

5E COMPATIBLE

OFFBEAT ENCOUNTERS: THE WAYWARD WARLOCK



BY GM LENT

An Unusual Confrontation You Can Drop Into Any Campaign!

OFFBEAT ENCOUNTERS: THE WAYWARD WARLOCK

An unusual confrontation and a noteworthy adversary or ally for characters of all levels - compatible with the 5th edition of the world's greatest roleplaying game.

For use with the Forgotten Realms setting and other fine game worlds

CREDITS

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THE WAYWARD WARLOCK

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INTRODUCTION

The Wayward Warlock is part of a scenario series called *Offbeat Encounters*, a 5th edition compatible collection of short, tough scenarios designed to easily add an unusual wrinkle to an ongoing adventure or campaign. Each is self-contained enough to provide a simple diversion, but laden with enough hints and hooks to anchor a longer-term campaign complication.

The intent of these encounters is to add a distinctive, uncommon flair to an otherwise unremarkable session. Each scenario includes suggestions on the type of adventure environment for which they are best suited, but with a little adjustment any of the setups could fit into almost any situation.

Each scenario includes four sections: Setup, Background, Encounter, and Setting.

Impression is the encounter at face value; essentially, what the characters would see.

Background provides details on *why* the encounter is occurring; in most cases, these situations are not what they seem.

Encounter lays out an actual game interaction based on the Impression and taking into account the Background.

Setting suggests the most likely environment to insert the encounter or other suggestions to assist the Game Master in using it. Often the section includes situational notes and suggestions on adapting the scenario to other environments, which in some cases would make the experience quite different indeed.

SCENARIO SUMMARY

The Wayward Warlock: The PCs have accomplished their goal! Before them lies the prize they sought, well-earned after their defeat of its powerful guardian. But just as they are about to reap the treasures they have earned, a strange man appears, warning them of trouble to come.



THE WAYWARD WARLOCK

A **HARD** ENCOUNTER FOR FOUR **5TH - 6TH** LEVEL PCs.

IMPRESSION

At last, the great treasure! After the perilous journey, the traps, the trials, the tribulations, and the losses, it is finally within your grasp. It's time to retrieve the object, collect your reward, and turn in for some well-earned rest.

Before you can claim your prize, however, you hear a strange popping sound and the smell of brimstone fills the air. As the acrid smoke clears, before you stands a man you would take to be middle aged were it not for the depths of sorrow and experience in his eyes.

"I wouldn't touch that if I were you," he says.

BACKGROUND

Walter Weird was a skilled healer in his home village, training to become the town physician. One fateful day, the supply wagon he was driving overturned, pinning Weird underneath and shattering both his legs as well as both his hands. Though his wounds healed, Weird was left with a limp and was no longer able to practice the medicine to which he had devoted his life.

Desperate for a solution to his handicaps, Weird searched everywhere for help to no avail. Finally, one day he happened across a lovely faerie glen deep in the woods, in which he found a beautiful fey spirit who offered to both heal his maladies and teach him the power of her magic. Relieved to have found respite at last, Weird promised to be the faerie noble's loyal subject.



The faerie was as good as her word, and she restored to Weird the use of his hands and legs. She also bestowed upon him the power of magic, which weird planned on using to enhance his medicinal skills. As tokens of his progress, the fey spirit bestowed

upon him winged boots that would allow him to fly to any height and a cape that allowed him to vanish in a puff of smoke if he had need of a sudden exit.

Too late, Weird realized he had been fooled: his patron was a powerful and evil hag, part of a coven that sought a vassal with which to corrupt and pervert the populace. After a bitter struggle, Weird managed to secure an arrangement with the coven that allows him autonomy to act as he will and the use of the coven's resources to gather information. In return, he must occasionally assist the coven in their goals, which often involve recovering powerful magical items or influencing the politics of powerful leaders and nations.

Weird still walks with a slight limp, but has access to many strange and wonderful magical items. He wears a crystal shaped like an eye on a thong around his neck; this crystal allows the coven to scry upon him at will but also allows him to contact them for assistance when he is in need. He can be a valuable ally and is still devoted to the healing arts, but his motivations are often not what they seem. He is fond of using intricate, flowery language when speaking, often invoking the names of strange spirits and entities he has encountered in his research and wanderings.

