

PATREON BACKGROUNDS

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND OPTIONS

While every story has a beginning, some beginnings are stranger than most. Some tales start in the middle of events, or at the end of a life-shattering occurrence that could just as easily be the closing chapter of a different saga. Characters evolve, grow, and change, even before a story starts, and tales of a veteran returning to a fight are just as intriguing as the first forays of a new adventurer.

Many adventurers are defined by the odds they have faced and the oddities they have lived through. Included here are a collection of diverse and distinct background options, perfect for the adventurer who has lived life before wandering abroad.

DRACONIC CAPTIVE

Dragons are inscrutable beings, often operating on a different level or with a different set of ethics than most mortals. It was likely surprising to you, then, when a chance encounter with a dragon resulted in it carrying you off to its lair, instead of merely eating you, as you would expect. The dragon had other plans, likely entirely unknown to you at the time.

Why did this dragon take you? What were its plans for you? How long did it hold you? And, perhaps most importantly, how did you escape, or did the dragon (for reasons inexplicable) set you free?

Skill Proficiencies: Arcana, Persuasion

Tool Proficiencies: One type of gaming set, musical instrument, or set of artisan's tools

Languages: Draconic, or one other language of your choice if you already know this language

Equipment: Worn fine clothing; a gaming set, musical instrument, or set of artisan's tools; a single scale shed from your captor; and a belt pouch containing 15 gp

CAPTIVE PURPOSE

Whether or not it was made obvious to you, every dragon that takes a mortal as a captive has some greater purpose in mind for that individual. These purposes rarely have the welfare of the captive in mind, and are usually a selfish expression of the dragon's wants and needs. You have learned to acquiesce to the dragon's plans as a matter of survival, though whether you were defiant, resentful, or compliant in this is a different matter entirely.

d8 Captive Purpose

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | The dragon claimed it just wanted someone to talk to, but it's hard to be honest with something that can and will eat you. |
| 2 | My intellect is what drew the dragon to me. It wanted an underling worthy of its grandiose vision. |
| 3 | I was to be added to the dragon's collection of rare things, but the dragon never informed me as to how I was rare. |
| 4 | The dragon recognized me as master of my craft, and forced me into service for them. |
| 5 | I was to be used in some scheme against another dragon or powerful magical entity. |
| 6 | I was taken to be a sacrifice for a powerful magical ritual, but the dragon kept claiming that the stars just weren't right for it. |
| 7 | The dragon took me to watch over its brood of young dragons, while it terrorized the countryside. |
| 8 | I was being trained by the dragon to be its mortal protector, though why it would need a mortal protecting it was never revealed to me. |

PATREON BACKER EXCLUSIVE

The background options listed here are compiled as an exclusive feature for our Patreon backers of Elite (\$10/mo.) level and above.

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FEATURE: DRACONIC KNOWLEDGE

Whether such was the intention of your captor or not, you have learned much about dragons during your captivity. Any Arcana or History checks you make to recall lore pertaining to dragons are made with advantage. Similarly, any Persuasion or Deception checks you make interacting with a dragon are also made with advantage.

Additionally, you may use a bonus action and make an Insight or Investigation check, targeting a dragon you can see. The DC for this check is the dragon’s CR. A successful Insight check will reveal to you the dragon’s motivating goals and its specific likes and dislikes. A successful Investigation check will spot a weakness in the dragon’s defenses, granting you advantage on the next attack you make against the dragon. Once you use this portion of this feature, you may not use it again until you take a short or long rest.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

Draconic captives are universally changed by their captivity, for better or worse. Though many end up even more frightened of large creatures and the outside world, others return from their captivity stronger, more determined, and more resistant to manipulation by forces that would use them. Regardless, a mortal who has been a captive of a dragon has developed behaviors and habits that make them an ill fit for normal society, and it is little wonder many of these former captives turn to adventuring.

d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I only ever speak in commands, with little variation.
- 2 I always keep some of my dragon’s favorite food or drink on my person. Just in case.
- 3 Any shape flying overhead is a cause for apprehension or fear.
- 4 I’m still getting used to the idea of being able to own my own treasure.
- 5 I subtly deface any dragon-related motifs I come across. Dragons are not worthy of respect.
- 6 The habits of most of society have become strange to me. Holding a steady job and starting a family pale in comparison to serving a powerful master.
- 7 I’m desperately trying to sample everything the outside world has to offer, to make up for time lost in captivity.
- 8 I hide everything I own in a “hoard” I keep in a specific pack or location.

d6 Ideal

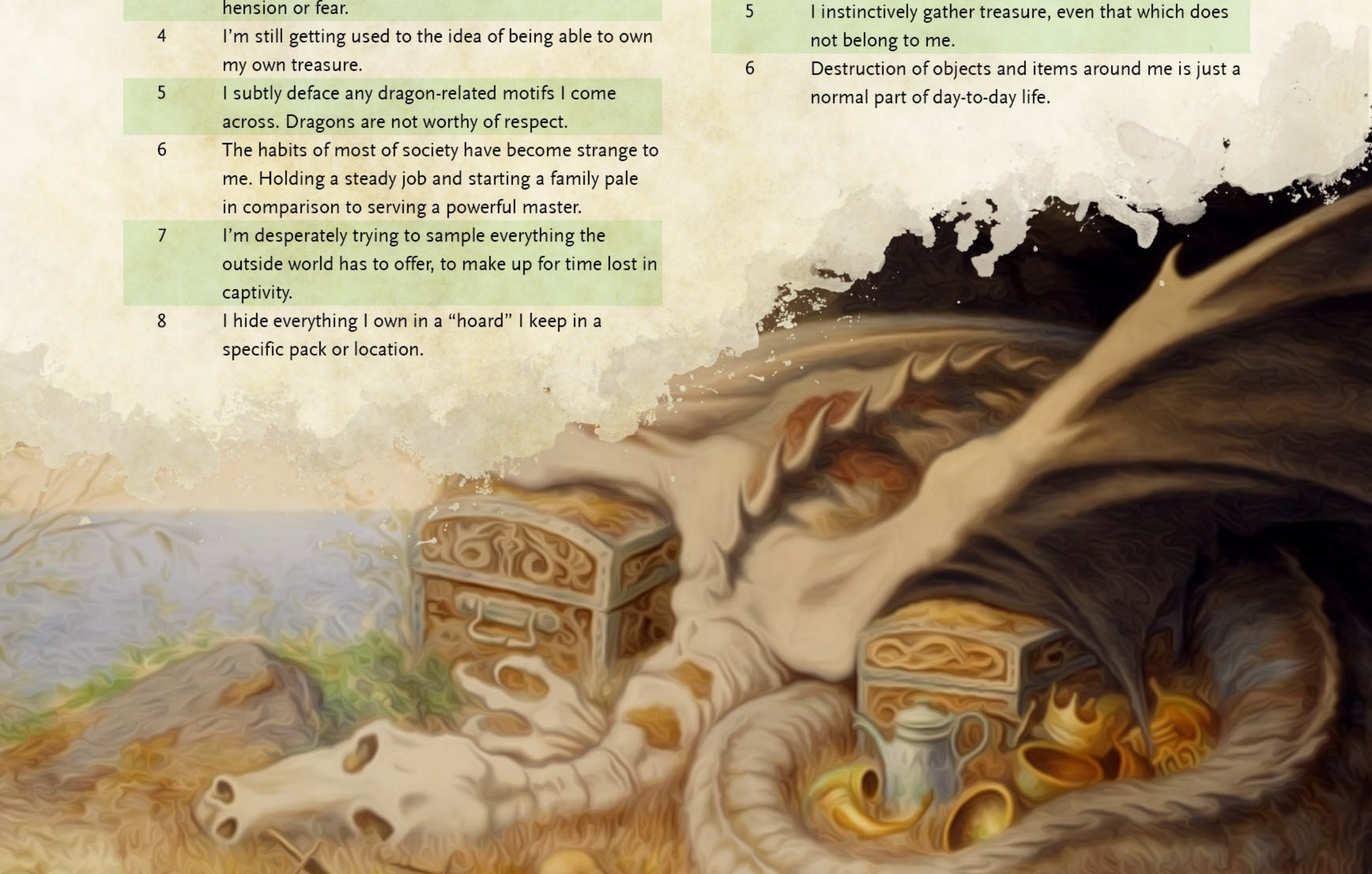
- 1 **Freedom.** All captives must be freed. (Chaotic)
- 2 **Strength.** Only the strong are bound to rule. This is the natural order. (Evil)
- 3 **Obedience.** There’s always one to follow who knows better than I. (Lawful)
- 4 **Slaying.** Dragons are a blight on the land, and must be slain. (Neutral)
- 5 **Greed.** One’s importance is greatly tied to the amount of treasure they have. (Chaotic)
- 6 **Skill.** I must use the skills the dragon prized for the betterment of all mortals. (Good)

