

AND THEN THE GROUND SHOOK

SANDS OF EMPTY WISHES, PART 3

In this third part of the *Sands of Empty Wishes* campaign, our heroes must deal with the ramifications of a series of natural disasters that have (literally) shaken the foundations of Almraiven. PCs have the opportunity to develop new skills, pursue old grudges, make new connections, and ultimately investigate the troubles of Almraiven in this nontraditional “downtime” or “interlude” adventure!

A downtime adventure for 3rd–4th level characters

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INTRODUCTION

Almraiven's greatest strength has always been the sea at its foot and the desert at its head.

—Adeera D'Intriz, Human Steward

SANDS OF EMPTY WISHES, PARTS 2 & 4

The introduction to this adventure assumes that the PCs have already dealt with “Mysteries and Aqueducts.” This adventure serves as a transition from Part 2 to Part 4, and will *not* stand alone. Additionally, this adventure makes reference to tables and charts in *Xanathar's Guide to Everything* (2017). To make full use of this product, you will want a copy of *Xanathar's Guide* handy!

PROLOGUE

This transitional adventure is divided into three sections.

DISCOVERY

In this section, the PCs come to terms with the earthquake and its effects: the initial structural damage, the fires caused in the collapses, and the copious water problems the earthquake left behind—the tidal rise, flooding, and the dumping of salt water into the few reservoirs and aquifers left in the city.

DOWNTIME

Once the PCs are aware of the dizzying array of places that the city is in need of help, this is a chance for them to spend some time and do what they want to do to help (whether that helping is for themselves or others!)

DEVELOPMENT

After the PCs have had their chance to see the city under pressure—and largely broken—they get the call to go outside the city and serve it again when the report of an old war flag surfaces.

THE WAY HOME

This adventure assumes that the PCs are still outside the city of Almraiven, escorting the remnants of the Vlari work crew.

Hakim introduces his wife, Dalia, as the woman embracing him. Dalia explains: “During the quake, a lot of the buildings in the poorer neighborhoods just fell apart. Governor Rishik Sirsh has called out the military and declared martial law, but even the Kel-Tir couldn't keep things under control. Without a Writ of Passage from a noble, we aren't even allowed to return to our homes in the Blue Quarter!”

The PCs have a Writ of Passage from Uldega Vlari that will grant the work crew, their families, and the PCs access to the Blue Quarter. The PCs may want to discuss what to do next; the work crew and their families are universally in agreement that the best thing the PCs can do (to help, to survive, to fulfill their contract—whatever!) is to use the Writ to get into the city, into the Blue Quarter, and meet with Uldega.

If the PCs are unsure, they can certainly find out more about what's been going on outside the city. As they investigate outside the city they may encounter:

- A small band of Ilmatari priests and assistants with bandages and a hot brand ministering to wounded and exhausted refugees from the city. (Goals: minister to the people. Needs: fresh water!)
- A single hooded figure sitting cross-legged in the midst of a circle drawn in the sand—despite the throngs of humanity around them, none dare enter the circle. (Goals: be left alone. Needs: to keep up the facade that there's something magical about the mundane circle.)

- Two children—a boy and a girl—both in rags, begging for food and water. Once they encounter the PCs, they follow them, badgering them at every possible opportunity for coin. (Goals: to get as much as possible from on-lookers and/or the PCs. They will resort to stealing if necessary. Needs: Fresh water—soon.)

Whenever the PCs decide to head for the city, they encounter several make-shift checkpoints manned by overworked, tired guards in Kel-Tir livery. The guards know little beyond their own checkpoints.

The first checkpoint's guards are irritable, easily upset, and wave the PCs through almost immediately—with or without their entourage—without much scrutiny of their Writ of Passage. The guards here have been swarmed with requests for re-admittance to the city and they are also the final checkpoint for the "deportation" of subjects who are being cleared out of the troubled areas of the city. These guards have heard all of the sob-stories (many of them true) and have stood their ground.

The second checkpoint is at the city gates. The guards here are tense, but bored. They have a spellcaster (magewright or wizard) whose entire job is to verify the validity of Writs of Passage; she casts a ritual to check its authenticity. The guards here are nervous and tense because they've seen the number of people who have been moved from the city and after the events of the last few days, they believe things will only get worse. The damage to the city is not visible here, but the smell of smoldering buildings and burning garbage come in waves on the wind. During the time it takes for the ritual to be cast, feel free to allow the nervousness of the guards to infect the NPCs traveling with the party!

The final checkpoint is within the city at the entrance to the Blue Quarter. These guards are mostly officers—the kind who never thought they'd be called into any kind of service that didn't involve leading other men and women to their deaths (from a safe distance). Some are preening themselves, some of drinking, and a few are standing guard like their lives depend on it. Though somewhat tense over the size of the PCs'

little expedition, they are conditioned to accept the power of a Writ of Passage and usher them into the Blue Quarter, instructing them to go directly to their destination: the palace of Uldega Vlari. The damage to the city is visible on this trip; entire buildings are rubble. Clouds of smoke and ash rain come and go. Organized groups combat the flames while looters scatter at the PCs' entourage's approach.

If the PCs have made any friends or have a favorite watering hole in the city, describe the damage to the home or structure; a little mystery and grief are appropriate.

DISCOVERY

Uldega's palace looks as pristine as ever, but amidst the chaos of the city, it looks dark and eerily silent. Only a single house guard greets you at the entrance, and he ushers you in without escorting you to the back courtyard. As you enter the garden courtyard where Uldega holds his audiences, you are overwhelmed by activity. Genasi and humans swarm over tables that have been set up under makeshift tents. Empty water jugs and glass containers sit in haphazard piles on top of once-beautiful plants. Despite the intensity of the activity, the place is jarringly quiet. The volume of their discussions is low as if they're afraid to be heard. In the center, under the large tent, a bevy of diverse individuals in a variety of positions are having a hushed but heated discussion. Overseeing them all, Uldega reclines in his usual place.

The individuals Uldega has gathered are leaders of various factions and groups throughout the city. With the threat so dire, he has cashed in a great many favors to bring this odd group together. See Appendix A for details on each member and their issues. You may want to have a copy of Appendix A handy "separately" while running this section.

Uldega's face breaks into a Cheshire grin at your approach. He motions to the assembled company, "Friends! I'd like you to meet some other associates of mine. They've been helping me with the water shortage; I expect they will be of great a use to you as they've been to me. I see they've brought some other help as well. Please indulge yourselves with some refreshments while I check in with them—then we'll handle introductions."

Uldega motions you over; seeing the state of the aqueduct crew he calls his stewardess, and a school of Vlari servants descend on the group, tending to their needs. Uldega's face and voice both drop as he turns his attention back to you: "I see you brought the crew back here; I presume that means that the—" he pauses, looking for a word that won't give away the nature of the aqueduct, "*—project* is on hold for now?"

The PCs have a chance here to fill him in and to ask questions. Though his initial interactions with the PCs here may not convey it, make sure that his further interactions convey his joy—albeit guarded—that the party was able to save what they could of the crew and that they made the executive decision to bring them back to Almraiven. (Vlari has its hands full, and skilled workers are in short supply.)

Feel free to answer any questions the PCs have about the assembled group Uldega is meeting with or have him defer those questions until after the introductions.

Uldega is ready with payment for their heroics, and asks them to stay and be introduced; he explains that these movers and shakers are important persons in Almraiven and he has called them together to seek mutual assistance in disaster relief.

When the PCs are satisfied, Uldega offers to introduce the assembled notables:

Uldega points to a fire genasi man wearing bleached white robes with a crimson red stole. "On my left you see Dawnbringer Nadir 'Toes' Sevriss, a cleric of Lathander and high priest of the Temple of Light here in the city."

Uldega's finger moves to a human woman in plain brown traveling clothes—except for a fine silk cloak—sitting in a chair that's been spun around, her arms resting on the chair's back. "This lovely lady is Cloak. She runs the city's most reliable and fastest postal service."

He continues along the line, this time pointing to a squat earth genasi with a small, white parrot on his shoulder. The man waves and grins, revealing a mouth dotted with gold teeth. "This is Farouk 'Goldbite' Akraid and his parrot Feeth. Farouk is one of the top financiers in the Caliphate."

Next, Uldega points out a wild-looking air genasi woman, hovering cross-legged above the carpeted floor, her hair subtly waving in a breeze that you don't feel. "Nashwa Menlat and her family have been moving grain and other overland goods to this city for a generation."

Uldega's finger moves along to a point at a bald halfling man who is almost swallowed up by the pillows he reclines among. "Corrin Goodbarrel is a merchant. If it can be bought and sold in Almraiven, Corrin's probably had a hand in it."

