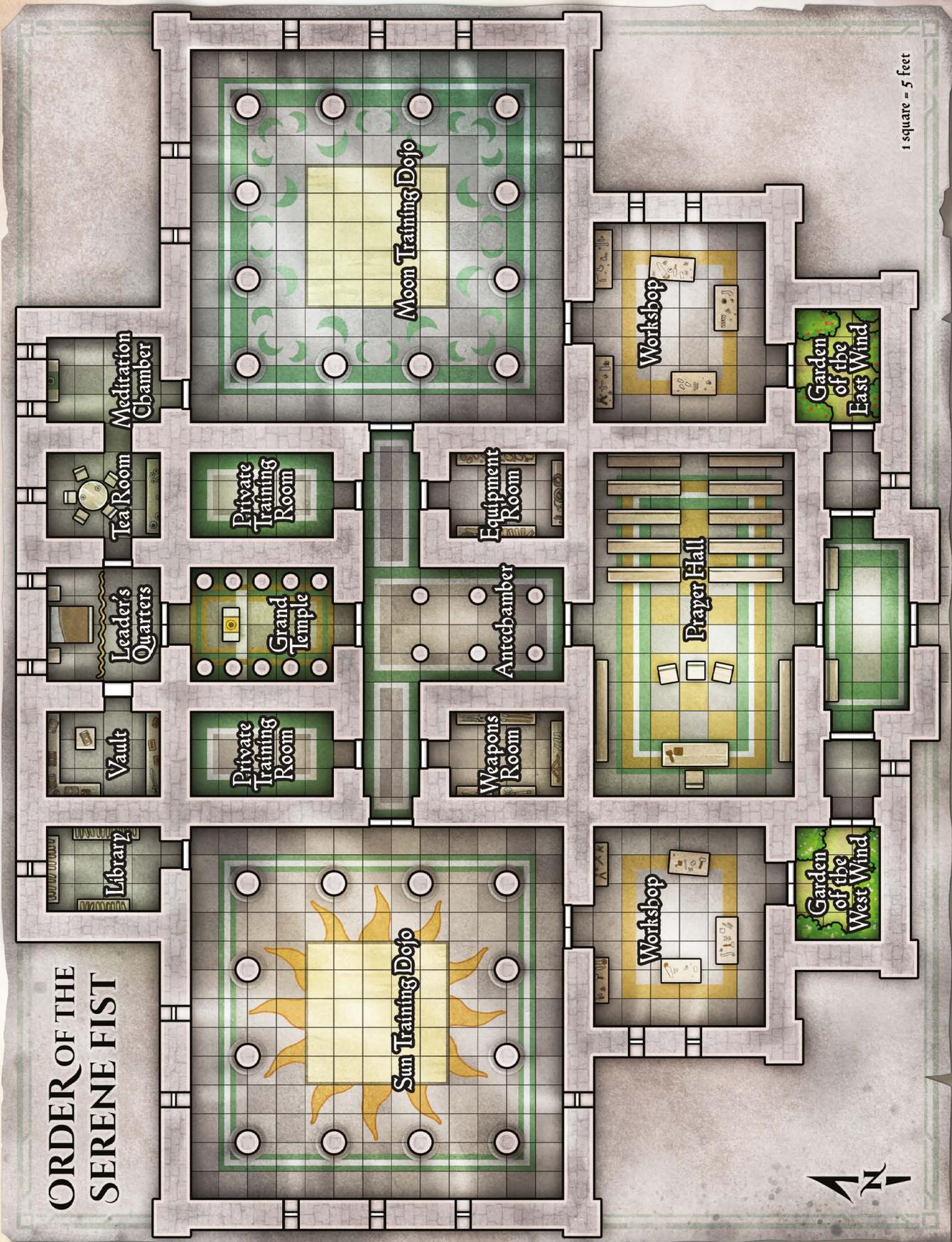
Forbidden Relic Room

Heart of Virtuous Chaos