d6 Bond

- 1 I still serve my dragon, and my freedom is a part of their greater plan.
- 2 I want to find the family I had before I was stolen away.
- 3 My captor (or one of their relations) is on my trail, and I can’t stay in one place long.
- 4 I have immense empathy for creatures in service to dragons, and will help them however I can.
- 5 The dragon hid away a precious possession of mine, and I was never able to find it.
- 6 I owe those that helped me an immense debt, and I intend to repay it.

d6 Flaw

- 1 I become incredibly furious at the slightest insult.
- 2 I casually threaten to eat my lessers, without giving it much thought.
- 3 I prefer to remain armored and armed at all times, even if doing so is impractical.
- 4 Anything significantly larger than I am is to be feared.
- 5 I instinctively gather treasure, even that which does not belong to me.
- 6 Destruction of objects and items around me is just a normal part of day-to-day life.



Ex-CULTIST

Once, perhaps not too terribly long ago, you served alongside your fellow neophytes. You worshipped at altars to a dark creature or eldritch god, performed the sacraments and blood sacrifices and adorned yourself with the proper tattoos or ceremonial scars. For a while, you basked in this dark glory with your fellows, feeling the camaraderie and clarity of purpose that comes with service to a higher, malign power.

But, something changed. Now, you wander the world outside of your isolated circle of brethren, either unwillingly or of your own volition. Surviving in the outside is difficult and often confusing after living as you did for so long, but perhaps a new circle of comrades could be of some assistance...

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, Religion

Tool Proficiencies: Poisoner's Kit

Languages: One of your choice

Equipment: Tattered robes, a symbol of your dark lord, a blasphemous holy text, a curved ritual dagger, a poisoner's kit, and a small pouch containing 5 gp.

CHANGE OF HEART

Why did you walk away from the world you knew, and why did you seek something different? Was this a choice you made, or did fate separate you from your fellow devotees? Do you wish to undo the evil that your cult perpetuated, or would you rejoin your cult if given the chance? Work with your DM to decide what you and your cult worshipped, how much of your cult still exists. You may also need to work out why you left the cult, or you can roll on the following table.

d8	Change of Heart
1	I witnessed a particularly gruesome rite and ran for my life.
2	A botched ritual slaughtered the other members of my circle. Only I survived.
3	I asked the wrong kind of questions. The others planned to sacrifice me, but I escaped.
4	Adventurers hunted us down, and only I was able to escape.
5	The other cultists disappeared through a portal to a land of horrors. Terrified, I stayed behind.
6	The others took their own lives to ascend. I could not.
7	I no longer believed in what we were doing. It seemed wrong, somehow.
8	A friend or family member rescued me, taking me away by force.

FEATURE: SECRET SIGNS

You know the secret symbology of your cult, which can pop up in some surprising places. Some nobles, influential persons, or even common townsfolk may also be members of your cult, and with a subtle gesture or knowing handshake you can discern who still follows the ways of your dark lord.

Cloisters of your cult may also be hidden across the land, identified by the secret signs and symbols designed to lead the faithful to places of dark worship. Such cloisters often contain enough lodging and food for at least ten people, for a week, and sometimes harbor eldritch treasures belonging to the cult. Cloisters with treasure still intact likely contain practicing cultists or guardian

monsters, however; your cult was not foolish enough to let its secrets remain unguarded.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

Ex-cultists often have a stilted worldview, shaped strongly by the dogma they have learned to accept over the years. Though they may be leaving behind the trappings of their cult (or not), they have a hard time shaking the old habits that still come second-nature to them. An ex-cultist is often looking for meaning in the world, and most are slowly still coming to grips with the deceptions and half-truths they had taken as unshakable facts.

d8	Personality Trait
1	Everything is a sign of coming doom. Every. Single. Thing.
2	The world outside is so exciting! Now I can do everything the dark lord used to forbid, like drinking wine, or wearing shoes!
3	The dark lord used to order us to do everything. It's a little hard for me to live without that.
4	If my friends will let me, I'll openly reminisce about my old days in the cult all day long.
5	I still can't help but check the holy scriptures for advice about any given situation.
6	It's no big deal, it's not the end of the world. That's not for another five years, three months, ten days, twelve hours...
7	It's still important to leave the old offerings, to perform the old rites.
8	I'll happily inform those I meet of the many ways in which they are being heretical.



d6 Ideal

- 1 **Loyalty.** My new companions are my new family, I will protect them. (Lawful)
- 2 **Reparation.** I must fix the evils my cult has done. (Good)
- 3 **Independence.** I'll never be bound in servitude again! (Chaotic)
- 4 **Power.** The dark lord was weak in the end. I will be stronger than they ever were. (Evil)
- 5 **Secrets.** The lore of my cult is historically important, and I should preserve it. (Neutral)
- 6 **Revision.** The cult failed because the holy book was wrong. I must learn about the outside world, and fix the book's errors. (Neutral)

d6 Bond

- 1 I must discover the truth behind my dark lord, even if it kills me.
- 2 I need to reconnect with the people from my life before the cult, if I can ever find them.
- 3 I must free other minions from unwitting service to dark masters.
- 4 A monstrous, immortal guardian of the cult is hunting me. I pray it never finds me.
- 5 I sold my soul in service to the dark lord, and now I seek to reclaim it.
- 6 The day of reckoning is coming, and my knowledge is the key to stopping it.

d6 Flaw

- 1 If I ever had the chance, I'd definitely rejoin my cult.
- 2 I'm a little too into blood sacrifice.
- 3 Knowledge is more important than sanity.
- 4 I'm often more interested in than frightened of abominable eldritch monsters.
- 5 I'm almost too willing to follow orders without thinking.
- 6 Murder was significantly less frowned upon by the cult than in the outside world.