This is a great place for Corrin to wink, click his cheeks, or make a lewd gesture at whichever PC you've decided he's fallen in love with.

Uldega moves on to a rigidly held fire genasi woman leaning against a tent pole. "Lieutenant Gamila Kel-Tir is an officer of the Kel-Tir's forces and a detective in the city guard."

His hand moves along to point at the last person assembled, a high elf man with excessively pointy ears wearing the loose-fitting open-sleeved robes of his race: "Paelias Amastacia is a magic broker. He helps those who want to deal in magic items find buyers or sellers."

"Now then, rather than listen to me drone on, I think I'll let my associates introduce themselves." All eyes turn to you, expectantly.

When all of the PCs have properly introduced themselves, he continues:

"I'll dispense with further formalities. We all know why we're here: let's see what we can do about getting Almraiven back on her feet!" Almost immediately the conversations you had interrupted with your arrival resumes, though it's clear that everyone is keeping an ear open in case you should wish to join in.

DOWNTIME

At this point, the "downtime" can formally begin. Have the PCs choose from the list of activities below—encourage them to choose unique activities! This is a chance for them to develop their characters a bit on their own.

You can either have this be a "mechanical" experience (where they learn about these options from you, as their DM) or as an "organic" experience (where they learn about these options from their interactions with the notables). This is entirely up to you!

Regardless of what the PCs choose to do (at least as their first choices) make sure that they interact with the notables involved as Patrons (and/or

Rivals) so that their network grows and their investment in the various causes that the notables are interested in grows too.

Please give the players the following guidelines first:

1. There will be opportunity for your characters to partake in a few weeks of downtime activity (which could result in as many as three separate activities). For example, you could carouse, then charter a ship, then craft a magic item OR you could carouse three times.
2. This time will not necessarily allow you to add new mechanical skills or bonuses, though it can certainly add story bonuses. For example, training with a priest will not give you proficiency in the Religion skill, but it may grant you a relationship with that priest, temple, or faith that allows you to call on them for help with a religious issue or question you would normally make a check to answer.
3. This is an opportunity to build relationships, make friends (and rivals), and learn a bit more about where your character fits in. Unlike hardcover adventure paths or ultra-time sensitive quests, **you don't have to worry about the main story here!** Do what you (or more properly, your character) want(s) to do.
4. There are a few options that may benefit from having multiple party members pool time and resources; you may wish to discuss that with your fellow party members if you think you want to attempt that. For example, buying property is generally a great expense—you may need both the time and the money of other PCs in order to accomplish your aim.
5. The activities you undertake and how you choose to complete them will influence how the notables see you; these NPCs can become great Patrons, terrible Rivals, or even just interesting contacts for future adventures.

CHECKS VS. ROLEPLAYING

In the "Downtime" section, free to allow players to roleplay their way to success on some (or, if you prefer, all) of the checks they make. The addition of the skill checks is *not* meant to remove roleplaying, but rather to streamline the process of "what constitutes success." As usual, do what's most fun!

Here is the complete list of options you may share with your players:

- a) Build a house/structure/buy property
- b) Carouse and party
- c) Conduct a heist
- d) Crafting a magic item
- e) Curing a magic epidemic / Serve a temple
- f) Detective work
- g) Engage in your profession
- h) Enter a tournament
- i) Gamble
- j) Investigate the source of the disaster
- k) Purchase magic items
- l) Pursue a romance/relationship/courtesan
- m) Research / Study a new subject
- n) Scribe a spell scroll
- o) Search for survivors / Clear Wreckage
- p) Sell magic items
- q) Spy on an enemy or rival
- r) Train with a master
- s) Visit a monastery or holy site

PATRONS, COMPLICATIONS, RIVALS, & OUTCOMES

For each task the players undertake, there may be a **Patron**, a **Rival**, and/or a **Complication**, as well as an **Outcome**.

Interacting with the **Patron** establishes the details of the task and possibly gives the character a chance to earn some help. Patrons can be a lasting ally for the character. The most likely source of patronage for the PCs are the eight assembled notables, though you may decide to introduce other NPCs.

Complications can arise based on the choices and skill checks the character makes during the task. These can affect the Outcome (and sometimes the Rival). Complications can occasionally be indefinite or lasting (rather than immediate).

Sometimes the very act of undertaking the task activates a **Rival**; sometimes Rivals are created from Complications. In any case, Rivals rarely shut down the task entirely, but rather force the character to detour. Rivals can be a lasting antagonist for the character. As with Patrons, the

most likely source of rivalry for the PCs are the eight assembled notables.

One character's Patron could even prove to be another character's Rival (and vice-versa).

Outcome is the short-hand for how the task ends and what the result of that task is. It is affected by Patrons, Rivals, Complications, and the results of skill checks and choices made by the character.

BUILD/BUY A HOUSE, STRUCTURE, OR PROPERTY

Patron: Farouk "Goldbite" Akraid

Rival: Corrin Goodbarrel

Description: At this juncture, it is highly unlikely that the PCs collectively (let alone individually) will have enough cash-on-hand to build a stronghold. (See "Building a Stronghold" on p.128 of the DMG.) Indeed, it is unlikely they'll even be able to pay the long-term upkeep costs of a stronghold or place business even if they had one. (See "Recurring Expenses" on pp. 126-127 of the DMG.) If they do, and they wish to, so much the better. Farouk is an able real-estate agent and helps the PCs find a spot within the city (likely the wreckage of another development) which would be valid for construction. Inside the city, deeds for land cost the following:

- Dockside: 100gp
- Red, Blue, White, or Black Quarter: 500gp
- Outside the city walls, but within the city's sphere of control: 100gp

It's possible the PCs may be interested in buying the land now, and building on it later.

Regardless, if a character seeks Farouk's help in securing a deed, he becomes very interested in them buying the property he's become stuck with and wants to unload (see Farouk's Problem (Private) in Appendix A). The place was originally a noble manor without an estate; now it is a wreck which will require 5,000gp to restore. Farouk was hoping to sell it for 15,000gp (expecting it to be worth 10,000gp). However, after showing it to the PCs, he may be willing to part with it for far less.

Check 1: Wisdom (Insight), DC 14

Check 2: Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation), DC 14

Check 3: Charisma (Persuasion or Deception), DC 14

Complications:

If the PC has already made Farouk or Corrin a rival from another downtime action, they have disadvantage on one of the checks (they can choose to apply this after rolling the first die).

If the PCs have already made Farouk or Corrin a patron from another downtime action, they have advantage on one of the checks (they can choose to apply this after rolling the first die).

Outcome:

Make the three checks.

If the PC succeeds in none of the checks, Farouk insists the property is worth 15,000gp and that he won't take a copper less. However, he will still help the character find a plot of land to deed. Similarly, Corrin Goodbarrel becomes a **Rival** to this PC—he knows the property Farouk is selling is a wreck and that if the PCs haven't been able to talk him down, they must be a liability.

If the character succeeds on one of the checks, Farouk will take what he originally thought the property was worth (10,000gp), but is willing to sell it to the PCs now and accept payments over time.

If the character succeeds on two of the checks, they have convinced Farouk that the property is not worth what he thought it was. In this case, he is willing to sell it to the PCs for 5,000gp in installments. Assuming this isn't the third week of downtime, he also offers to knock this down further if the PCs help him with other House Akraid business. (Similarly, if they've already helped him, he halves it.)

If the character succeeds on all of the checks, Farouk is beside himself with how decrepit the place looks and similarly believes the PCs would be worthy owners. He parts with the whole property for 500gp.

CAROUSE AND PARTY

Patron: Paelias Amastacia

Rival: Dawnbringer Nadir "Toes" Sevriss

Description: No matter how heroic, sometimes characters need to cut loose. Hopefully, while you're letting off steam, you might make some money or some new contacts! Paelias Amastacia is a legendary partier. He knows the best places to carouse in every quarter of the city—the plushiest pleasure palaces and the seediest dive bars. PCs who can convince him to let them tag along (as opposed to just pointing them in the right direction) find that their purses are a bit heavier and they make contacts a bit easier.

Check 1: Charisma (Persuasion or Deception), DC 14

Check 2: Charisma (Perform) or Wisdom (Insight), DC 14

Check 3: Wisdom (Medicine), DC 14

Complications:

Characters who are jailed or who make enemies while carousing find that they've also caught the attention of Dawnbringer Nadir "Toes" Sevriss—who thinks this is a wildly inappropriate time to be carousing and becomes a **Rival**. However, this level of dedication to partying makes Paelias a **Patron** in the future.

Outcome:

Make the three checks first.

Refer to the "Carousing" section in the DMG (p. 128) and the "Carousing" section in *XGtE* (p. 126–128).