ENCOUNTER

The specific reason(s) Walter Weird is present in the location where the PCs go to claim their treasure is left up to the GM, but could include any of the following:

- The item carries an unknown and dangerous curse
- Removing the item will free an ancient evil from its prison

- Weird received a vision of a different calamity that would result from the PCs retrieval of the item
- The item's former holder was its rightful owner, and Weird has proof
- Weird simply wants the item for himself (or his patron) and uses any of the above stories to justify taking it

PARTICIPANTS:

Walter Weird (See the Appendix)

Walter Weird is a skilled warlock, and while he is arrogant, he is not stupid or reckless. His typical tactics involve misdirection and deception, using his copious persuasive skills enhanced with magic when necessary.

If pressed to combat, he will cast *sleep* if he has reason to believe it will be effective, tying up his foes once they have succumbed to the spell. When engaging more powerful enemies he will cast *wall of fire* to reign in as many opponents as possible, and will negotiate from the far side of the spell. He has no wish to die, and is not above hiding or disguising himself to escape if necessary.

SETTING

While Walter Weird is presented here as an opponent, he can be a valuable ally and resource to groups who take a more diplomatic approach to the encounter. Through his own experiences and those of his patron coven, Weird has access to great knowledge and more than a few powerful rulers and creatures. Weird and/or the coven could be a source of charms or other supernatural gifts, for example, which can be of great value to an adventuring party. Game masters should feel free to outfit Weird with any other items or knowledge that suits their campaign.

APPENDIX: NEW MONSTER

WALTER WEIRD

Medium humanoid (human), neutral

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 117 (18d8+36)

Speed 25 ft., fly 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws Wis +6, Cha +7

Skills Arcana +5, Deception +7, Medicine +6, Perception +6, Persuasion +7

Senses passive Perception 16, can see 120 ft. in darkness, both magical and non-magical

Languages Common, Elven, Infernal, Deep Speech

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Innate Spellcasting. Weird's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma. He can innately cast the following spells (spell save DC 15), requiring no material components:

At will: *detect magic*, *levitate*, *mage armor* (self only)

Spellcasting. Walter Weird is an 11th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). He regains his expended spell slots when he finishes a short or long rest. He knows the following warlock spells:

Cantrips (at will): *dancing lights*, *eldritch blast*, *friends*, *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, *prestidigitation*, *vicious mockery*

1st-5th level (3 5th-level slots): *blink*, *charm person*, *dimension door*, *faerie fire*, *fear*, *hold monster*, *misty step*, *phantasmal killer*, *seeming*, *sleep*, *wall of fire*

ACTIONS

Shortsword. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 6 (1d6+ 2) piercing damage.

1/Day. Weird can use his cape to cast *dimension door*. Once he does so, he cannot use this property again until the next dawn. When he disappears, he leaves behind a cloud of smoke, and he appears in a similar cloud of smoke at his destination. The smoke lightly obscures the space he leaves and the space he appears in, and it dissipates at the end of his next turn. A light or stronger wind disperses the smoke.

1/Rest. Weird can force every creature in a 10-foot cube originating from him to make a Wisdom saving throw against his warlock spell save DC. The creatures that fail their saving throws are all charmed or frightened by him (his choice) until the end of his next turn.

Healer. Weird is a skilled physician, and when he uses a use a healer's kit to stabilize a dying creature, that creature also regains 1 hit point. As an action, he can spend one use of a healer's kit to tend to a creature and restore 1d6 + 4 hit points to it, plus additional hit points equal to the creature's maximum number of Hit Dice. The creature can't regain hit points from this feature again until it finishes a short or long rest.

REACTIONS

Misty Escape (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).

In response to taking damage, Weird turns invisible and teleports up to 60 feet to an unoccupied space he can see. He remains invisible until the start of his next turn or until he attacks, makes a damage roll, or casts a spell.

Weird carries a *figurine of the giant fly* which he has named Mukha, and uses it when he needs to travel long distances quickly.

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