FEY-SNATCHED

Mortals and their ways are intensely curious to the fair folk that dwell within the Feywild. Many of the fey find the creations, persistence, and even mortality of mortals to be highly intriguing or comical, and occasionally spirit mortals away from their homes to keep with them this enjoyment of mortal arts, attitudes, and frailties. This enjoyment is nearly always at the expense of the mortals kept by the fey, whom often assume the roles of servants or pets. Should a mortal escape or be freed, returning to their normal lives is often impossible, as time may travel slower or more quickly within the Feywild. The fey also have a habit of leaving a clever imposter in place of the mortals they take, seamlessly filling the roles those mortals played in the Prime Material.

Which fey spirited you away? Why did they decide you were worth their attentions? What was your time in the Feywild like? Did you remain a servant, or rise above your station? And, of course, how did you break free?

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, Performance

Tool Proficiencies: One type musical instrument or set of artisan's tools

Languages: Sylvan, or one of your choice if you already know this language

Equipment: Finely-tailored rags, a musical instrument or set of artisan's tools, a letter containing your true name with your captor's seal, and a small sack containing a day's worth of mundane food and 15 gp



FEY DESIRE

The fey only abduct humans that entertain them, or can serve them in some useful way. The fey have vastly distinct desires and needs from one another, however, and your stay in the Feywild was likely very different depending on which fey captured and kept you. Work with your DM to develop an identity for the fey that took you, and a motive for your capture. Alternatively, roll on the following list.

d8	Fey Desire
1	A hag stole me, with intent to make me her apprentice and minion.
2	A great archfey king brought me to his queen as a present, due to my singing voice.
3	After witnessing me kill in self defense as a child, a tribe of redcaps took me to become one of them.
4	Fomorians captured me, using me as slave labor to build their horrid lairs.
5	A circle of fairies played games with me as a child, and took me into their world to keep playing for the next 100 years.
6	An aspiring eladrin duelist was bested by me and then spirited me away, forcing me to train him.
7	I became a quarry for the wild hunt, who transformed me into a stag and tracked me for years.
8	A dryad or satyr became smitten with me, and took me away to their domain in an attempt to woo me.

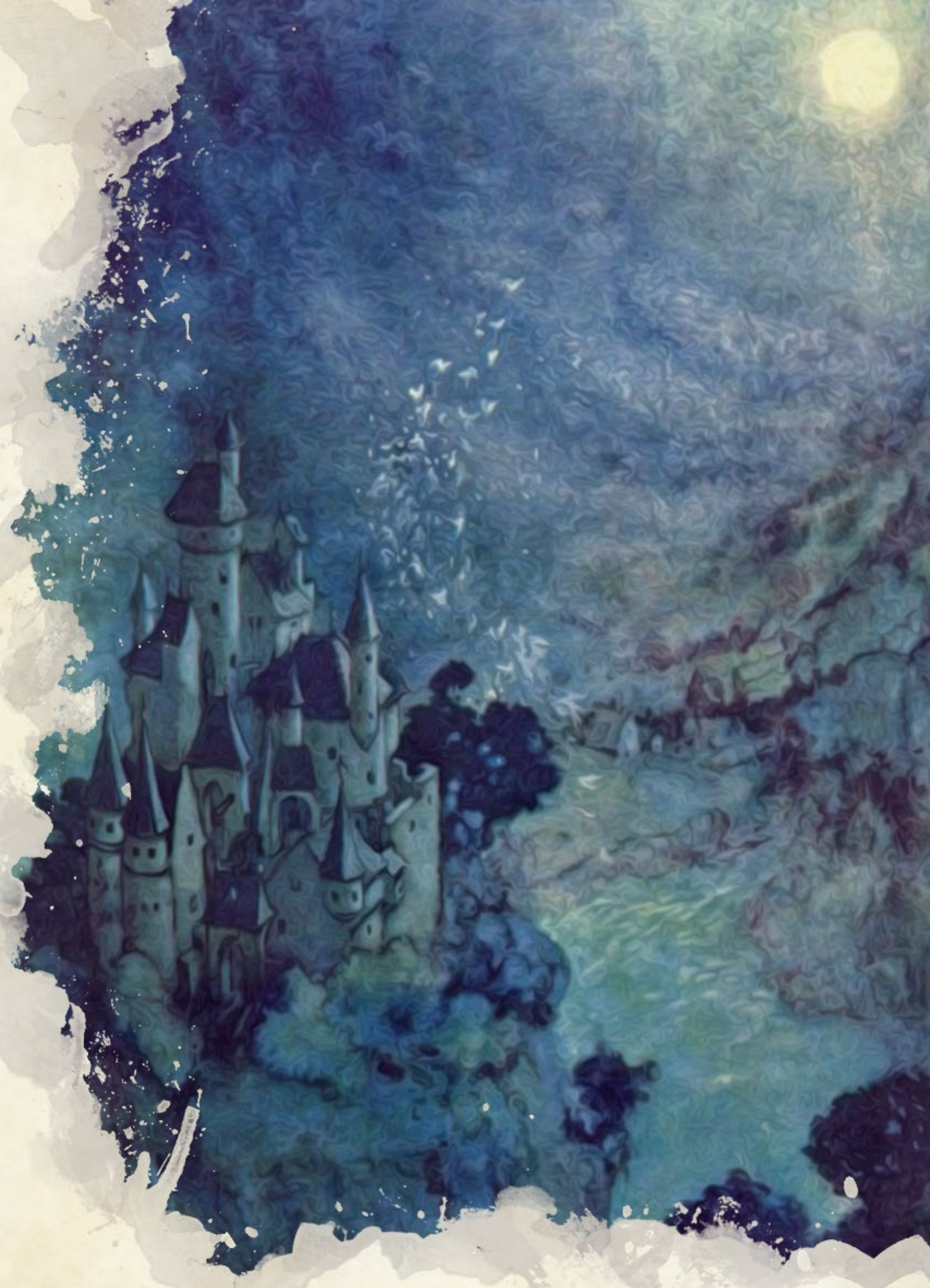
FEATURE: THE HIDDEN WAYS

The fey have hidden ways and passages through the corners of reality that they flit through without a care. During your time in the Feywild, you have discovered many of these ways, and perhaps used them to escape the clutches of the fey. You have advantage on any checks you make to discover a passage leading to or from the Feywild.