If the PC succeeds in none of the checks, Paelias points them to either the lower- or middle-class carousing areas but does not go with them and does not help them foot the bill. The PC may choose which place to carouse. Roll to see if there are complications related to the location, then roll on both the contact carousing chart (*XGtE*) and the standard carousing chart (DMG).

If the PC succeeds on one of the checks, Paelias is willing to take the PCs wherever, but will not participate or pay. The PC may choose which place to carouse. Roll to see if there are complications related to the location, then roll on both the contact carousing chart (XGtE) and the standard carousing chart (DMG).

If the PC succeeds on two of the checks, Paelias is willing to take the PCs wherever, and even offers to pay if they choose lower- or middle-class carousing. Similarly, the PC gets advantage on the standard carousing table. The PC may choose which place to carouse. Roll to see if there are complications related to the location, then roll on both the contact carousing chart (XGtE) and the standard carousing chart (DMG).

If the PC succeeds on all three checks, Paelias insists on taking the PC to the wealthiest carousing available—and in paying for everything. Paelias pays for upper-class carousing as well as covering any gambling debts or fines incurred by the PC as a result of the carousing. The PC has advantage on the standard carousing chart and gains one additional allied contact. (Note the maximum unspecified per-character contacts in XGtE, p.128).

CONDUCT A HEIST

Patron: Cloak

Rival: Gamila Kel-Tir

Description: Less scrupulous characters or rebellious ones may want to take advantage of the chaos to perform some looting. Cloak is desperate to take advantage of the situation and is very interested in involving the characters (as fresh, free-of-suspicion agents) in a heist.

There are several targets available, and the thieving character may choose among them. You may share the DCs as well as the skills required for the three checks with players. Do not share complications ahead of time!

- DC 10, 100 gp, robbery of a Kel-Tir barracks
- DC 15, 200gp, robbery of a Menlat storehouse
- DC 20, 400gp, robbery of a Zoos bar safe
- DC 25, 2,000 gp, robbery of an Akraid vault

Of course, Cloak wants her cut (half the take) for orchestrating the heist and providing the intel.

- **Check 1:** Dexterity (Stealth)
- **Check 2:** Wisdom or Dexterity (Thieves' Tools)
- **Check 3:** Charisma (Deception), Wisdom (Perception), or Intelligence (Investigation)

Complications:

Crime doesn't always pay. Whether or not the character encounters complications is dependent on the success of the checks; see Outcome for details.

Outcome:

Make the three checks.

If the PC succeeds on none of the checks, the character is caught and jailed. The character must pay a fine equal to the profit they would have earned if they had been successful, and will spend one week per 50gp of that total in jail. If the fine cannot be paid (or if they want to buy their way out sooner) they can take a loan from a Patron (likely Cloak, Farouk Akraid, or Uldega Vlari), but this diminishes their reputation and requires them to pay back twice the value of the loan. Work out the details for reasonable and prompt repayment; delaying repaying the loan will cause the Patron to become a Rival and possibly involve more jail time. Buying out of jail requires double the gold of the fine (pay 50gp extra for each week they don't want to spend in jail).

If the character succeeds on one of the checks, the heist fails, the character escapes, and Gamila suspects the character's involvement, making her a Rival. Cloak becomes a Patron. Additionally, there is a further complication from the chart below:

d4 Conduct a Heist Complications Chart 1

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | A bounty equal to your potential profit is offered for information about the crime by the house you attempted to rob. |
| 2 | One of your rivals contacts you, threatening to turn you in for the heist if you don't perform a service for them. |
| 3 | Your victim is ruined by the attempted theft; the Kel-Tir guards are demoted, the Menlat storehouse manager and guards are fired, the Zoos bar is shut down, or the Akraid vault guards are held on suspicion of conspiracy. |
| 4 | The victimized house asks one of your companions to solve the case. |

If the character succeeds on two of the checks, the heist partially succeeds and you are able to steal half of the possible loot value. Cloak becomes a patron. Gamila suspects your involvement only if she is already a Rival (in which case she becomes a more entrenched Rival). Additionally, there is a further complication from the chart below:

d4 Conduct a Heist Complications Chart 2

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | The loot is a single, easily identified item that you can't fence in Almraiven. |
| 2 | A bounty equal to double your profit is offered for information about the crime by the house you robbed. |
| 3 | Your victim doesn't report the crime to the guard; Almraiven's underground is out looking for you instead. |
| 4 | You receive a faded note written in an elaborate script that swears revenge for this slight. It is unsigned. |

If the character succeeds on all three checks, the heist is a wild success and you are able to earn the full value of the heist in profit. Cloak becomes a Patron.

CRAFT A MAGIC ITEM

Patron: Paelias Amastacia

Rival: Corrin Goodbarrel

Description: Craftsmen characters may want to try their hand at making their own magic items. This

choice takes all three weeks of downtime. The first week is spent accessing the appropriate materials and laboratory. The second and third weeks may be spent crafting items.

This section dovetails with the "Crafting an Item" information on pp. 128–130 in *XGtE*.

- **Check 1:** Intelligence (Investigation) or Dexterity (Stealth), DC 14
- **Check 2:** Strength (Athletics or Intimidation) or Charisma (Intimidation), DC 14
- **Check 3:** The tool, kit, or skill needed to craft the item, DC 14

Complications:

Paelias has built himself a well-equipped and illicit magical laboratory, but he has squatters who have taken up residence there in the chaos and are using it for less-than-legal operations. He can't go to the guard because of the less-than-legal things of his own that would be exposed if he them in. Helping him allows the PCs to have access to many of the rare ingredients and equipment they may not otherwise have, but it first requires them to come to terms with the squatters.

Corrin is benefiting from the squatters creations and (since he doesn't know it was actually Paelias' lab) is likely to become a Rival if the characters interfere.

Outcome:

Make the three checks first. This represents the first of the three weeks of downtime (meaning the remaining two work-weeks can be spent making items).

If the PC succeeds on none of the checks, the squatters retain full control of the lab, meaning the character needs to pay them to use it. In addition to paying the squatters 100gp, only a Common item (or healing potions) can be created. Paelias and Corrin see the PC as a useless meddler; both become Rivals.

If the PC succeeds on one of the checks, the squatters retain shared control of the lab, meaning the character doesn't need to pay them to use it.

Only Common items (or healing potions) can be created, and Corrin becomes a Rival.

If the PC succeeds on two of the checks, they effectively kick the squatters out. This allows Common or Uncommon items to be created (along with healing potions). Paelias becomes a Patron, and since Paelias' forge continues to produce, Corrin does not become a Rival.

If the PC succeeds on all three checks, they kick the squatters out (allowing Common or Uncommon items to be created) but also demonstrate extraordinary efficiency with materials, meaning the cost for created items in these two remaining weeks of downtime is reduced by 25%. Since both Paelias and Corrin benefit from this, they both become Patrons.

CURE A MAGIC EPIDEMIC / SERVE A TEMPLE

Patron: Dawnbringer Nadir "Toes" Sevriss

Rival: Cloak

Description: In the wake of the disaster, many people are coming down with a sickness. At first, it was thought to just be a result of the exhaustion and dehydration, but the plague is literally blanching people's skin—a very dangerous occurrence in an equatorial climate. People are calling the disease "Bedwhite." It not only flushes color from people's skin, it also causes infected individuals to accumulate exhaustion at a rate of one level per day until the disease has caused the infected to gain three levels of exhaustion. Note, these three gained from the disease can stack with other levels gained from other sources. Once it has reached this stage, the victim must endure the exhaustion for three days. If they survive that long, the disease abates.

Dawnbringer Nadir has opened wide the doors to the Temple of Light, and other priests are doing what they can for the diseased, but it's not enough.

While Cloak doesn't want the disease to kill everyone, she is quietly excited that this disease affects genasi and humans indiscriminately; many diseases that affect humans the genasi are

resistant to. As such, she is hoping the fear of the disease will—at the very least—humble the genasi nobility.

Curing/Treating the disease involves treating the stricken, researching the symptoms, and ultimately attempting a cure.

- **Check 1:** Wisdom (Medicine), DC 14
- **Check 2:** Intelligence (Investigation), DC 14
- **Check 3:** Herbalism Kit or Artisan's Tools (Alchemist, Brewer, or Cook), DC 14 [Note: these tools can be supplied by the Temple if the PC doesn't have them.]

Complications:

The most dangerous complication is the possibility of contracting the disease itself, but there is also a risk of turning Cloak into a Rival.

Outcome:

Make the three checks first.

If the PC succeeds on none of the checks, no cure is created (though the disease is still treatable with bedrest and curable with *lesser restoration* or similar healing). Worst of all, the PC contracts the disease itself. The only good news is that Dawnbringer Nadir becomes a Patron, and the transmission method of the disease (skin-to-skin contact with an affected person) is discovered.

