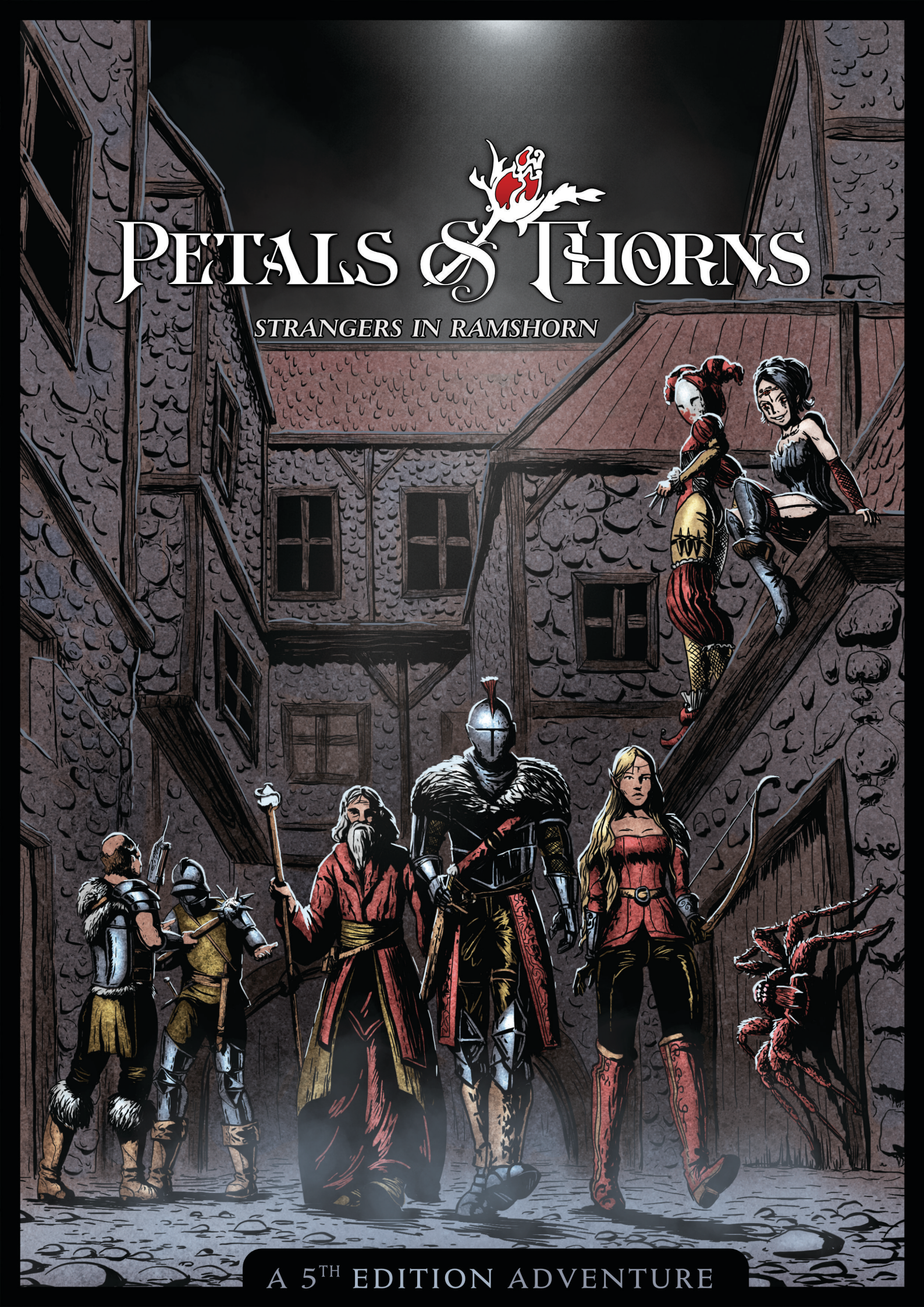




PETALS & THORNS

STRANGERS IN RAMSHORN

A 5TH EDITION ADVENTURE

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VIRTUAL TABLETOPS DON'T NEED INTRODUCTIONS. You pull open their tabs and pick a starting article to read at semi-random, then look relevant stuff up from there until you've meandered through the whole adventure, kind of like a wiki. A PDF is expected to be more structured, though. The order in which things come is very specific and there is supposed to be a bit at the beginning where the writer or one of the writer's colleagues or associates writes a thing about the book. Unfortunately, I am writing this after having blitzed through the revisions necessary to turn the Virtual Tabletop handouts into a PDF so that I can get them to David Shugars, who does my PDF formatting, in time to hit my December deadline, and I still need to do the Pathfinder conversion after this. Which means if you're reading this same introduction in the Pathfinder version that I was too burned out after that to write a new one. I think Rich Burlew's sentiment from the introduction to *No Cure For The Paladin Blues* sums up my current feelings:

"Tradition dictates that the author of a book write the Introduction (or Preface, or Foreword, or whatever he or she is writing at the front) at the end of the book creation process. I'm not sure why; maybe the theory is that the lack of sleep and general fatigue that results from pushing to get the book finished by the printer's deadline will loosen the author up to write honestly about his or her work."

I don't really have the focus for real segues right now, so we're just gonna let the audible grind of a sudden gear shift be our transition into the success of the Kickstarter and the future. The Kickstarter for this adventure (adventure path? It's longer than most adventures but shorter than most adventure paths—this ambiguity vexed me to no end when trying to find out how to market it) succeeded far beyond my expectations. If you're one of those 197 people who put their trust in me before I'd ever put a product to market, you have my sincerest gratitude, and my apologies for being unable to come up with a less cliched way of expressing it. While the story contained herein is complete—barring calamity, it ends with the town of Ramshorn saved and the characters having grappled with each of the interlocking conflicts between the major factions and their philosophies—many of the themes and characters introduced in this product aren't even close to being fully explored. The strong positive reception they've received in the Kickstarter has me daring to hope that I'll be able to produce a sequel to explore them in more depth. If that hope holds, I'll see you in the next one.

—Chamomile

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This document uses several PDF features to provide a more convenient at-the-table experience.

The headers on each page link directly to each of the major sections of the book. To create a more print-friendly file, access the "Layers" tab in your preferred PDF viewer and hide the "Background," "Art," "Maps," and "Borders" layers.

PREMISE

THE PLAYER CHARACTERS have been tasked to prevent Ramshorn from falling into anarchy. It's on the west side of the river, and while the hills which surround it are full of ambush points and difficult terrain that make it unpopular for trade and troop movements, wilderness forces like spiders and bandits could spread out from there easily if left unchecked. Who exactly has given the task will vary based a lot on what kind of characters you have. The characters may be mercenaries responding to the call of local merchant Goldblum (like the hirelings who show up later on), a minor order of knights tasked with preventing the chaos of the Eastern Frontier from spilling into the heartlands, or any other group with a vested interest in protecting the town. Regardless of the details, the players will find Ramshorn surrounded by threats and will need to explore the wilderness to find where they're lairing and put a stop to them. While doing so, they will also need to balance the interests of multiple different factions of the Eastern Frontier—or else forsake some of them to side firmly with others in anticipation of the coming civil war. Unbeknownst to anyone at the start, the threats near the town are being coordinated by agents of the Beryl Clan, hoping to soften the kingdom of Vintaria up for invasion. Once the Beryl Clan notices the party thwarting their allies one after another, they will eventually begin plotting their demise.

The adventure begins on the approach to the Ramshorn bridge as described in the notes on the Order of the Bear. After the bridge and the raid on Ramshorn, player characters are largely free to explore the area however they like. The Order of the Bear serve as the obvious initial lead, but players may end up wandering off to engage other threats nearby.

RESTING AND THREATS

This adventure uses a special variant rules for resting: Short rests take only five minutes, but long rests take a full week. Five minutes is just long enough for enemies in a nearby encounter to reorient themselves in preparation for the players' next attack without giving them time to completely evacuate the area or build fortifications, while a full week means that every long rest will give each of the threats arrayed against Ramshorn plenty of time to advance their various schemes (or, in the spiders' case, to expand rapidly outwards devouring everything in their path). Every time the players take a long rest, double check which threats are still present and which have been resolved, and update the map or run appropriate Ramshorn encounters for the appropriate week for any that threats that are still kicking.