Additionally, when travelling overland through a natural area (anything where construction has not replaced nature, such as a forest, ocean, or desert), your knowledge of the hidden ways allows you to reduce the total travel time of you and your companions by 1/4.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

Those taken by the fey never see the world the same way again. The fey-snatched were imprisoned in a land of wonder, beauty, and terror told only in the darkest of tales, with little hope of escape. Some of the fey-snatched miss the Feywild and think of it fondly, while others are horrified at the prospect of ever returning there again. Though the Prime Material seems droll and mundane in comparison, many of the fey-snatched cling to its gritty practicality, while others dismiss it as a pale shadow compared to the lands they have visited. Regardless, all fey-snatched have a hard time trusting anyone or anything, and any being that lives in fey lands has a healthy respect for the power of bargains.



d8	Personality Trait
1	Never speak words unless they are true. Falsehood brings pain.
2	I'm an incredibly savvy trader, and will haggle until I get what I want.
3	I always check for local superstitions when I enter an area. They're usually true.
4	If a deal is too good to be true, someone is trying to cheat me. Or worse.
5	Never, ever, ever, ever trust a fey.
6	Cities are a comfort to me, after my experiences in the Feywild.
7	Old rituals are important. They placate the fey, and keep them from showing up.
8	I have a ridiculous, but probably life-saving, attachment to cold iron.
d6	Ideal
1	Glamour. Beauty is truth, and I must create more beauty. (Neutral)
2	Spite. Any wrongs done to me must be repaid one hundredfold. (Evil)
3	Bargains. All deals are binding, and one must respect that. (Lawful)
4	Chivalry. Always show respect for those of higher station, and courtesy to those below. (Good)
5	Trickery. A well-woven deception is its own reward. (Chaotic)
6	Apathy. Never grow too attached. The world is a changing place. (Neutral)



d6 Bond

- 1 My word is my bond, regardless of anything.
- 2 The fey still have one of my loved ones, and I must get them back.
- 3 I fell in love with a young fey while within the Feywild, and I must see them again.
- 4 My fey lord seeks after me, trying to bring me back to their domain.
- 5 I swore a geas during my time in the Feywild, and now I must uphold it.
- 6 I still secretly serve my fey lord, and seek to further their agenda.

d6 Flaw

- 1 The forest completely terrifies me.
- 2 I have to make sure everyone I meet isn't a fey imposter.
- 3 I'm addicted to intense emotional highs and lows, and take insane risks because of this.
- 4 I cannot accept gifts, I must pay an equal price for anything.
- 5 I painstakingly search what others tell me for half-truths. I take nothing anyone says at face value.
- 6 Every morning when I wake up, I have to make a new escape plan in case the fey find me.

FREED SLAVE

You were bound in service to a wealthy mortal, treated as property without any rights or possessions to call your own. Still, you persevered, survived, and never stopped struggling against the yoke of servitude. Finally, you broke free using escape, murder, or coin, and have abandoned the life of painful drudgery you suffered for so very long.

How have you won your freedom? How do you feel about your masters, and those still enslaved? And now that you are free, where will you go with your life?

Skill Proficiencies: Athletics, Survival

Tool Proficiencies: One type of musical instrument, one set of artisan's tools

Equipment: Sack-cloth rags, one set of artisan's tools, one musical instrument, broken shackles, and a small pouch containing 5 gp

PAST TOIL

A slave by their nature has very little say in what work they do, often working longer and harder than would be healthy even for an able-bodied individual. A master may purchase a slave for a specific task, if that slave already has the aptitude, or train a slave until they are ready to work unceasingly at whatever job the master has in mind. Roll or choose an option on the table below to determine what your work as a slave was.

d8 Past Toil

- 1 We moved large rocks to build huge buildings, day in, day out.
- 2 I was chained to a rotating mill wheel and forced to pull it in a circle.
- 3 I maintained a lavish estate, and kept my head down when the master was present.
- 4 I fought other slaves in a pit. I got good at it.
- 5 I harvested crops, under the watchful eye of cruel taskmasters.
- 6 I worked in the mines, and went days without seeing the sun.
- 7 I cared for the master's hounds, and they became some of my best friends.
- 8 I played music for the master, whenever they would demand it of me.

FEATURE: ENDURANCE

You have learned to suffer great burdens and continue on. You can carry one and a half times your normal carry capacity before you are encumbered, and suffer the effects of exhaustion as if it were one level less. However, reaching an exhaustion level of 6 will still result in death.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

Slaves that have earned their freedom are hearty folk, able to persevere through much adversity. Usually a former slave has developed some skills during their time in servitude, and is proactive about putting them to use bettering their situation. Freed slaves tend to be positive, but wary. Many still bear the physical and emotional scars of what they have gone through, and may take some time before they can trust.



d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I have a practical solution for everything, even with limited resources.
- 2 I always keep out of sight. It's safer that way.
- 3 I openly challenge any who would try to take my freedom again.
- 4 I never grow too attached to any location. Life on the move is best.
- 5 Friends keep you free, and you can never have too many of them.
- 6 My only goal is to enjoy all the things that were once forbidden to me.
- 7 I believe my religion is what set me free, and I'm unafraid to proselytize.
- 8 Money is freedom, and I'm always willing to earn more of it.

d6 Ideal

- 1 **Liberty.** All lives deserve to breathe free, unshackled. (Good)
- 2 **Revenge.** Death to the masters! (Chaotic)
- 3 **Power.** Gaining absolute power over others is the only way to stay free. (Evil)
- 4 **Property.** Now that I can own possessions, I'd like to build myself a life. (Neutral)
- 5 **Abolition.** Only through changing the law will all slaves be free. (Lawful)
- 6 **Survival.** Whatever it takes, as long as I live another day. (Neutral)

d6 Bond

- 1 Someone I love is still owned by my former masters.
- 2 I owe everything to the people who freed me, and I aim to repay them.
- 3 My former master's men are still tracking me, and are trying to return me to chains
- 4 Another slave was caught and punished helping me get free. I need to return and help them.
- 5 I took out a loan to buy my freedom, and will lose my liberty if it is not repaid.
- 6 I cannot rest while my master still draws breath.

d6 Flaw

- 1 I have night terrors. Every. Single. Night.
- 2 Violence has won my freedom, but now I cannot stop.
- 3 Now that I can own property, I'm hopelessly addicted to gambling.
- 4 I have to pretend I don't care for the plight of slaves, lest people think I'm one of them.
- 5 I'll turn someone else in, if it means saving myself.
- 6 When something scares me, I find that I'm incapable of speech.

GRAVEDIGGER

Once, not long ago, you made your way in life by digging graves for the fallen. It wasn't a glamorous job, nor did it demand much respect, but it was honest work that needed doing. You may have worked as part of a funeral service alongside a cleric or similar, or you may simply have been a digger of holes to put bodies in.