1 square = 5 feet



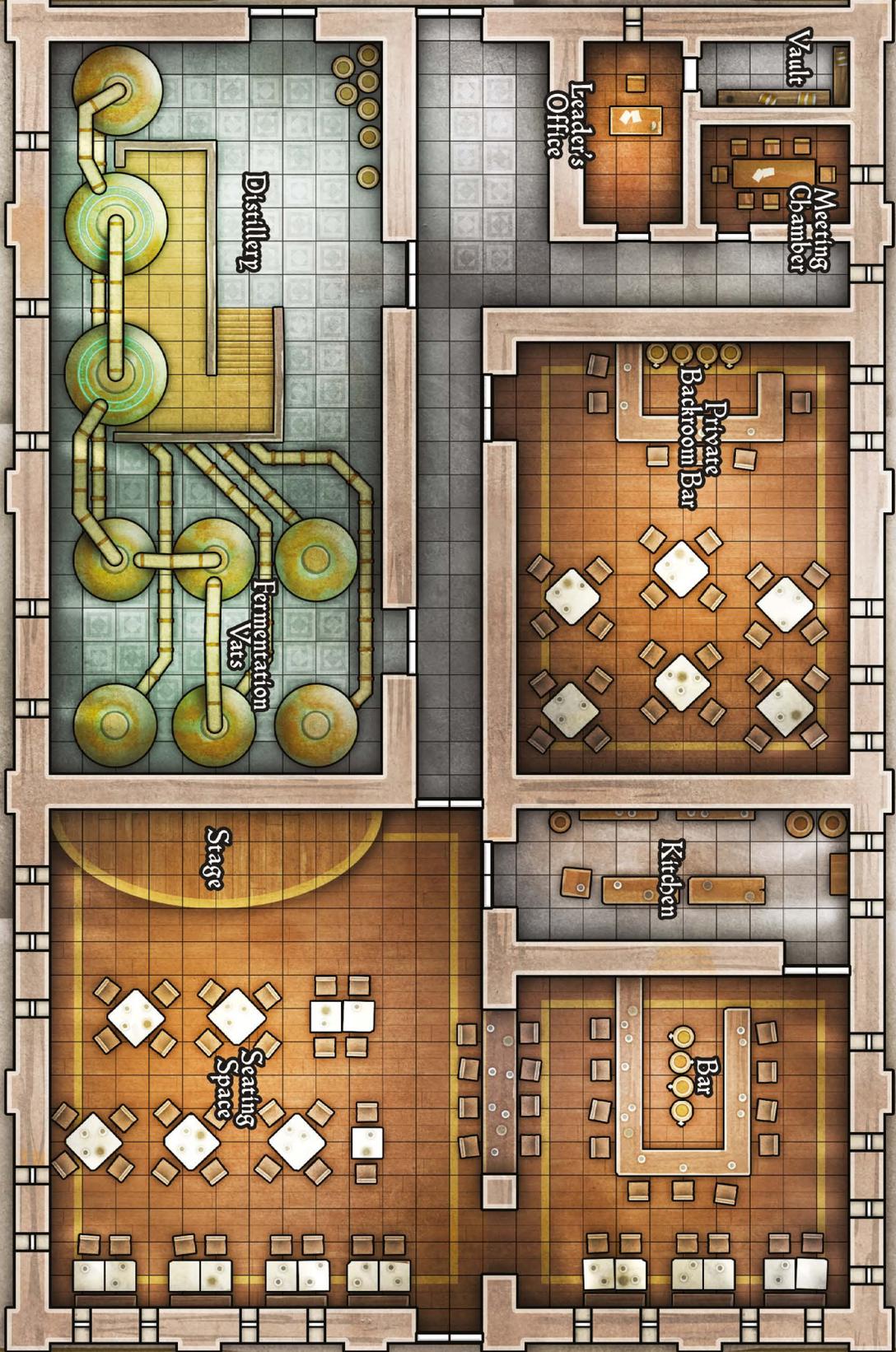
# ORDER OF THE SERENE FIST