It's important to note here that clearing a threat doesn't require extermination of every single token in the wilderness and their lair. Any threat that has reached the "Aftermath" stage of its notes, with factions bickering over who (if anyone) gets to loot the bodies for some kind of tactical advantage, has been cleared. More specifically:

- The Order of the Bear are no longer a threat once Sir Brander is dead or has entered an official alliance with a friendly faction (presumably the Order of the Lion).
- The hobgoblins are no longer a threat once Sir Dagai is dead.
- The sahuagin are no longer a threat once both the sahuagin priestess and the shoggoth have been slain.
- The spiders are no longer a threat once their egg chamber has been captured or destroyed.
- The undead are no longer a threat once all four undead knights have been destroyed.
- The Beryl Clan are no longer a threat once all of them are dead or have fled the Ramshorn region.

Lots of things can happen during a long rest. When characters take a long rest, resolve events in the following order:

- 1) Characters pay for accommodations.
- 2) Characters heal and any Ramshorn threats still active will alter the map, according to the guidelines given below.
- 3) Characters receive invitation to this week's faction event if they've qualified for it (see **Events Overview**), decide whether or not to attend, and participate in the event (or not).
- 4) Roll up a new set of hirelings and run a random vignette (see **Vignettes**) to signal that a new week has begun.

WANDS

Wizards and sorcerers each receive a *wand of magic missile* for free. This is to help alleviate their unusually strong reliance on long rests as compared to other classes. Wands and other magic items that refresh at dawn now instead refresh either at dawn on Sunday, dawn on Saturday, or sunset on Friday. Generally, holy items refresh on Sundays, arcane on Saturdays, and unholy on Fridays. The exact details do not much matter, as in almost all cases players will be simply refresh their items on a long rest and not worry too much on exactly which day a magic item is restored. If players do insist on trying to somehow wrangle tiny scraps of extra power out of exactly when different magic items refresh themselves, feel free to have all magic items refresh on a long rest, full stop.

XP MILESTONES

Players should level up every other threat neutralized. Using XP is strongly discouraged. The adventure is best played with players acting to defend the town from the various threats, rather than attempting to personally exterminate each and every monster in the wilderness.

DIFFICULTY

Boons

When run under default difficulty, **PETALS AND THORNS** can be a harrowing campaign, especially for small parties. The hirelings that show up in the second week allow small parties to beef up their forces and fill in any mechanical gaps. For example, if you're short on healing, hire Diesa Balderk, the Cleric hireling, or maybe Kara Stormwind, who is more focused on mauling people but does still know *cure wounds*. This is the recommended way of managing difficulty. Even a party doing poorly will usually have access to enough gold to hire two or three hirelings and make things much easier.

However, not all players want to run hirelings. Some of them are new players who are overwhelmed at the concept of learning two new characters at once, some find it makes it harder to get into character, and some just don't want to bother. For groups that dislike the hireling approach to adjusting difficulty, you can instead use boons. Boons are a list of minor bonuses that make certain dungeons much easier. Each party member can pick whichever boons they like, but everyone must have the same number of boons. This number can be none if you want to play the game at its originally intended difficulty, or all of them if you don't mind all the fights being foregone conclusions. The recommended amount for toning the difficulty slightly is two or three, enough to take the edge off the pain of some of the adventure's nastiest dungeons but not so many as to totally eliminate the challenge.

Beak's Defense: You are resistant to all piercing damage from ranged attacks, but not in melee.

Durn Concern: Characters adjacent to you or with whom you are flanking gain a +2 bonus to AC.

Got Gud: You quickly memorize the attack patterns of creatures who make large attack combos. Whenever a creature makes more than one attack on you in the same round, they have disadvantage on every attack after the first.

Jethro Scorns the RNG: You may take the average result of any damage or healing rolls you make rather than rolling for them.

Leki's Revenge: You gain advantage on ranged attacks when you're higher up than your target.

Martial Advantage Advantage: You are familiar with the ways of goblinoids and are never taken off-guard by their tricks. You are immune to the bonus damage from the hobgoblin's Martial Advantage ability and the bugbear's Surprise Attack ability.

Spiderproof: You take half damage from all poison damage. If you acquire poison resistance through some other means, this stacks and you take only one quarter damage.

Sword Saint: At your discretion, any damage you deal may be converted to radiant damage.

Banes

If you are a crazy person, instead of boons that make the game easier, your party can agree on a certain number of banes that make it even harder. Unlike boons, banes affect the entire party, so the entire party must agree which bane or banes to take.