Regardless, you know burying the dead is a particularly important job. You've seen some things during your time working at a graveyard, and you know what the dead can get up to if they're improperly buried.

Skill Proficiencies: Perception, Religion

Tool Proficiencies: One type of musical instrument, shovels

Equipment: Common clothes, one musical instrument, a rusty shovel, a holy symbol, a small jar of grave dust, and a sack containing 10 gp

FEATURE: GRAVE KNOWLEDGE

Your time around the dead has taught you much about them, and fortified you against the horrors that death may hold. You have advantage on any Wisdom (Medicine) checks you make on a dead body to determine its cause of death, and advantage on any Wisdom (Insight) checks to determine details about the former lifestyle or predilections a corpse held when it was living.

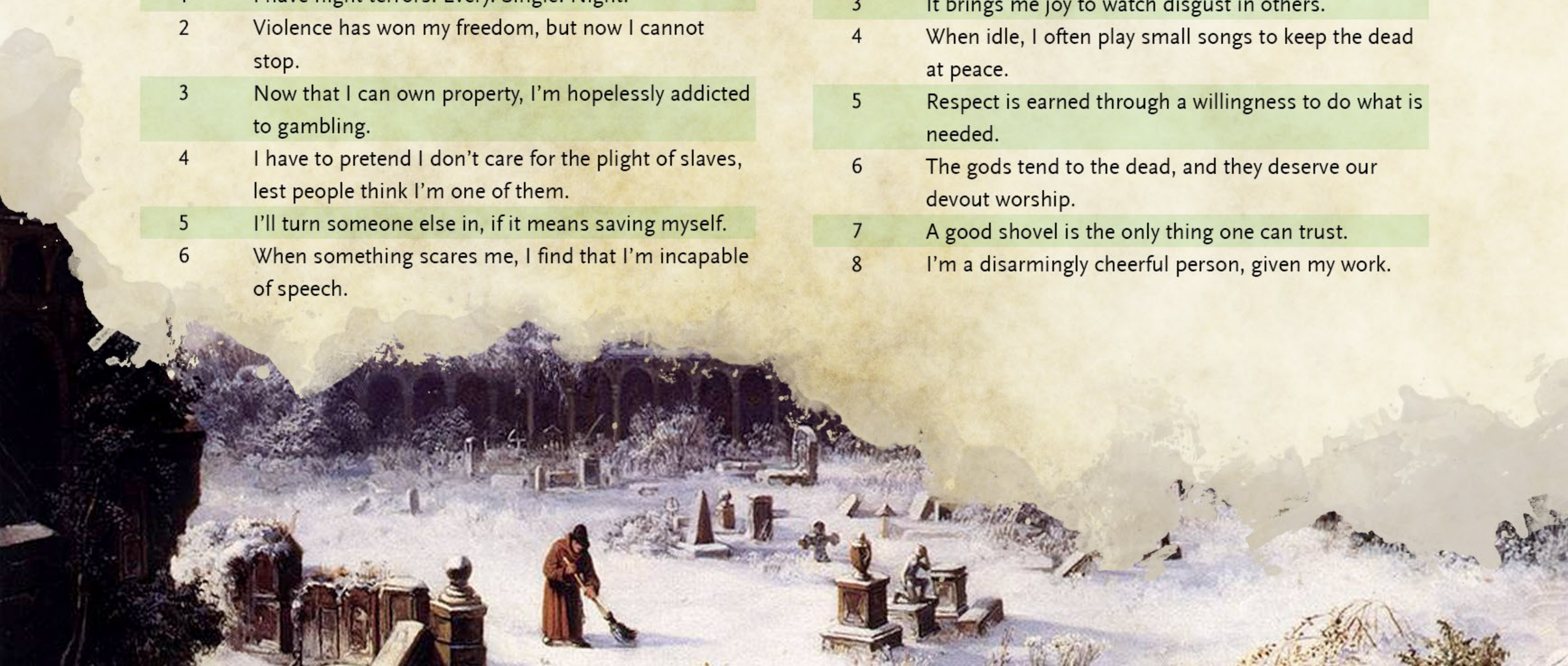
Additionally, you have advantage on any saving throws you make against becoming frightened of an undead creature, or against effects similar to a ghost's possession ability.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

Gravediggers are often gruff and practical. They see the aversion the common man has to the dead, and scoff openly at it. The dead need special care, true, but death is nothing to be feared, and it waits for each and every one of us at the end of our lives. Gravediggers also take pride in their willingness to get their hands dirty, to take on jobs that would make others squeamish. A good gravedigger is professional and respectful to the dead, though these courtesies don't always extend to the living.

d8 Personality Trait

- 1 Work is work, and there's never a reason to complain.
- 2 The dead are easier to understand than the living.
- 3 It brings me joy to watch disgust in others.
- 4 When idle, I often play small songs to keep the dead at peace.
- 5 Respect is earned through a willingness to do what is needed.
- 6 The gods tend to the dead, and they deserve our devout worship.
- 7 A good shovel is the only thing one can trust.
- 8 I'm a disarmingly cheerful person, given my work.



d6 Ideal

- 1 **Riches.** Well, the dead aren't using it. Why shouldn't it be mine? (Chaotic)
- 2 **Sanctity.** Every corpse deserves a proper burial. (Good)
- 3 **Nihilism.** Death comes for everyone, so why make a fuss over it? (Neutral)
- 4 **Responsibility.** It's my job to safeguard the dead against those that would use them. (Lawful)
- 5 **Defiling.** Sure, I've sold corpses to necromancers. It's not like the dead care. (Evil)
- 6 **Hedonism.** I see the dead every day, so I know I should live while I can. (Neutral)

d6 Bond

- 1 All are equal in death, and the dead are all my responsibility.
- 2 Someone I love dearly has died, and I'll do anything to return them to life.
- 3 I take great pride in helping clergies that tend to the dead.
- 4 Once, I saw something eerie and unexplainable in the graveyard. I need answers.
- 5 Those that kill without thought deserve to find themselves in a grave.
- 6 My loyalty is to the job I'm doing, right now.

d6 Flaw

- 1 I constantly hear the voices of the dead, which may or may not be my imagination.
- 2 I expect hatred and derision from the common folk, whether or not they actually feel that way.
- 3 I hold no respect for any of the living. Only the dead deserve respect.
- 4 Honestly? Most people would be better off dead.
- 5 I keep trying necromancy, but I can stop anytime I feel like it.
- 6 I pilfered something from a grave and was caught. Now, I'm wanted by the authorities.

HEIR TO ADVENTURE

Your parents were adventurers of great reputation, and you grew up hearing astounding tales told of their deeds. Their adventuring companions were treated as your uncles and aunts in your early life, and you have lived life knowing that one day you might replicate or even surpass the achievements of your parents.

Who are your parents, and what have they accomplished? What has become of them, do they still live, or do you not know? And how do you feel about the legacy you have inherited?