If the PC succeeds on one of the checks, the character is able to create an effective treatment (salve) which reduces the duration of the disease by a day (from minimum of six to a minimum of five) and lowers the exhaustion threshold to two (from three). Dawnbringer Nadir becomes a Patron, and transmission is discovered.

If the PC succeeds on two of the checks, they discover the salve, the transmission method, a way to mass produce the salve without using the limited pure water supply, and Dawnbringer Nadir becomes a Patron. This tamps down on the number of infected quickly, allowing the temples to make progress toward eliminating the disease in the city. In addition, Dawnbringer Nadir promises the character the resources of the Temple for one free cast of any healing spell up to *greater restoration*.

If the PC succeeds on all three of the checks, they discover the transmission method, Dawnbringer Nadir becomes a Patron, and a cure is discovered. Once cured, an individual cannot re-contract the disease. This tamps down on the number of infected quickly, allowing the temples to make progress toward eliminating the disease in the city. In addition, Dawnbringer Nadir promises the character the resources of the Temple for one free cast of any healing spell up to *greater restoration* or a cast of *raise dead*.

DETECTIVE WORK

Patron: Gamila Kel-Tir

Rival: Nashwa Menlat

Description: Almraiven's governor, Rishik Sirsh, is worried. His daughter, Saadia Sirsh, grew up with Zaina Antar (female air genasi). Governor Rishik has grown quite fond of his daughter's friend; Zaina has become a favored advisor of his. Unfortunately, among the chaos of the disaster, she was found dead in her bedchamber with her throat slit. Gamila has managed to keep the murder under wraps at the governor's request for now, but she needs to apprehend the murderer before the news gets out and demoralizes the populace further.

Gamila is happy to get an outside "consultant" because she is stuck; her own detective skills are good, but this killer has managed to evade her.

The three checks cover the PC's investigation: meeting with Zaina's family, friends, and house servants, looking for potential witnesses, searching out motives, and performing a crime scene investigation. Feel free to flesh this investigation out as much or as little as you like—it is only downtime after all!

- **Check 1:** Wisdom (Insight), DC 14
- **Check 2:** Intelligence (History), DC 14
- **Check 3:** Intelligence (Investigation), DC 14

Complications:

Nashwa is well-aware of the murder and (partly rightly) believes her brother is in some way responsible. Becoming a consulting detective on

the case causes Nashwa to become a Rival to the PC. Nashwa's brother is not directly responsible for the murder, but his support of banditry has allowed the assassin into the city. This is not enough to convict him of murder, but he is an accessory to the crime due to his negligence. (In reality, the banditry he supports is far more legally damning).

Outcome:

Make the three checks first.

If the PC succeeds in none of the checks, Gamila is no better off than she was when she started. She is forced to allocate more resources to solve the murder, and the PC does not gain her as a Patron.

If the PC succeeds on one of the checks, Gamila is able to get a lead. While it does not lead to an arrest, it does implicate someone in the Menlat family (making Nashwa a Rival). It also earns Gamila's respect as a Patron for future endeavors.

If the PC succeeds on two of the checks, Gamila not only finds a lead, but is able to track that lead down and arrest a suspect. While the suspect is not, in fact, the murderer, the arrest spooks the actual murderer (an assassin paid by the resistance) who, it is discovered, flees the city. The suspect—a low-ranking member of House Menlat—is still guilty of conspiracy, giving some measure of justice and getting Gamila off the hook for a public relations nightmare. However, it does earn Nashwa's ire and turn her into a Rival. The characters involved are granted a Badge of Audience by the governor himself for their involvement. (A Badge of Audience is a one-use official document granting the character a meeting with the governor.)

If the PC succeeds on all three checks, Gamila and the PC are able to track down and catch the assassin, a tiefling named Nicor Revulsion who has been trying to pass himself off as a Kel-Tir fire genasi. The assassin is able to be turned over to the governor for justice (after interrogation, he'll be executed. Curious PCs will be unhappy to learn that the interrogation will be private; the assassin's truest motives will not be shared with the PCs.) Because the assassin is not a member of House Menlat, their involvement is not widely publicized (so the PCs do not gain Nashwa as a Rival). PCs

involved are lauded as heroes of the city, granted a permanent Writ of Audience (allowing them to arrange meetings with the governor whenever they wish to) and earning Gamila's happy Patron status.

ENGAGE IN YOUR PROFESSION

Patron: Corrin Goodbarrel

Rival: Varies (see Complications)

Description: Engaging in one's profession is as simple (or complicated) as going to work.

Complications:

If a work complication arises, assume that one of the notables is involved as a Rival. Choose an appropriate notable based on the type of work being performed and the character performing the work.

Outcome:

Use the "Work" section on p. 134 of *XGtE* to determine the wages and possible complications of working a job.

ENTER A TOURNAMENT

Patron: Gamila Kel-Tir

Rival: Paelias Amastacia

Description: Gamila is involved in an underground tournament known as the Sandfighters' Arena. She has gambled away much of her personal wealth on these matches, and is now in the uncompromising position of either fighting a match herself or of providing a fighter who will battle on her behalf. The bouts are nonlethal, but they are illegal nonetheless; many of the fighters are humans, and the establishment (secretly) sees it as a training ground for resistance fighters. Gamila would need to win two bouts to restore her credit and her standing and prevent her exposure as a participant beyond the Arena.

PCs who are itching for a fight can take Gamila's place and fight on her behalf.

- **Check 1:** Strength (Athletics), DC 14

- **Check 2:** Wisdom (Perception), DC 14
- **Check 3:** Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) or Strength (Intimidate) or Charisma (Intimidate), DC 14

Complications:

Paelias Amastacia knows about Gamila's tournament fighting and doesn't particularly want her to win so that he can continue to collect interest on his loan to her. Depending on how well the characters do in the tournament, they may end up with permanent injuries/scarring.

Outcome:

Make the three checks first.

If the PC succeeds in none of the checks, Gamila's debt is unpaid (though she still becomes a Patron) and the character has lost two bouts (as well as taking damage equal to half their maximum hit points). In addition, the PC gains a permanent injury/scar from the chart below. Finally, Paelias finds out about the character's involvement, becoming a Rival.

d4	Enter a Tournament Complications Chart
1	You lose a finger from your "off" hand
2	You receive a facial scar. This can be from a piercing or slashing weapon and can be whatever shape or size.
3	You are sliced across the eye, causing you to lose sight in it. (This has no mechanical affect and can be fixed with a <i>regenerate</i> spell.)
4	The fingernails on one hand fall off from a bludgeoning strike.

If the PC succeeds on one of the checks, they win one of the bouts but lose the next two. The character takes damage equal to half of their maximum hit points. In addition, Paelias still finds out and becomes a Rival. Gamila becomes a Patron.

If the PC succeeds on two of the checks, the character wins their first two bouts, only losing in the championship match. This restores Gamila's credit and standing, and gives the character a 100gp prize. Paelias doesn't find out that the character helped Gamila, but Gamila does become a Patron.

If the PC succeeds on all three checks, the character wins all of the bouts—including the championship bout. Gamila becomes a Patron, Paelias does not become a Rival, and the character wins the grand prize: 200 gp and an engraved dagger with "Sandfighter Supreme" on it.

GAMBLE

Patron: Corrin Goodbarrel

Rival: Varies (see Complications)

Description: Engaging in gambling is expensive but sometimes rewarding work.

Complications:

If a gambling complication arises, assume that one of the notables is involved as a Rival. Choose an appropriate notable based on the type of complication and the character who is gambling.

Outcome:

Use the "Gambling" section on pp. 130–131 of *XGtE* to determine the wages and possible complications of gambling. Regardless, Corrin Goodbarrel loves a good gambler and becomes a Patron for that character.

INVESTIGATE THE SOURCE OF THE DISASTER

Patron: Dawnbringer Nadir "Toes" Sevrin

Rival: Gamila Kel-Tir

Description: Curious characters may want to spend their downtime trying to figure out the source of the earthquake and answer the question: was this a random, natural event or a targeted, magical attack? Dawnbringer Nadir is similarly interested in the source of the disaster and is willing to use his own magical and mundane resources to assist characters who seek these answers. Farouk Akraid believes this to be a waste of time; regardless of the source, it is a misuse of resources to look backward instead of forward.

- Check 1: Intelligence (Religion or Arcana), DC 14

- Check 2: Intelligence or Wisdom (Investigation), DC 14
- Check 3: Intelligence (Nature or History), DC 14

Complications:

Farouk hates misusing money. Since the Akraids have a vested interest in the Temple of Light, he sees the idea of using Temple resources to investigate the source of the disaster as wasteful.