Elisha's Fate: All characters have vulnerability to poison damage.

Funhouse Mirror Match: All six members of the Beryl Clan are always present, regardless of how many players there are in the party.

I Want To Get Off Mr. Bones' Wild Ride: Undead in the catacomb regenerate five HP each round. Undead reduced to zero HP will revive and get back up when they recover health in this manner. The party can receive exactly four deanimating sigils from Petre Vlatla that will cause an undead to stay down when defeated. Activating a sigil requires an action and can only be done to a skeleton that has been reduced to zero HP.

H₂O Intolerant: You take a level of exhaustion whenever you get wet. You do not take any additional levels of exhaustion if you jump in more water when you're already wet, and the exhaustion level goes away as soon as you've had an hour or two to dry off, or have taken a short rest with towels.

Jethro Abandoned: Enemies have advantage on all saving throws made to resist your spells or other abilities.

Ozhi's Laughter: When an enemy gets a critical hit with a ranged attack, the damage dice are tripled instead of doubled.

Pack Tactics For Everyone: Every enemy gets advantage on attacks if they have a friendly creature adjacent to the target of their attack.

TIMELINE

WEEK 1

Ramshorn, fearing an inability to feed themselves 'till the next harvest, refuses to pay the Order of the Bear's "tax." The Order of the Bear patrol sent to collect it raid the village. The players, unless they have managed to get very lost very quickly, will walk in on this raid.

If the players visit Goldblum this week after the raid is over, they run into the tiefling Vain, actually Colgru Beryl using *disguise self*. She's buying some alchemical ingredients from Goldblum, and is impatient and agitated (her spell duration is only an hour and she wants to be far outside Ramshorn when it expires). If asked about her, Goldblum will say that she's dropped by now and again the past couple of weeks, but never for very long. He doesn't know where she stays. The Great Forest isn't far, but both it and the area surrounding Ramshorn is dangerous, and it's odd she would make a dangerous trip from some hamlet in the Great Forest to Ramshorn just to buy some alchemical ingredients. She never buys anything that could actually make something by itself, either—all the ingredients are inert when mixed with each other. Just topping off her own supply, Goldblum supposes. Anyway, she's not paying him to pry.

WEEK 2

Immediately after the characters begin their long rest, the Lunatic Fete is held, provided that the characters have turned Sir Brander (or possibly Sir Dagai) over to the Lunatic Court. See the **Events Overview** for details.

If the Order of the Bear are still active, they will make a retaliatory raid on Ramshorn to punish their impudence in the last week. This raid will consist of three waves of attackers. Each one is comprised of 3d6 Bear infantry, 2d6 Bear archers, 1d3-1 ogrillions, and 1d6-4 rogue elementalists (minimum 0). The first wave arrives from the western road. On the Order of the Bear's initiative count for round three, the second wave arrives from the northwestern corner, but have used a dash action to get there and won't act until the next round. The third wave arrives in the fields to the south of the road leading west, led by Sir Mortimer, on the fifth round, having also used their dash action to arrive.

The hirelings have arrived and will help the party defend the town whether they're hired or not (the hirelings have been hired by Goldblum to defend the town). If the Order of the Bear have the town's defenders mostly surrounded and occupied, any newly arrived reinforcements will start spreading into the town to kill the locals and pillage their homes. If any of the Bear units are able to move and attack a party member or hireling, they'll do so (including if a Bear archer can line up a clear shot on one, even from several dozen squares away), but if they can't, they'll instead use their movement and possibly even a dash action to start picking off townspeople.

The Order of the Bear aren't heroes, and if they ever find themselves noticeably outnumbered by the party and their hireling allies in the immediate vicinity, they will disengage and flee. Note that this applies only to the immediate vicinity (maybe within ten squares or so of the Bear unit's location). Because the Bear come in different waves that arrive in different parts of the map and break off to menace the villagers if the party and hirelings seem occupied

(even only for the moment), it's entirely possible that the players and their allies will be able to scare off Bear units on the north side even while still outnumbered by those on the south, or vice-versa. Sir Mortimer will not retreat no matter how badly outnumbered, but will attempt to fall back after being reduced below half his hit points (19 HP or less). Bear units in Sir Mortimer's vicinity will not flee until he does.