Skill Proficiencies: History, Persuasion

Tool Proficiencies: One type of gaming set

Languages: One language of your choice

Equipment: Common clothes, one gaming set, a non-magical weapon belonging to one of your parents, and a backpack containing 15 gp worth of precious gems

ADVENTUROUS LEGACY

Throughout the tales told by your aunts, uncles, and passing bards of your parents' deeds, one stands out in

particular as the height of their accomplishments.

Perhaps you use this as a benchmark to gauge your own achievements by, or perhaps you possess your own mixed opinions of what your parents have done. Work with your DM to determine what legacy your parents have left you, or roll for it on the following table.

d8 Adventurous Legacy

- 1 My parents have slain a powerful necromancer, who vowed one day to return.
- 2 A supposedly impossible dungeon has been conquered by my parents, or so they say.
- 3 My parents were leaders of a revolution to overthrow a mad tyrant, but some people have mixed feelings about this.
- 4 One of my parents was the heir to a powerful noble house, before the other whisked them away to a life of adventure.
- 5 My parents were corsairs, the scourge of the open seas. Every port feared their names.
- 6 Some claim my parents met and perhaps even fought gods. My parents always laughed it off, saying it was more complicated than all that.
- 7 Working together, my parents stole a great treasure from a powerful planar entity, which seeks revenge to this very day.
- 8 My parents slaid a great dragon that had terrorized the land for centuries, though none know what became of its hoard...



FEATURE: NAME OF RENOWN

Most people instantly know tales of your parents upon hearing your name, and will treat you accordingly. You can receive free food and a room at any inn you travel to that your parents have visited before (that is to say, very many of them), as long as you have not shown yourself to be a threat, and you are willing to share some stories from your childhood. At such an inn, you can be assumed to live a comfortable lifestyle without paying the related cost.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

Heirs to an adventurous legacy often, as is the nature of children, have complicated feelings about what their parents have done. Do you try, and sometimes fall short, of the expectations laid out for you? Do you resent having a legacy held over your head? Or do you openly attempt to defy what others would have you do? Regardless, adventure is all you've ever known, and comes as naturally to you as farm work to a child raised on a farm.

d8	Personality Trait
1	I am practically required to show bravado at all times.
2	I travel under an assumed name, in hopes that none will discover my identity.
3	Treasure is a good measure of how much I've lived up to my parents' legacy.
4	Adventuring is a family business to me, and I take upholding our traditions seriously.
5	If I haven't achieved something for my own legacy in a day, it has been a waste of time.
6	I must take a radically different path than my parents, but adventure is all I know.
7	I journey far and wide in hopes of someday finding somewhere the people haven't heard of my parents.
8	I will literally pay bards to sing about me, if that's what it takes.
d6	Ideal
1	Tradition. My children will be adventurers, and their children's children. (Neutral)
2	Independence. I'll do anything to escape the legacy set before me. (Chaotic)
3	Storycraft. Nothing is as important as the ability to tell a good tale. (Neutral)
4	Power. My parents were fools. I work only for my own benefit. (Evil)
5	Heroism. It's my responsibility to be a hero for the next generation. (Good)
6	Family. Even if one doesn't agree with their relatives, the love they share is the most important thing. (Good)
d6	Bond
1	My companions are my family.
2	I hope I find a love as strange and exciting as what my parents shared.
3	I was always told to care for my steed above all else, and I'd do anything for my mount.
4	If my stories aren't worth telling, then what has my life been?
5	I hope to one day have a truly worthy nemesis, like my parents did.
6	I need to keep my legacy free of dishonor.

d6	Flaw
1	I take nearly suicidal risks, in the hope that legends will be told about me.
2	If I drink enough, maybe I'll stop feeling others' disappointment in me.
3	What good is having a legendary family name if you don't let absolutely everyone know?
4	Everything I do, I do to undermine the legacy of my parents.
5	No one else is as important as I am. I have a birthright.
6	I will fight anyone who even hints at under-estimating me.

LAWYER

You studied many hours to become a barrister, and have led a life defending or prosecuting individuals in a court of law. Dealing justice is an everyday practice for you, and it's little wonder you've taken to adventuring as a continued outlet for it.

Do you do this out of a profound sense of right and wrong, or something else? How much do you truly believe in the laws you uphold? And what, at the end of the day, do criminals deserve?

Skill Proficiencies: History, Persuasion
Languages: Two languages of your choice
Equipment: Fine clothes, a book of law, spectacles, ink and quill, and a portable case containing legal papers and 15 gp

GREATEST CASE

You have had a long and storied legal career, but most people know of you from how you handled one case in particular. What was that case, who was it against or for, and what was your role in it? Decide these details with your DM, or roll on the table below.

d8	Greatest Case
1	My incisive litigation exposed a crime ring, and imprisoned a crime boss masquerading as a philanthropist.
2	I defended a tiefling falsely accused of a town's wrongs. I lost, but laid bare the corruption of the court.
3	I once outed a shapeshifter hiding its true form in the middle of a court session. Chaos ensued.
4	I defended a small property owner successfully against the will of a local corrupt land baron.
5	I won legal personhood for a half-orc child, and set a lasting precedent.
6	I successfully defended an alleged mass murderer. I tell my feelings on this to no one.
7	Once, I arbitrated a legal separation between a wizard and their familiar, which only got stranger from there.
8	I was somehow able to convince a dragon to pay taxes on its hoard.

FEATURE: LEGAL PRACTICE

You have the schooling, experience, and reputation needed to practice law, and may choose to do so during any downtime you may have. If you practice law in a large city, you can earn wages sufficient to live a wealthy

lifestyle without paying, including food and board. If you are practicing in a small town, your wages instead merely support a comfortable lifestyle.

You may also decide to be selective with which cases you take on, aligning them with your personal ethics. If you do so, you instead may live a comfortable lifestyle in cities, or a modest lifestyle in towns.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

Rules-minded and very used to working in highly formal settings, lawyers appear calm and by-the-books to those that interact with them. Though it is impossible for a lawyer to not have personal feelings about the cases they work, a good lawyer is able to mask these feelings, or completely divorce their work from their emotional state. Lawyers typically have strong opinions about the nature of justice, and are driven and competitive enough to act on their beliefs.

d8	Personality Trait
1	Everything is a competition for me, and I will win.
2	My adventurous side allows me the power to change what I cannot in the courtroom, and vice versa.
3	You never know who will need a lawyer, so I hand important people small paper cards with my name and address written on them.
4	My first thought in an emergency? Who can be sued over this.
5	Adventuring parties are massive legal liabilities, but I need companions if I'm to survive.
6	I enjoy representing the little guy, and helping those no one else will help.
7	Doing work for the big guys usually means big profits.
8	Most relationships are just business relationships to me.
d6	Ideal
1	Fair Play. The laws are clear as day, and everyone has to follow them. (Lawful)
2	Loopholes. Every legal contract has a way out. (Chaotic)
3	Community. Fair arbitration improves the quality of our society. (Good)
4	Greed. All courts are corrupt. Either you take money, or you go broke. (Evil)
5	Impartiality. Taking sides is only something I do professionally. (Neutral)
6	Revisionism. If the laws are not just, the laws should be changed. (Lawful)
d6	Bond
1	My clients deserve my absolute loyalty.
2	My adventuring companions have my back, even if they are a mountain of legal trouble.
3	I lost a case and my client was falsely convicted. I'll do whatever it takes to free them.
4	The people of my community deserve proper representation. That's why I'm here.
5	I need to repay the debts that earned me my education, or they will collect.
6	I have a dark secret that will cause me to be disbarred, if it ever comes to light.

d6	Flaw
1	I don't have an ego, everything really is about me!
2	I often find I lie compulsively, and can't stop.
3	I'm incapable of caring about people more than is legally required of me.
4	I will turn on my clients, if the bribe is big enough.
5	I often focus too much on the little details, and miss the big picture.
6	I will argue about absolutely anything.