Outcome:

If the PC succeeds in none of the checks, Dawnbringer Nadir uses a great deal of Temple resources and is still left with ambiguity. This ambiguity convinces him that the disaster was a deliberate attack. This news spreads through the group of notables, but is contested by Farouk who believes that it was not only a wasteful exercise to search for a source at this point, but that the ambiguity should be taken as confirmation that it was only a natural occurrence. A character gains Dawnbringer Nadir as a Patron and Farouk Akraid as a Rival.

If the character succeeds on one of the checks, Dawnbringer Nadir uses a great deal of the Temple's resources to assist the character but finds convincing evidence that it was only a natural quake. The PC gains Dawnbringer Nadir as a Patron and Farouk Akraid as a Rival.

If the character succeeds on two of the checks, the PC is able to discover relevant information without using a large amount of Temple resources: it was only a natural quake. The PC gains Dawnbringer Nadir as a Patron but does not gain Farouk Akraid as a Rival.

If the character succeeds on all of the checks, the PC is able to discover that it was only a natural quake without using any significant Temple resources. This prudence impresses both Dawnbringer Nadir and Farouk Akraid who both become Patrons. Similarly, while the quake was natural, there are signs that some of the complications arising from the quake are—while still not strictly speaking intentional—supernatural.

THE DISASTER

The idea of what caused the disaster will have to haunt the PCs for a while longer. For your knowledge as DM:

- The quake is naturally occurring.
- Long ago, a nearby kingdom was cursed—forced Atlantis-style beneath the sands.
- The quake has uncovered not only a bit of this lost kingdom, but also a clue to its whereabouts *and* its monstrous guardian(s).
- The "clue" is a gigantic ark-like battleship that has now been dredged up from the bottom of the sea and is the focus the next part of the adventure, *Sands of Empty Wishes, Part 4, "The Lady Dark."*

PURCHASE MAGIC ITEMS

Patron: Paelias Amastacia

Rival: Cloak

Description: Though there aren't any magic item markets in Calimshan, it is possible to find magic items for sale. Paelias Amastacia is one of the best brokers in the city. He's pleased to use those skills to help the PCs, but he can be fickle in his efforts without the proper motivation. Similarly, seeking seemingly insignificant magic items can raise the ire of Cloak. She has a great deal of interest in stopping the legitimate magic item trade (since so many of its beneficiaries are genasi nobles).

In Paelias Amastacia, the PCs have already found a "seller," (really a broker) but they still need to make checks to see what kind of items he can come up with. (On p. 126 of *XGtE* there are guidelines for characters seeking specific magic items as well.) Because of the PCs connection to Uldega and the other notables, Paelias doesn't charge the normal fees associated with the search; the PCs do not need to pay the 100gp per week. However, they may choose to pay 100gp (or more) in order to boost their final search score.

- Check 1: Intelligence (Arcana), DC 14
- Check 2: Intelligence (Investigation), DC 14

- Check 3: Charisma (Persuasion) (see "Buying a Magic Item" on p. 126 of the *XGtE* for results).

Complications:

Cloak is not so self-centered that she believes that the characters are seeking to use the legitimate magic item market in order to sabotage her own efforts. However, she doesn't want her efforts exposed. Shoddy investigative efforts (failure on check 2) cause danger to her agents and will make her a Rival. Similarly, failing to recognize true magic items versus duplicates or decoys allows her agents to waste Paelias' time, ultimately leading to fewer quality items being available.

Outcome:

Once the PCs have decided if they're looking for something specific (and you've set the appropriate end-DC), make the first two checks and consult the information below.

Refer to the "Buying a Magic Item" section in the *XGtE* (p. 126) for charts and ideas referenced in this section.

If the PC succeeds in neither of the first two checks, the PCs have disadvantage on their final Charisma (Persuasion) check, Cloak becomes a rival, and the first magic item purchased (if any) is subject to a roll on the "Magic Item Purchase Complications" table (p. 126 *XGtE*). Paelias does the bare minimum for the PCs, giving them a (likely) small set of low quality items available.

If the PC succeeds on the first check but not the second, Cloak becomes a rival, but there are no further complications.

If the PC succeeds on the second check but not the first, the first magic item purchased (if any) is subject to a roll on the "Magic Item Purchase Complications" table (p. 126 *XGtE*), but Cloak does not become a Rival.

If the PC succeeds on both of the first two checks, Paelias is impressed by the PCs knowledge and skill and works extra hard to locate a suitable cache of available magic items. PCs roll Check 3

with advantage and receive a 10% price reduction in asking price.

PURSUE A ROMANCE / RELATIONSHIP / COURTESAN

Patron: Corrin Goodbarrel OR Cloak

Rival: Corrin Goodbarrel OR Paelias Amastacia

Description: Some players may want to engage in romance during their downtime. Feel free to adjust this according to a discussion with your players about how they want to progress such a relationship with their characters, but here is a general guideline that allows the dice to do some of the work of creating the story!

Some “love interest” options appear below. Players should feel free to work with you to create their own if they wish. (I'm leaving gender mostly out of these examples. An interested player can assign a gender—or lack of—to the NPC being pursued).

- Fire genasi with a military bent from House Kel-Tir. This low-level officer and sensual lover is passionate, jealous, and fiercely loyal.
- Human with deep blue eyes and a tattoo of an owl on the left arm. This lowly house servant is coy and flirty, secretive about the past but clear about wanting to spend the future with someone who can take them away from servitude.
- Dwarf merchant with a heart of gold and deep pockets. This dwarf insists on paying for everything while on a date, but also doesn't like to be seen dating (and will insist that all activities with non-dwarves be couched as “business meetings”).
- Water genasi from House Zoos who is only looking to have fun and (at least at first) isn't looking for anything serious. It is likely this genasi has other lovers and shows love in very physical ways.
- Human courtesan from the Red District who you are paying as an escort. Devious, playful, and elegant, this courtesan is not above using your emotions against you, actively working to create jealousy, protective instincts, and—

perhaps obviously—lust in order to keep you paying for services.

- Air genasi ex-lover who you meet by chance. You dated at least a decade ago, and your ex has changed significantly since then. They are now able to appreciate you more, though whether that translates into a long-term relationship is unclear.
- An earth genasi with a stubborn streak is having a spat with a spouse and is actively looking for someone to cheat with. Whether this will blossom into a new relationship or just be a callous way to revenge themselves on a combative spouse remains to be seen.
- **Check 1:** Wisdom (Insight) or Charisma (Persuasion), DC 14
- **Check 2:** Charisma (Perform) or Charisma (Deception), DC 14
- **Check 3:** Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics), DC 14

Complications:

Corrin Goodbarrel has a crush on one of the PCs. If that PC is the one who wants to spend time pursuing a relationship, and they're willing to pursue it with Corrin, then any success or failure pertains to Corrin. If they choose not to pursue that relationship, the results will still determine how likely Corrin is to become a rival (though the new paramour would be the one becoming a Patron).

If Corrin is uninvolved as a Patron or Rival, it is easy for Cloak to introduce successful paramours and become a Patron and/or for Paelias Amastacia to be a spurned Rival lover who feels as though the character has stolen a potential mate.

Outcome:

Make the three checks.

If the PC succeeds in none of the checks, the relationship is a whirlwind romance. This could range from a steamy one-night stand to a night of dancing and drinking to a midnight stroll that lasts for hours. Whatever the case, by the time the dawn comes, you've committed a grave mistake and injured/angered your paramour. They become a Rival. You spend the rest of the week sulking and

recovering from your horrid mistake. Cloak remains a Patron, despite your idiocy.

If the character succeeds on one of the checks, your relationship lasts the week. Parties, dinners, taking long walks—whatever you do while you're together has been pleasant, but ultimately your paramour breaks it off with you. Perhaps in the future you'll be more compatible? Cloak remains a Patron.

If the character succeeds on two of the checks, your relationship is a whirlwind of tender love and passion. Even at the end of the week, you're still madly attached to one another. You've agreed that even though duty calls you away, you'll be seeing each other again; your relationship will endure. Your paramour becomes a Patron; Paelias Amastacia becomes a Rival.

If the character succeeds on all of the checks, you have found your soulmate. This person is not just a paramour but the one who you one day hope to marry. If the DM and player agree, there could even be a hastily arranged wedding before the week's end. Alternatively, the week might have ended with an accepted proposal or similar promise of a future marriage. Regardless, your relationship with this individual is exceptional. Your paramour becomes a Patron as does Cloak. You earn no Rivals from this as everyone can see how right you are for each other!

RESEARCH / STUDY A NEW SUBJECT

Patron: None

Rival: None

Description: Characters may decide to look for information about some piece of lore they've encountered thus far.