If the Order of the Bear are not active, then Caspar and Lidia Vlatla greet the characters as they come to the inn at the end of the day somewhere in the middle of their long rest. If the characters called upon the Lunatic Court to defeat the Order of the Bear, there is a Lunatic Ringmaster with them. If they called upon the Order of the Lion, there is a Lion Knight. If they dealt with the Order of the Bear on their own, Caspar and Lidia are there alone.

Regardless, Caspar will ask the players to investigate sightings of sahuagin in the area. It sounds like the Deep Empire has sent a scouting patrol. Not only will snuffing this patrol discourage any further probing, they also usually travel with a shoggoth for religious purposes. Caspar would like the characters to retrieve *shoggoth tentacles*, as his order would like to study the shoggoths connection to the Old Ones, a source of power to Warlocks and possibly also Sorcerers and thus of great interest to them. He offers a *wand of web*, a *wand of paralysis*, and a *wand of lightning bolts* in exchange for the tentacles. If the players react to being offered the powerful wand of lightning bolt, even if the reactions were out of character, it's a good opportunity to have Caspar say something along the lines of "I thought that might get your attention." The exception, of course, is that the party are specifically playing characters who are all very cagey and guarded, in which case that should trump their OOC reaction.

Caspar's attitude is one of friendly professionalism. He respects that the player characters have unique skills and have taken the lead in clearing the Ramshorn region of potential dangers (if, as is likely, they have in fact done so), and is hoping that they will be willing to put those skills to use in order to help the Order of the Third Eye advance their research, an arrangement which will not only be immediately beneficial to both parties, but will also lead to long run benefits as the Third Eye discovers new and better ways to improve the lives of the people of Vintaria using their magic. He is disappointed, but not angry, if the characters refuse him.

If the Lunatic Ringmaster is present, he'll tell the characters that the Order of the Wyrd have a standing policy of exterminating everything from the Deep that comes up from the ocean to the coastal waters or onto land, especially those shoggoth things the Third Eye keeps messing with. Sure, the Third Eye is offering some powerful magic in return, but if the characters deliver those tentacles, the best case scenario is that the Third Eye will get what they want from them and get even more magic to hoard for themselves—that "improve the lives of the people" line is a lie, they don't share anything. Plus, it's as likely as not that they'll end up creating some abomination, getting bored with it, and dumping it into the woods for the Order of the Wyrd to clean up, like they did with the owlbeats and the manticores. If the Lion Knight is present, he'll tell the characters that while the Third Eye are secretive, they are perfectly honest and trustworthy in their dealings and very cautious wizards who don't treat lightly the possibility of losing control of their magic. Whatever they want the shoggoth tentacles for, the Lion Knight asserts that it is at worst eccentric and may end up being a great benefit to the region.

Lidia Vlatla will tell the players that her sire, Petre Vlatla, needs some disposable mortals for a job cleaning up some **rogue skeletons** in the catacomb in exchange for one thousand gold pieces each, drawn from the ancient treasures of the Vlatla's vaults. Lidia carries herself with a flippant sarcasm and acts like she's condescendingly amused by just about anything mortals do (especially if they try to threaten her, in which case her answer is essentially "come at me, bro"), but in truth she's actually very impatient and uncomfortable being surrounded by tons and tons of mortals who might plausibly be able to destroy her if they all ganged up. She'll turn to mist and flee if attacked. Similarly, she'll lose patience and walk away if the characters interrogate her for too long or express explicit suspicion of her motives, telling them to come to the catacombs and talk to Petre about it, and warning them that the rogue skeletons will be a much bigger problem for Ramshorn than for the Vlatlas in the end.

If asked where the rogue skeletons came from, Lidia will tell the party to go find the catacomb and bug Petre about the details. If pressed for an explanation immediately, Lidia will reluctantly explain that they've been doing experiments on busting the limits on animate dead by blanketing certain areas with a ton of necrotic energy. It was going great for months, but something messed up the spell recently and now they're all uncontrolled and rampaging. Now Petre's ordered all of the Vlatlas to defend the central crypts and especially the ossuary to make sure the rogue skeletons aren't able to use the inanimate bones resting there to increase their numbers and overwhelm the catacomb, and has sent Lidia to go and recruit some expendable mortals to clean up the outer crypts. If the players go to the catacomb and ask Petre about the situation, he will deliver the same information.