1 square = 5 feet

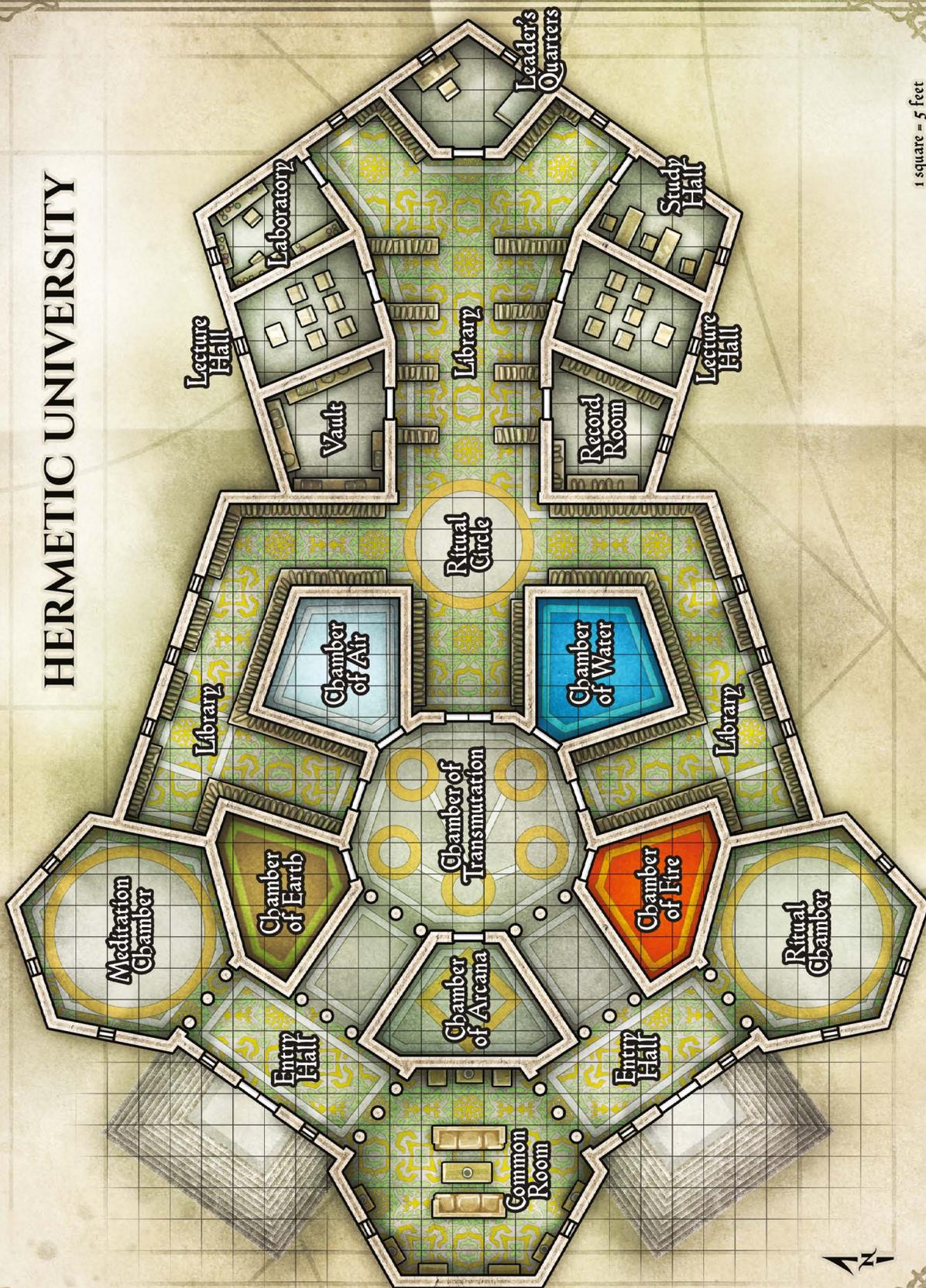