Complications:

None of the notables assembled by Uldega are appropriate Rivals for the complications generated by researching. Feel free to create a new Rival if the character triggers a complication.

Outcome:

Use the information on pp. 132–133 of *XGtE* to establish how many pieces of lore a character learns about their chosen topic. If it is unclear what the lore should include/entail or if the question the character wants answered cannot yet be answered, feel free to reward the character with a Patron who is a wise lore-master—someone the character can consult when the time is right.

SCRIBE A SPELL SCROLL

Patron: None

Rival: None

Description: Scribing is solitary, lonely work, but sometimes a character wants to spend downtime crafting new spell scrolls!

Complications:

If a complication arises involving a Rival, assume that one of the notables is involved. Choose an appropriate notable based on the type of scroll being scribed and the character performing the scribing.

Outcome:

Use the "Scribing a Spell Scroll" section on p. 133 of *XGtE* to determine the costs, time, outcomes—and possible complications—from scribing a spell scroll.

SEARCH FOR SURVIVORS / CLEAR WRECKAGE

Patron: Dawnbringer Nadir "Toes" Sevrin

Rival: Farouk "Goldbite" Akraid

Description: Particularly compassionate characters may want to spend some time assisting the Kel-Tir as they search for survivors from the earthquake and the ensuing floods and fires which are plaguing the city.

- **Check 1:** Wisdom (Survival) or Strength (Animal Handling) or Wisdom (Animal Handling), DC 14

- **Check 2:** Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation), DC 14
- **Check 3:** Strength (Athletics) or Dexterity (Acrobatics), DC 14

Complications:

Dawnbringer Nadir is especially worried about his lover, Thana Intriz, and supports characters who want to search for survivors. Similarly, Farouk Akraid is worried that by speeding up the search for survivors it will exacerbate the refugee problem before there are any solutions, straining already strained purses.

Outcome:

Make the three checks.

If the PC succeeds in none of the checks, their work is fruitless and slow. While they find the bodies of several dozen commoners, they discover no sign of Thana Intriz; she is presumed dead. Perhaps worst of all, your work crew's efforts inadvertently caused another building collapse, blocking off one of the recently cleared streets and causing even greater delays for people and goods traveling the city. Dawnbringer Nadir is still grateful for your efforts and becomes a Patron. Farouk Akraid is furious at your failure and becomes a Rival.

If the character succeeds on one of the checks, they are met with some success. A few people are found alive in the wreckage of the buildings you are clearing. Unfortunately, only the body of Thana Intriz is found. Nevertheless, Dawnbringer Nadir is grateful for the closure and becomes a Patron. Farouk begrudgingly accepts that the few survivors found have boosted moral and are not a drain on resources; he does not become a Rival.

If the character succeeds on two of the checks, you manage to uncover a basement vault with dozens of living survivors. These survivors are skilled individuals who are eager to put their skills to work rebuilding the city. In addition, you are able to find Thana Intriz alive, though injured, and reunite her with Dawnbringer Nadir. Farouk Akraid is happy to see productivity instead of refugees and does not become a rival. Dawnbringer Nadir becomes a very happy Patron.

If the character succeeds on all of the checks, then you manage to not only save dozens of survivors—including Thana Intriz—but one survivor and tavern-and-innkeeper, dwarf Duric Burrowfound, offers you his eternal friendship (which includes rooms and gossip for you and your compatriots). Duric becomes a Patron, as does Dawnbringer Nadir. Farouk Akraid does not become a Rival. Duric invites you to his inn, the Sordid Stone at your earliest convenience.

SELL MAGIC ITEMS

Patron: Nashwa Menlat

Rival: Paelias Amastacia

Description: While buying a magic item means going through Paelias, Nashwa's business involves selling them. Use the information on pp. 133-134 in *XGtE* to resolve characters who wish to sell magic items, with the following change: the 25gp/week resource cost is waived.

Complications:

Any complications that ensue can be traced (somehow) back to Paelias, who is desperate to prevent Nashwa from muscling in on his business.

Outcome:

Regardless of the outcome of the sale, Nashwa becomes a Patron and Paelias becomes a Rival.

SPY ON AN ENEMY OR RIVAL

Patron: Cloak (unless she is the target, in which case Gamila)

Rival: Dawnbringer Nadir

Description: It is possible that more paranoid players may decide it's a good idea to spy on rivals or enemies. It seems more likely that this will take place as a second or third option rather than a first choice for downtime. Nevertheless, a character who chooses to spy is basically doing "first-hand" research.

Some options for targets may include:

- Any of the notables at Uldega's gathering or Uldega himself
- Governor Rishik Sirsh or a member of his family
- An ex-lover (if a character's romance turned south)
- A member of law enforcement (particularly if a heist went badly)
- One of the heads of the noble houses, or a prominent noble
- An NPC from a character's background who is in Almraiven

Some inappropriate choices:

- An NPC from the character's background who is not in Almraiven
- The Peddler
- Other player characters

Before rolling any of the checks, roll a percentile die; there is a ten percent chance of encountering a complication from the chart below. (See

Complications):

- **Check 1:** Dexterity (Stealth), DC 14
- **Check 2:** Deception (Charisma), DC 14
- **Check 3:** Investigation (Intelligence), use "Research Outcomes" chart on p. 132 in *XGtE*

Complications:

Generally speaking, Cloak encourages the PCs to spy on their rivals—as long as they will share what they know. Similarly, Dawnbringer Nadir thinks spying reeks of illicit behavior unbecoming a champion of the light.

d6	Spy on an Enemy or Rival Complications Chart
1	You accidentally damage the target's property
2	You offend a contact, who demands an expensive gift as atonement.
3	If you had known the group you were working with employed goblins, you never would have signed on. The goblins are hangers-on and you become a known associate of their band.
4	A thief becomes obsessed with you, tracking your every move.
5	Your questions spook a local tavern's patrons and start a bar-fight. You are banned from the tavern for life.
6	You are offered a tantalizing piece of information, but to obtain it, you will have to owe a powerful genasi a favor.

Outcome:

Make the first two checks.

If the PC succeeds on neither of the checks, they make the final Intelligence (Investigation) check with disadvantage. Additionally, the target becomes a Rival if they were not before. Cloak becomes a Patron (assuming she's not the target).

If the character succeeds on one of the first two checks, make the final Investigation check normally. The target remains a Rival if they were already but does not become one if they were not before. Cloak becomes a Patron (assuming she is not the target).

If the character succeeds on both of the initial checks, make the final Investigation check with advantage. Even if the target was a Rival before, the PC has discovered how to win the target over; they are no longer an active enemy. The PC has either managed to avoid their attentions or convince them that they are not a threat to them. Cloak becomes a Patron.

The results of the third check of Intelligence (Investigation) reveal how many pieces of lore the character is able to acquire (as per the chart on p.132 in the *XGtE*). The DM is the ultimate judge of what information is discovered.

TRAIN WITH A MASTER

Patron: None

Rival: None

Description: This task takes all three weeks of downtime and must therefore not be entered into lightly or late. PCs have a chance to learn a new language or develop proficiency in a new tool from this training, but it is costly and there is a potential for failure.

- **Check 1:** Wisdom (Insight), DC 14
- **Check 2:** Intelligence (Investigation), DC 14
- **Check 3:** Either the tool you are training with OR a straight Intelligence check, DC 14

Complications:

There is no chance for complications, only a chance for failure!

Outcome:

Make the three checks.

If the PC succeeds in none of the checks, the character gains nothing mechanical from the experience. However, they are granted inspiration and can count on their master/trainer as a Patron.

If the PC succeeds on one of the checks, they become able to recognize the language or gain a single use of advantage on a tool check in which you are not proficient. The character gains inspiration and their master/trainer becomes a Patron.

If the PC succeeds on two of the checks, character becomes proficient in the language or tool they've been training (though for roleplaying purposes, they are still novices. This tool cannot be the subject of Expertise and the character will never pass as a native speaker of the language).

If the PC succeeds on all three checks, the character becomes proficient in the language or tool they've been training in as if they've always known it. They can pass for a native speaker of the language and the tool may eventually be the target of Expertise.

VISIT A MONASTERY OR HOLY SITE

Patron: Dawnbringer Nadir "Toes" Sevriss

Rival: Gamila Kel-Tir

Description: Some characters, particularly those with a divine bent, may decide this is a perfect time to go on a pilgrimage to a monastery or holy site. Work with your players to determine how specific this site is to their faith/religion/path. (For example, holy shrines to the Elemental Princes are fairly common near Almraiven, but it may be unlikely there is a monastery devoted to a Gnomish deity anywhere in Calimshan.)