He'll also reassure any characters who express worry about the danger posed by the skeletons that despite what his daughter's impatience might have implied, this is not a suicide mission. Petre will insist that if the skeletons take over the catacomb they will be able to build up their numbers to overwhelm the region, but as they are now, they aren't very dangerous, especially not in the north crypts. He only needs to rely on outside help because he's worried about stray skeletons getting into the central crypt (or worse, the ossuary) while his children are distracted cleansing the outer ones.

If the Lunatic Ringmaster is present, he'll reassure the characters that the Vlatlas are trustworthy. They're assholes, but they're trustworthy. If the Lion Knight is present, he will antagonize Lidia until she leaves and gives her parting comment to find Petre in the catacombs for more information, then ask the players to go ahead and clear the outer crypts, but to bring him along so he can consecrate them, preventing the Vlatla Clan from raising any more undead in the area. This will stop anything like this from ever happening again, whereas leaving the Vlatlas to experiment unchecked will probably just lead to another disaster in a few months—plus, who's to say the Vlatlas aren't building that army with an aim towards conquering the kingdom?

If the Beryl Clan are still active, they blast the dead end tunnel in the southeast catacombs into a connector with the spider caves. **LOCATION II** of the spider nest now connects to **LOCATION D** in the catacombs.

WEEK 3

The Order of the Lion and the Order of the Wyrd host the Ramshorn tournament. If the characters are invited, they may attend. See the **Events Overview** for details.

If at least two of the goblins, spiders, and Order of the Bear are still active, Goldblum's supplies have begun to be interdicted in greater and greater numbers. He can no longer brew Keoghtom ointments, potions of growth, or potions of resistance. He still has this week's stock and he'll hold onto that stock until the players buy them, but once the players have bought them they will not replenish. Goldblum will leave a message with Bruen telling the players he'd like to meet with them, where he will ask them to deal with the goblin problem (unless the players haven't dealt with the Order of the Bear yet, in which case he'll ask them to prioritize the Bear instead) ASAP, as their dedicated attacks on his caravans are currently doing the most damage to his supply chains. Thanks to all the raids, he doesn't have a lot of liquid cash, but he'll offer them healing potions (including greater healing potions) at cost of production this week if they agree to take on the problem, and if they succeed, he'll give them each 200 gold in store credit, or if they don't mind waiting, 200 gold in cash to be paid the week after the goblins are defeated (when Goldblum's wagons will hopefully have gotten moving again and gotten his business back on its feet).

If the spiders are still active, remove the brown bear from encounter 1 and replace it with an encounter with three **wolf spiders**. Replace the black bear at encounter 6 and replace it with two **tiger spiders**. Replace the **wolf pack** at encounter 8 with three **spitting spiders**. Add four **wolf spiders** and three **tiger spiders** to the three-way confrontation at encounter 14. Reset half of all cleared spider encounters.

If the Beryl Clan are still active, Vain has been in town twice this week, though never for long, asking about the players. If the players have been using hirelings, she spends a lot of time talking to them. Otherwise, she mostly talks to Goldblum, Bruen, and Ront. Because she's only ever around for twenty or thirty minutes at a time, the players have missed her (unless for some reason they have made arrangements to be notified as soon as she's around so they can talk to her, in which case see the week 4 result for when the players actually talk to her).

If Caspar and Lidia didn't show up at the inn last week, they show up this week instead. If the characters haven't cleared the Order of the Bear or did so with neither the help of the Lunatic Court nor the Order of the Lion, but have subsequently made friends with the Order of the Lion at the tournament, the Lion Knight will show up to the conversation.

WEEK 4

The Order of the Third Eye and the Vlatla Clan host the occult conference. If the characters are invited, they may attend. See the **Events Overview** for details.

If either of the goblins or Order of the Bear are still active but Goldblum didn't suffer any hits to his business in week 3, he suffers one now. See week 3 for details. If this is the second time Goldblum has been affected, he now loses his ability to brew oils of slipperiness, potions of water breathing, dusts of disappearance, and potions of greater healing. If the players refused Goldblum's earlier offer, he'll up his offer to giving them free potions this week if they can just get his caravans moving again. If they accepted but just haven't succeeded, Goldblum will offer them free potions this week if they promise to get rid of both the goblins and the Order of the Bear before the end of the week (although if one of them, probably the Bear, are already gone, he'll just ask them to deal with the remaining threat, for obvious reasons). A randomly selected hireling is killed in an ambush.