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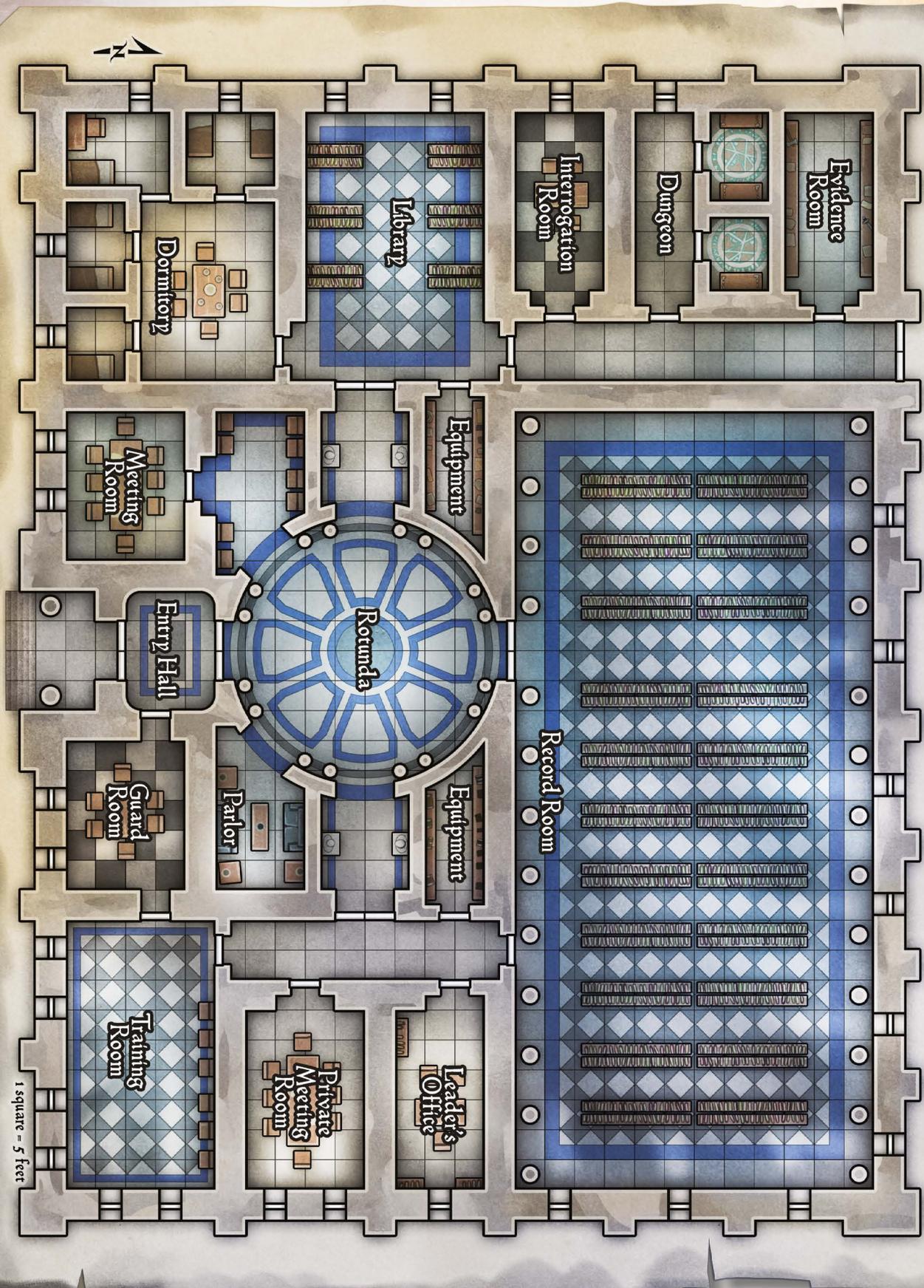
1 square = 5 feet