Some popular destinations may include:

- The Silent Spring, a secluded cliff a day's journey outside the city that is sacred to Eldath. Pilgrims claim they are never in danger when the Spring is their destination.
- Torchbright, an everburning natural flame fed by natural gas around which followers of flame deities have built a fortress and monastery.
- The Sighouse, a spire thrust out of the sea where druids of Silvanus and Umberlee, bound by an uneasy truce, meditate on the mysteries of the sea.
- Shieldhame, a convent devoted to Helm where an order of women train to become defenders in the name of the Watchful Eye.
- The Palace of Desire, a training place of courtesans (and prostitutes). Ostensibly, it is devoted to Sune and those who worship beauty. In reality, it is watched over by The Lady in Red, a fire genasi who secretly worships Beshaba.
- Battlebreak Field, a holy sanctuary of combat is a deserted wasteland in a valley surprisingly near Almraiven. Those whose lust for battle is strong are often driven to seek out this arena by Tempus himself. It is said that a champion of Tempus has watched over the place for centuries, though whether this is the same champion or the mantle has passed from champion to champion is unknown.
- The Font of Righteousness is a fabled holy place of Tyr. Only those called by the Even-

Handed can find it, and it is said that they who do are able to see perfectly how to atone for any misdeed. Some who seek it crave this atonement, others see it as a curse. All who receive the call are drawn inexorably to discover the secrets of their own hearts.

- **Check 1:** Wisdom (Survival or Animal Handling), DC 14
- **Check 2:** Intelligence or Wisdom (Religion, Arcana, or Nature), DC 14
- **Check 3:** Wisdom (Insight), DC 14

Complications:

Powerful characters making personal pilgrimages has the potential to reflect well on those who see the influence of Almraiven's priests as beneficial. On the other hand, those who don't want the moralizing influence of the temples to grow will be annoyed at best and angered at worst by such shows of piety and devotion. Dawnbringer Nadir supports a pilgrimage to any neutral- or good-aligned location. Gamila Kel-Tir (because of her personal guilt) actively opposes such a journey.

Outcome:

Make the three checks.

If the PC succeeds in none of the checks, the journey to the holy site is uneventful and mostly empty. Perhaps the character is distracted or the priests or caretakers were corrupt. In any case, the journey leaves a sour taste in the character's mouth. They still gain Dawnbringer Nadir as a Patron and Gamila Kel-Tir as a Rival.

If the character succeeds on one of the checks, the journey is a moderate success. They either receive a holy relic from a caretaker of the holy site or discover one on their own. In either case, they feel as though they were meant to have this relic. Player and DM should work together to discern an appropriate item. Their faith and focus are strengthened. They gain Dawnbringer Nadir as a Patron and Gamila Kel-Tir as a Rival.

If the character succeeds on two of the checks, the journey was enlightening. Not only did they receive/find a holy relic, but this relic is such a recognizable symbol of their faith/deity that

displaying it grants advantage on checks related to interacting with other members of the faith/religion or who worship the same deity. Player and DM should work together to discern an appropriate item. They gain Dawnbringer Nadir as a Patron. This sincerity shames Gamila; she is not a Rival.

If the character succeeds on all of the checks, then this pilgrimage was transformative. During one particular prayer the PC is so in communion with their god that they were able to ask a single question and received the god's/power's answer! (DMs should feel free to play this up. The relevant god/force can answer this question truthfully to the best of the god's ability/knowledge. However, the answer may be couched in mystery or riddle!) The PC also received/found a holy relic directly from their deity. This relic is such a recognizable symbol of your faith/deity that displaying it grants advantage on checks related to interacting with other members of your faith/religion or who worship the same deity. Player and DM should work together to discern an appropriate item. The character gains Dawnbringer Nadir as a Patron. This sincerity shames Gamila; she is not a Rival.

DEVELOPMENT

When each of the PCs has spent the three weeks of downtime allotted, bring or summon them back to Uldega's palace and read the following:

After living and traveling among the chaos of the city for the past few weeks, you had forgotten what Uldega's home was like in the quiet times before the disaster. Looking around, you notice how much things have changed in these few short weeks. The carpets and tent-flaps—so meticulously managed before—are becoming ragged from the trample of so many shod feet. The gardens, before so lush and perfectly governed, are wilted here and there; stray weeds have cropped up and bald patches glare out at you. Uldega himself—a man who was haggard and stricken when you met him, despite his size—looks as worried as you have ever seen him. The notables you've become accustomed to checking in with under his tent are nowhere to be found.

He begins, "My friends, I didn't know who else to turn to. I have learned some new information. As things have begun settling, I paid a friend in House D'Ris who was willing to take some Vlari scouts along the coast. Ships are scarce at the moment, so this was ostensibly to assess the damage and look for survivors, but really I was hoping we'd find that the coast would reveal some secret—something that would point us toward a new aquifer.

"I was right about the secret, but I wish it hadn't been me who is now responsible for it. My scouts found a ship. Not just any ship, but a battleark, flying the flag of the Black Isles. It was beached out of reach on the heights of a cliff, but my scouts were adamant and consistent in their reports.

"You may have heard stories of the battlearks. Back in the times before the djinn ruled Calimshan, there were many human kingdoms scattered across the sands along the coast. Most have been lost to history, but there are still stories told of one: the Kingdom of the Black Isles. The stories told of four islands off the coast of Calimshan, all ruled over by a great king. The landed kingdoms grew jealous and built fleets of ships to conquer the islands, but the Black King was prepared. He built ships of enormous size and scope—the battlearks—to protect his people. The power of the arks is legendary, but history simply...stops recording anything about the Black Isles. The kingdom, the islands themselves, and the battlearks—all gone. Perhaps the greatest human kingdom that ever existed in the realm we now call Calimshan just...vanished.

"And now, during one of the worst crises of the city of Almraiven, a ship matching the description of a battleark and flying the flag of the Kingdom of Black Isles appears. I am not foolish enough to think that the Black Isles have returned, but such news would spark fear and riots, tearing the city apart.

"I need you to find this "battleark" and find out who built it. It could be a faction of rebels, hoping to spark a human revolt. It could be well-funded pirates, hoping to take advantage of the tensions in Calimshan. Perhaps it's a foreign power trying to rattle us as prelude to an invasion. Whoever it is, we must know the truth before they make their move: before it destroys the people of Almraiven."

PCs may have additional questions about the Black Isles, the battlearks, or other related items. There is very little in the history books from that long ago. Some legends that have sprung up around the Black Isles include:

- The gods themselves sunk the Black Isles into the sea for their hubris.
- The Black King went mad and commissioned a spell which destroyed the Black Isles and brought the first djinni to Calimshan.
- The Black Isles were destroyed at a time when Calimshan was verdant and fertile.
- Battlearks were built with ancient mariner magic allowing them to stay afloat despite their bloated and generally unseaworthy size and construction.

Regardless of how they proceed, award each character the opportunity to level up for their exploits in the downtime activities they participated in.

APPENDIX A:

The following are the notable persons gathered in Uldega Vlari's courtyard:

1. Uldega Vlari
2. Dawnbringer Nadir "Toes" Sevriss
3. "Cloak"
4. Farouk "Goldbite" Akraid
5. Nashwa Menlat
6. Corrin Goodbarrel
7. Gamila Kel-Tir
8. Paelias Amastacia

1. ULDEGA VLARI

Uldega Vlari is the party's so-far patron, an honest and corpulent water genasi man recognizable for his great size and sleepy demeanor. His particular talent for organization has brought this group of movers and shakers together in the first place.

He is overjoyed at the return of the PCs and the aqueduct workers, though he wishes the news had been better. As a gesture of good faith to the

assembled notables, he even allows the PCs to repeat their report openly to the entire group. (Uldega is, after all, hoping to secure their help in obtaining water for the city!)

For the moment, Uldega has no jobs for the PCs; there is too much minutiae and too much mundane work to be done. However, he believes that anything the PCs can do to assist the other notables with their issues would help him to win them over and get their help with the water situation. If asked, he advises the PCs as such.

2. DAWNBRINGER NADIR "TOES" SEVRIS

Dawnbringer Nadir "Toes" Sevriss is a fire genasi man recognizable for his piercings. He has lanced his ears, arms, and legs with burnished bronze, making him look like a patchwork of deep black and red. He is very charismatic and has a perfect memory. He tends to speak in rhyme or some other peculiar way and is arrogant in his dealings with others. Despite his arrogance, he earned the nickname "Toes" because of his incredible generosity to the poor. He consistently comes home without sandals or shoes, having given them to beggars or urchins he has seen in his daily journeys. Indeed, his feet are bare in the PCs' first introduction to him.

He is often at the Temple of Light in Almraiven, a place of worship for fire and light deity followers (Lathander and Imix, primarily). If you asked him, he would say that his ideal is, "Self-sacrifice!" If he has a flaw, it is that he is brave to the point of foolishness.