MADMAN

Some may call you mad, but you prefer to believe that you simply see the world as it is. You may see the world as a twisted place full of suffering, a frivolous realm of meaningless ephemera, an oscillating wheel of delights and torments, or some other emotionally extreme interpretation of its base nature. Further, you may see sights, shapes, and specters that are not visible to the eyes of your peers.

Was there a particular event that drove you mad, or was your mind always this way? How much reality is there to what you see and experience? And have you made peace with the nature of your mind, or do you struggle to gain purchase on your last shred of sanity?

- Skill Proficiencies:** Deception, Insight
- Tool Proficiencies:** One out of thieves' tools, the disguise kit, the herbalism kit, or the poisoner's kit.
- Languages:** One language of your choice
- Equipment:** A broken straightjacket, a bound journal full of mad scribbings, charcoal, a cracked mirror, and a small pouch containing 5 gp

MADNESS

A blanket term for generalized insanity, madness can take many forms, and have many symptoms. Further, though many interpret madness as merely an unfortunate state of mind, others see it as a holy blessing from the gods, an opening of one's sight beyond what a sane mind is capable of. The nature of your madness and its interpretation by those around you should be decided with help from your DM. Alternatively, you may roll on the following table.

d8	Madness
1	I see shapes and individuals which others tell me aren't there. But I'm not so sure.
2	I'm prone to intense emotional highs and lows.
3	Sometimes, my mouth runs away from me, and speaks words I'm not aware I'm saying.
4	I hear a voice, which I attribute to a powerful god or fiend. I may or may not follow its direction.
5	I feel compelled to break any social taboo I come across, for no reason I can articulate.
6	I'm not always aware of where I am, and sometimes find I'm reliving scenes from my past.
7	The world has terrified me to the point of madness, but still I must face it each day.
8	I sometimes mistake myself for a specific powerful ruler or magic user, and act as such.

FEATURE: SECOND SIGHT

The convoluted nature of your mind makes it incredibly difficult for outsiders to deceive. You have advantage on

on any Investigation checks you make to see through illusions, and on any saving throws you make against the charmed condition.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

While outsiders may have difficulty discerning the motives of a madman (or woman), the mad are always consistent to themselves. Madmen have an internal logic to which they remain consistent, and which the outside world is unable to perceive. While they may be mad, they are not illogical, and every action they take that might be considered odd is a product of their perceptions. Madness always has a method to it.

d8 Personality Trait

- 1 If I explain how I see the world, maybe they'll see it my way.
- 2 They don't understand. The gods guide my actions, and I have no say in it.
- 3 I spend a great deal of time contemplating the nature of my madness, in hopes I may understand.
- 4 Someone is coming to get me. I don't know when or who, but it's coming.
- 5 I have bursts of revelation I feel compelled to write in my journal, but I can never read the writing afterwards.
- 6 I want to rejoin society so badly, but something I do always destroys my efforts.
- 7 My words and actions are prophecy incarnate, my gift to the world.
- 8 I joke and jeer at taboos others ignore, to open their minds to the truth.

d6 Ideal

- 1 **Revelation.** All must see the true nature of reality. (Neutral)
- 2 **Altruism.** I can act to make my madness a blessing to those around me. (Good)
- 3 **Freedom.** None may ever tell me what to do. (Chaotic)
- 4 **Pain.** Those without pain must suffer as I've suffered. (Evil)
- 5 **Renovation.** The paradigm of society must be torn down and rebuilt. (Chaotic)
- 6 **Seeking.** One day, I will find the truth behind my madness. (Neutral)

d6 Bond

- 1 I believe an object I own is alive with a personality, and I will do whatever I can to protect it.
- 2 My madness is heaven-sent, and I must follow where it leads.
- 3 My companions can understand or at least help me, I must look after them in turn.
- 4 I care deeply for others who suffer maladies of the mind, and will do what I can for them.
- 5 I lost track of a family member when the madness took me, and I'm trying to find them once more.
- 6 There is a specific entity that wants me to be mad, and I must find them at all costs.

d6 Flaw

- 1 Sometimes, I need a minute or five to scream or cry in the corner.
- 2 I am prone to wandering mindlessly, only to find myself much later far away from where I started.
- 3 I'm inconsolable without some object or totem that symbolizes my safety.
- 4 The people that know me will turn on me eventually. I just don't know when.
- 5 I intensely hate authority, and if ordered to do something I will make everyone's life difficult.
- 6 I'm easily fascinated by beauty, and sometimes stop to just watch the world go by.

VARIANT MADMAN: MAD PROPHET

Your mad ramblings have attracted true believers who harold you as the voice of a specific god. You embrace your prophet status fully, for you are no charlatan, and you labor to do the work of the gods as you see it. You may replace the Second Sight feature with the Variant Feature: Retainers, located on page 136 of the *Player's Handbook*.



ROLEPLAYING MADNESS

Of the backgrounds presented here, the Madman has the potential to be especially disruptive in the wrong hands. It is recommended that any players that wish to play a Madman character do so with direct assistance from the DM during character creation, to better integrate a Madman into both the plot and party.

As for the madness itself, it is similarly up to the DM to determine what your Madman sees, hears, or senses, and how that differs from reality. It is recommended that your DM not make it obvious to you that your character is suffering from a delusion, to provide both immersion and a feeling that your character's perceptions fundamentally differ from reality.

MINION

You were once the underling of a mighty overlord, powerful deranged wizard, or some other malefactor full of dreams of power and ill intent. However, your service to your overlord has come to an end, and you and your fellow minions have scattered. Perhaps your overlord has fallen, perhaps they ascended to another state of being, or perhaps they simply moved on to other plans, leaving you behind.

Regardless, you find yourself in a world likely hostile to your kind without the protection your overlord offered. How will you survive and continue on, when the authority you trusted could not?