If the undead knights are still active, kill the two **Vlatla thralls** stationed with Natalia Vlatla at E1 and move her back to the four niches at E2. Both Nicolae at E3 and Lidia at E4 donate a thrall to help her hold this new position. Add three destroyed **skeleton infantry** in the corridor south of E1 and four destroyed **regular skeletons** in the corridor north of E1, and leave two new **skeleton archers** and a **skeleton infantry** occupying E1. These new forces were drawn from unoccupied tombs in the outer crypts.

If the spiders are still active, kill two **skeleton archers** and two **skeletons** at LOCATION D in the catacombs as they are sacrificed to fending off the spider attack. Another two **skeleton archers** and two **skeletons** must be brought in from elsewhere in LOCATION D to restore their numbers. Reset half of all cleared spider encounters.

If the Beryl Clan is still active, Vain (Colgru Beryl in disguise) is gathering information on the players' capabilities again this week, but for the first time she's in Bruen's tavern at the same time as they are and will gladly engage them in a few minutes of direct conversation. If they ask why she's asking around, she claims she's interested in talent scouting potential allies for trouble in the GREAT FOREST. She claims to be sided with no faction in particular and seeking only to protect the forest inhabitants from the war, and is very interested in learning as much as possible about what the characters are capable of and what their immediate plans are. Vain will do everything in her power to avoid staying around so long that her disguise fails, including insisting on leaving immediately, fleeing any attempt to block her exit, and directly recasting the spell in plain view of witnesses to buy more time. Better to let them know only that she's in disguise than to let them know who she is under the mask. If she must recast the spell, she'd rather do it in private, but she doesn't like to spend two of her spells on keeping herself disguised—she works on the same weeklong recharge as the players do.

WEEK 5

The Order of the Lion and the Order of the Third Eye hold their war council this week. If the characters have been invited, they may attend. See the **Events Overview** for details.

If the spiders are still active, remove any remaining Order of the Bear encounters. If the Order of the Bear wasn't already neutralized, it is now. Place three **jumping spiders** and two **spitting spiders** in encounter 10, three **spitting spiders** at encounter 11, three **wolf spiders**, a **spitting spider**, and a **recluse** at encounter 12, and a pair of **tiger spiders** to encounter 13, to replace the killed Bears. Remove the goblins and sahuagin from the three/four-way battle at 14 and move the spiders from that encounter to fight with the owlbear at encounter 16.

If the male huntsman is still alive or if the werewolf pack encounter has been cleared, replace the werewolf pack from encounter 19 with three **wolf spiders** and two **tiger spiders**. If the male huntsman is dead and the werewolf pack is not, remove half of the wolves remaining in the pack and do not add any spiders.

Destroy the Vlatla thrall and the three friendly skeleton archers at encounter 5, and move **Tereza Vlatla** and one of the **thralls** stationed at her position to defend the entrance of the catacomb on the catacomb map. If Goldblum's business has taken one or fewer hits and wasn't already being hit by goblins or the Order of the Bear this week, it takes a hit now. If this is the first hit he's taken, see week 3. If it's the second, see week 4.

If the goblins or the Order of the Bear are still active, Goldblum's business takes a hit. If this is the first time this has happened, see week 3, and if the second, see week 4. If this is the third time this has happened, Goldblum can no longer manufacture anything but healing potions and will offer all magic items in his stock and any remaining potions he has to take care of the problem before his business implodes completely. Three randomly selected hirelings are killed in battle defending the caravans.

If both the goblins and the Order of the Bear are active, kill Sir Ornas and his troops at encounter 10, kill half the goblins and one of the bugbears from 17, and move the surviving goblinoids from 17 to encounter 10. If the Order of the Bear is inactive, split the goblin ambush in half, with half the goblins and bugbears moving up to 10 while the other half stay in their original location at 17.

If the undead knights are still active, kill one of Natalia Vlatla's thralls at E2 and move her to E3 with Nicolae while her remaining thrall goes to E4 with Lidia. Move the infantry and two archers at E1 to E2 and destroy them. Additionally, add three more destroyed regular skeletons there. Then add six animate skeletons in the crypts and corridors just north of E2 and west of E3 and another five in the crypts and corridors just south of E2 west of Lidia's position at E4.