PROBLEM (Public): Cure Disease

In the wake of the disaster, many people are coming down with a sickness. At first, it was thought to just be a result of the exhaustion and dehydration, but the plague is literally blanching people's skin—a very dangerous occurrence in an equatorial climate. (See Cure a Magic Epidemic/ Serve a Temple, p.11.)

PROBLEM (Private): Missing Lover

Dawnbringer Nadir's lover, fierce fire genasi Thana Intriz, is still missing. He has been committing all of his personal and professional resources to helping figuratively and literally keep the lights on, which has left him no time to help search for Thana. (See *Search for survivors / Clear wreckage*, p. 17.)

3. "CLOAK"

"Cloak" (Real name, Eshi D'Voraz) is a female human, recognizable for her pronounced scar—a whip sliced clear across her face when she was a young servant in House Voras (water genasi; not a primary house) and it left a scar from her forehead to her chin crossing her nose and narrowly missing both eyes. She is enormously strong for a human (thanks to a hidden *Belt of Giant Strength*). Ostensibly, she runs a courier service. In reality, she runs the most feared thieves' guild in Almraiven. She tends to speak in a low voice and is deceptively friendly in her dealings with others.

The courier business is legitimate, and many of her messengers don't know the true purpose of the organization they serve.

She is protective of close family members. If you asked her, she would say that her ideal is, "beauty!" If she has a flaw, it is that she is possessed of overpowering greed.

PROBLEM (Public): Missing Persons

With the city in such disarray, many couriers are dead, injured, or missing, and many of the people being delivered to have been displaced. Assistance is needed locating missing persons (couriers and recipients) of note. (See *Search for survivors / Clear wreckage*, p. 17.)

PROBLEM (Private): Run a Heist

Cloak knows the chaos is a perfect time to make some extra money, but ironically her public profile has ruined her chances to disappear and be a part of a heist now. She needs fresh blood who will not be suspected to commit a burglary. (See *Conduct a Heist*, p.9.)

4. FAROUK "GOLDBITE" AKRAID

Farouk "Goldbite" Akraid is an earth genasi man, recognizable for his missing teeth—and their solid gold replacements. Known as a drunk, he drinks everyone under the table and is quite likely intoxicated when the PCs meet him. He tends to enunciate overly clearly to compensate and is honest in his dealings with others.

He is protective of a silent parrot, Feeth, who sits on his shoulder consistently and who he is constantly feeding. If you asked him, he would say that his ideal is, "Life without limits!" If he has a flaw, it is that he enjoys decadent pleasures.

PROBLEM (Public): Bank Recovery

House Akraid is working around the clock to protect the assets of its investors. However, one of the lesser known vaults is understaffed and was recently underwater in Dockside, and the Kel-Tir refuse to send help to protect it. Wreckage needs to be cleared, the inventory secured, and guards posted until more Akraid resources can be freed up to take over. (See *Search for survivors / Clear wreckage*, p. 17.)

PROBLEM (Private): Discreet Property Sale

Farouk is in a bit of a business bind. He agreed to take on a small "summer mansion" in Dockside while its owner was embroiled in some legal issues. However, his wife Nuha forbade him from purchasing any more property. This wouldn't be a problem, except that the original owner was killed in the disaster. As Dockside is reclaimed, he knows that she will find out that he owns it. He seeks a buyer for this property—one who can take possession immediately. He doesn't yet know that the property has been ravaged by the flooding and damaged by the earthquake and hopes to get top dollar for it. (See *Build/Buy a house, structure, or property*, p. 7.)

5. NASHWA MENLAT

Nashwa Menlat is a female air genasi, recognizable for her untamed light blue hair. She is very beautiful and paints beautifully. She tends to use colorful oaths and exclamations and tends to be brutally blunt in her dealings with others.

She is drawn to the sky, and has a particularly close relationship with House Krikala's carpet-riders. If you asked her, she would say that her ideal is, "logic!" If she has a flaw, it is that she is prone to fits of rage.

PROBLEM (Public): Bandits!

Bandits and thieves are everywhere in the wake of the disaster. Livestock and bulk goods are turning up missing, and the stakes are quickly moving from profit to mere survival. (See Search for survivors, p. 17; Engage in your profession (if soldier), p.13; and (for Rivalry) Detective work, p. 12).

PROBLEM (Private): Family Bandit?

Nashwa is convinced that despite the horrid implications her brother Qusay is responsible for many of the attacks on the livestock and bulk goods. She needs help discovering whether or not her brother is involved and keeping the entire affair quiet. (See Spy on an Enemy or Rival, p. 18.)

6. CORRIN GOODBARREL

Corrin Goodbarrel is a halfling man, recognizable for his bald head. He is smart but somewhat more frail than he lets on. He is unbelievably lucky. He tends to sing, whistle, or hum quietly and is quiet in his dealings with others.

He is captivated by a romantic interest—one of the PCs (this can be determined randomly, or select a character whose player would have the most fun having an NPC falling in love with him/her. If you asked him, he would say that his ideal is, "live and let live!" If he has a flaw, it is that he is possessed of overpowering greed.

PROBLEM (Public): New Investments

Corrin wants to make money. The disaster means there are demands everywhere and the only issue is supply! He wants to find new investors, new partners, and new ways to do business. (See Gamble, p. 14.)

PROBLEM (Private): Corrin falls in love at first sight with one of the PCs and wants to take him/her out on a date as part of his courtship (in order to show off his wealth, show his beloved a good time, and ultimately—because he's always lucky—reel him/her in. (See Pursue a Romance, p. 16.)

7. GAMILA KEL-TIR

Gamila Kel-Tir is a fire genasi woman, recognizable for her rigid posture (unusual in the usually pliable fire genasi). She has great agility but appears more frail than you'd expect from an officer of the military. She tends to bite her fingernails and is curious in her dealings with others.

She is dedicated to fulfilling a personal life goal: becoming the general of the governor's forces (chief officer of the city's military). If you asked her, she would say that her ideal is, "people!" If she has a flaw, it is that she loves violence, even when it may not be socially appropriate or acceptable.

PROBLEM (Public): High Profile Murder

There has been a high-profile murder: Governor Rishik Sirsh's daughter's childhood friend (and longtime advisor to the governor) Zaina Antar (air genasi woman) was found dead in her bedchamber with her throat slit. Gamila has managed to keep the murder under wraps for now, but she needs to apprehend the murderer before the news gets out and demoralizes the populace. (See Detective Work, p. 12.)

PROBLEM (Private): Tournament Participation

Gamila is involved in an underground tournament known as the Sandfighters' Arena. She has gambled away much of her personal wealth on these matches, and is now in the uncompromising position of either fighting a match herself or of

providing a fighter who will battle on her behalf. The bouts are nonlethal, but they are illegal nonetheless; many of the fighters are humans, and the establishment sees it as a training ground for resistance fighters. Gamila would need to win two bouts to restore her credit and her standing and prevent her exposure as a participant. (See Enter a Tournament, p. 13.)

Red District's pleasure palaces) but has run into a problem: the disaster broke some of the magical and mundane protections on the lab, and now he has squatters who have taken up residence there and are using it for less-than-legal operations. He can't go to the guard because of the less-than-legal things of his own that would be exposed if he brought them in. (See Craft a Magic Item, p. 10.)

8. PAELIAS AMASTACIA

Paelias Amastacia is a male high elf, recognizable for his extra-long, extra-pointy ears. He is very intelligent, if feeble. He tends to fidget (he gets bored easily) and is generally honest in his dealings with others.

He is protective of close family members. If you asked him, he would say that his ideal is, "tradition!" If he has a flaw, it is that he envies easily, both possessions and status.

Paelias is a magic item dealer—a perfect job for a patient elf. He both buys and sells magic items; he often tells his clients (only half-joking) that he'll get back to them in a century when he's found a match for their request (buying/selling).

PROBLEM (Public): Persuade for Magic

Paelias has been living in Almraiven for decades and considers it his home. Some of his clients have access to magical items which would be of great use in the current situation (*decanters of endless water, portable huts, wands of create/destroy water, crystal balls*, etc.). However, these clients need to be convinced (diplomatically) to either loan these items to the city's civil servants or (especially in the case of items that are used up) the city treasurers need to be convinced to pay for their use. Paelias is even willing to lower (or perhaps even temporarily abolish) his brokering fee for these efforts. (See Purchase magic items, p. 15.)

PROBLEM (Private): Secret Lab Recovery

When Paelias can't find a magic item for a client, he often commissions it himself. As a result he has built himself a well-equipped laboratory. He is not above loaning out this lab for coin (as well as influence, magic, or sex—Paelias frequents the