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, Survival

Tool Proficiencies: One out of thieves' tools, the poisoner's kit, or the forgery kit

Languages: One language of your choice

Equipment: Rags, an insignia of your overlord, a jagged weapon, and a pouch containing 10 gp

OVERLORD

For years, your overlord's evil plans shaped the trajectory of your life, and you considered little else but obeying orders. While their absence has left a hole in your life, who they were still very much colors your perceptions of the world. Work with your DM to determine an identity and motivation for your overlord, or roll on the associated table.

d8	Overlord
1	A potent necromancer that sought to steal a god's power.
2	A general of a rigidly organized dark army, seeking total domination of the area.
3	An eldritch horror from parts unknown, demanding daily sacrifices.
4	An avaricious dragon, who ordered you to raid wealth from the surrounding countryside.
5	An inscrutable vampire who plotted many secret schemes and never told you anything.
6	A wicked fey liege, interested in spiteful games of intrigue.
7	A terrifying fiend, concerned only with corrupting the righteous.
8	A frighteningly strong giant, who commanded you to bring them food offerings.

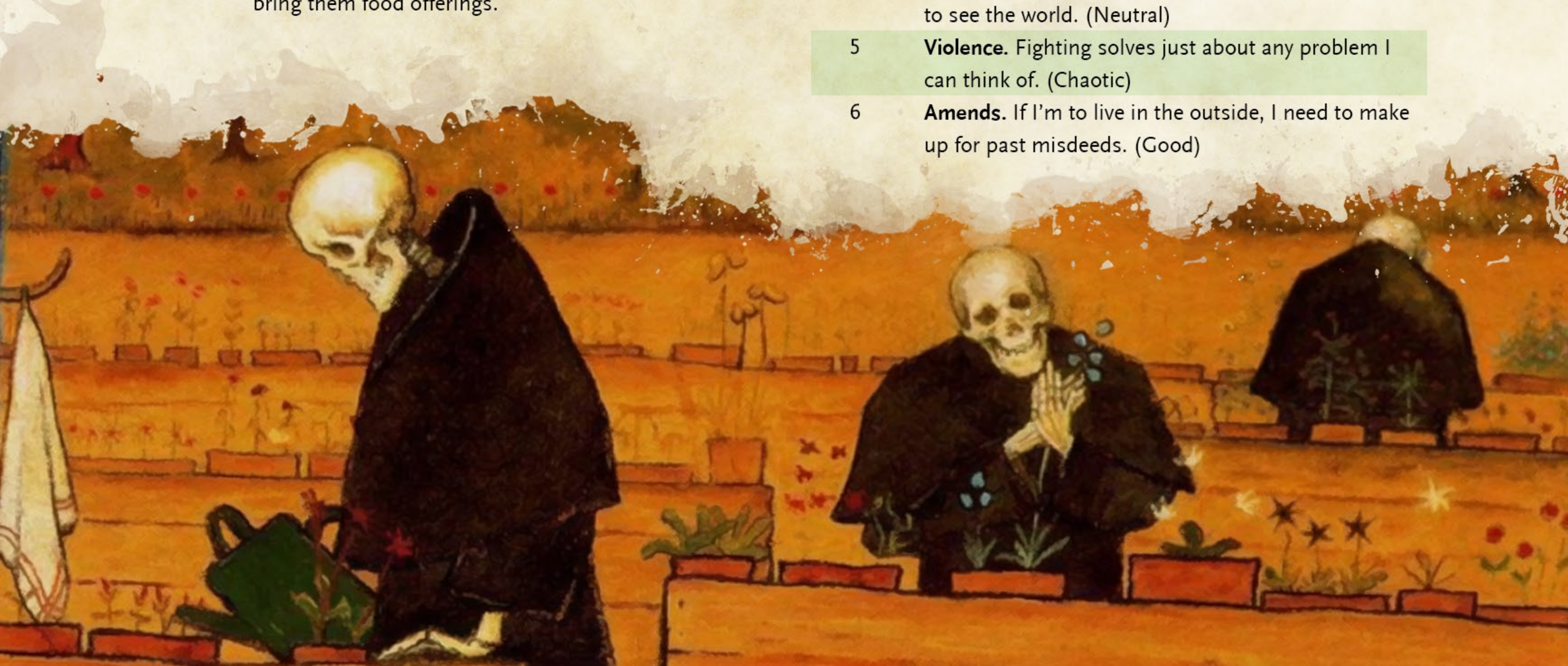
FEATURE: DUNGEONEERING

While serving your overlord, you may have lived in an ancient dungeon, a forgotten ruin, an isolated wizard's tower, or similar. You grew used to avoiding the many traps and pitfalls that were sprinkled throughout your home, and now avoiding common traps is second nature to you. You have advantage on any checks or saving throws you make to spot, disarm, escape, or avoid traps.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

A minion is used to a life of service to an unquestionable master, and losing that master forces the minion to learn a degree of self reliance. Nevertheless, minions are used to adversity and having to struggle against a superior force, often prevailing, and thus losing an overlord isn't the end for them. Rather, most minions treat the loss of their overlord as a chance for independence and personal freedom, to go into the wider world and seek out whatever it is that they want the most.

d8	Personality Trait
1	There's so much wide open land in the outside world, it's hard to tell where the traps might be.
2	The concept of personal property not just being something you take is new to me.
3	I still ask my overlord for guidance. Sometimes, I mimic their voice in response.
4	Without an overlord to follow, I'm my own overlord. I consciously try to dress and talk as they did.
5	I always examine dungeons with an eye for craftsmanship, and scoff if it doesn't meet my standards.
6	The food and drink are so much better in the outside world, I can hardly help myself.
7	I try and convince other minions of the benefits of independence, but they rarely listen.
8	I'm trying to improve the public perceptions of my kind, but doing so is difficult.
d6	Ideal
1	Security. I must be able to live a comfortable life free of danger. (Neutral)
2	Greed. Just because the dungeon's gone doesn't mean I have to stop looting. (Chaotic)
3	Tyranny. Life was better with an overlord, and I will raise another to power. (Evil)
4	Adventure. After living under my overlord, I deserve to see the world. (Neutral)
5	Violence. Fighting solves just about any problem I can think of. (Chaotic)
6	Amends. If I'm to live in the outside, I need to make up for past misdeeds. (Good)



d6 Bond

- 1 I rely on my companions to interpret the culture of the outside world for me.
- 2 Someday, I hope to find what happened to my overlord. It's not possible they were defeated.
- 3 I hope to find another of my kind, settle down, and start a family.
- 4 My overlord's work must continue, whether or not they are present to see it through.
- 5 I care for the plight of dungeon dwellers, and advocate non-lethal ways of dealing with them.
- 6 I'm saving up money to open my own dungeon.

d6 Flaw

- 1 You really just can't beat the taste of human flesh...
- 2 The wide open sky still startles me, and I avoid looking at it if I can.
- 3 I sleep armed, and am liable to attack whatever wakes me.
- 4 A sacrifice a day keeps the overlord at bay.
- 5 After losing my overlord, I can't trust others to stick around.
- 6 Sometimes I set traps, and then forget where I left them.

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