# HERMETIC UNIVERSITY

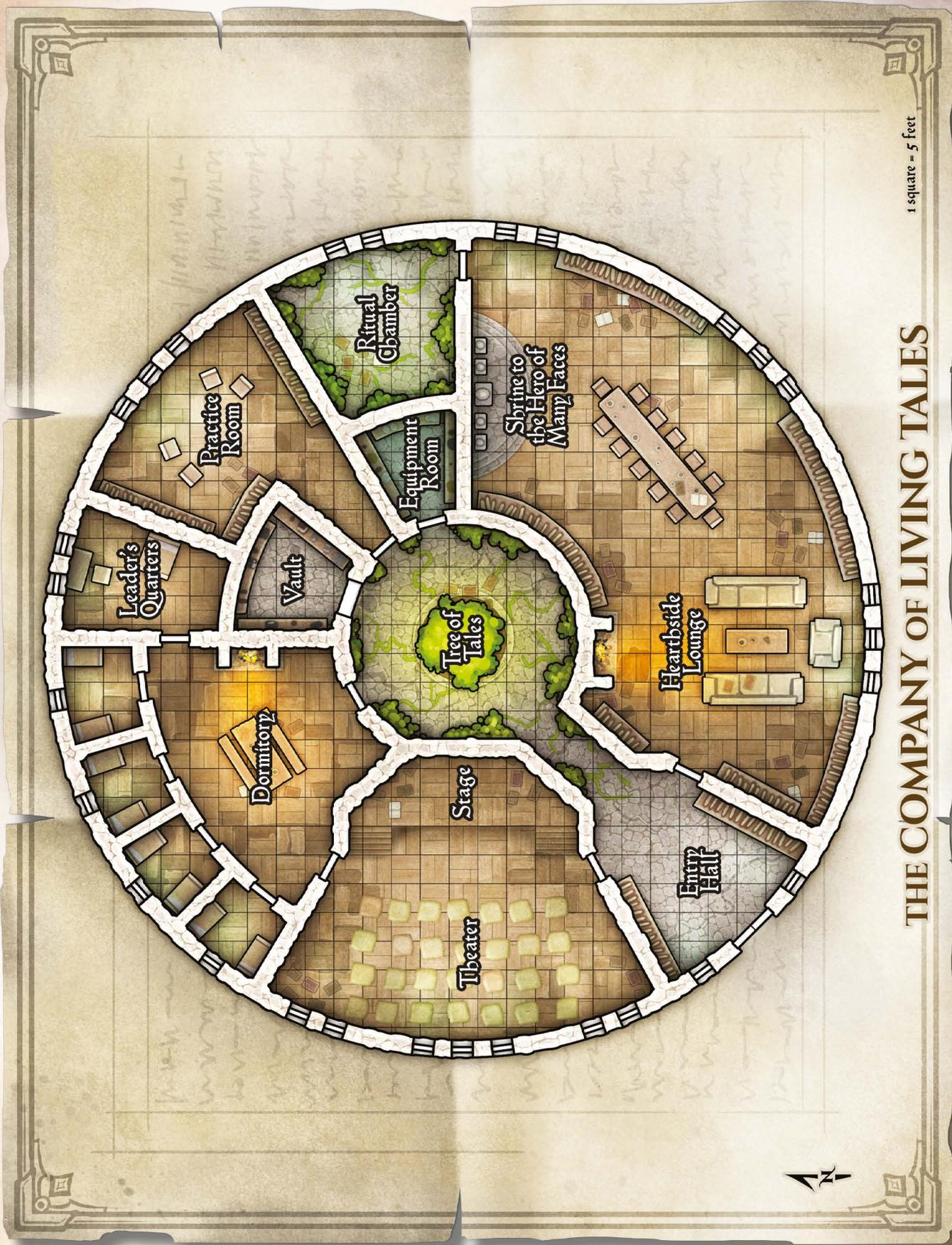


1 square = 5 feet

# BUREAU OF MYSTERIES



1 square = 5 feet



1 square = 5 feet

# THE COMPANY OF LIVING TALES





# THE FRONTIER GREENMOUNTS



1 square = 5 feet

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