If the Beryl Clan is still active, Hiski Beryl or, if the party has only three members and Hiski is not here, Saiz Beryl will travel into town openly to recruit some hirelings. These hirelings will then wait in the wilderness to attempt to ambush and kill the players the next time they see them. Hiski/Saiz will recruit hirelings equal in number to the players from amongst whoever of Fodel Dumein, Imsh Starag, Kara Stormwind, Lindal Thorngage, Luther Helder, Milo Hilltopple, and Naivara Homilion would be most effective as counters to the party, to the best of their estimation. If there are fewer of these hirelings left alive than there are players in the party, Hiski/Saiz recruits as many as are left.

WEEK 6

The Lunatic Court and the Order of the Wyrd host the harlequinade this week. The players may attend if they're invited. See the **Events Overview** for details.

If the goblins or the Order of the Bear are still active, Goldblum's business completely implodes and he can no longer sell anything. Another three randomly selected hirelings are killed as the town is bled white, and all of the surviving hirelings are available for hire by the players. Any not hired this week will leave Ramshorn, but still survive and may reappear elsewhere in Vintaria.

If both the goblins and the Order of the Bear are active, move the **hobgoblin lieutenant** and four of the **hobgoblins** from the sleeping chamber in their caverns to occupy the crossroads at 10, kill the three Bear archers at the canyon ambush at 11, all the Bear troops at the box canyon at 12, and all the Bear troops on the hill at 13, and move any surviving **goblins** or **bugbears** from the crossroads at 10 to occupy the canyon at 11 (move only goblins and the bugbears—leave the hobgoblins you just placed there). Move the **goblin scout patrols** at 5 and 13 to the canyon ambush at 12. Kill half the goblins now at 12 and one of the bugbears. These are casualties of the goblins' fight with the Bear. The Order of the Bear are now neutralized.

If the spiders are still active, remove all goblin and sahuagin tokens from the wilderness, along with the owlbear at 16 and, if it made it this long, the werewolf pack. Leave the tiger spiders at the owlbear's former location, and add two new **tiger spiders** at the old hobgoblin perimeter at 18. The hobgoblins and sahuagin are now neutralized. Goldblum's business implodes as the spiders have totally overrun the wilderness and three randomly selected hirelings are killed in the wilderness (on top of any killed by goblins).

If the undead knights are still active, kill the thralls remaining at E3 and E4 and move Lidia, Nicolae, and Natalia back east to E5. Destroy half of the ordinary skeletons in the corridors north and south of E2 and add another six ordinary **skeletons**, three **skeleton archers**, two **skeleton infantry**, and two **skeleton mages** to the tombs and corridors east of E3 and E4 and west of E5. If the spiders are also still active, the Vlatla Clan have fled the catacomb entirely and taken up residence in some of the abandoned tavern space at Bruen's left by the dying hirelings. Raise another twenty ordinary **skeletons** and scatter them throughout the ossuary, concentrating them two or three to each bone room, then grab the horde in the various E areas and move them out into the wilderness, killing the Vlatla thrall outside and converting the three friendly skeletons to their horde. If there are spiders nearby, the skeletons remain hostile towards them.

WEEK 7

If the players have repelled the Order of the Bear's follow-up attack in week 2 but still managed to get this far without the Bear being neutralized by either the spiders or the goblins, then congratulate them on successfully metagaming their way to a really weird ending. Have a dog flying a UFO abduct the party or something.

If the goblins are still a threat, then they will mass their forces for a final strike on Ramshorn this week. Goblins who survive from the wilderness will be massed into an infiltrationist unit with bugbears from anywhere in the Ramshorn region (i.e. including the goblin caverns) to strike at the tavern and kill the hirelings inside. Any hirelings not actively in the party's employ will be slain. The goblins will remain in the town and hidden until dawn, when the hobgoblins from the wilderness and caverns will be massed to attack from the west, while the goblins and bugbears strike from ambush from behind after the hobgoblins have started a melee. Sir Dagai and the goblins from the spawning cavern will be held in reserve and attack whenever and wherever the hobgoblins look like they need support.

If the spiders are still a threat but the undead are not, remove any stray non-spider tokens from the wilderness and create a new spider force of three **tarantulas**, eight **wolf spiders**, four **tiger spiders**, six **jumping spiders**, and five **spitting spiders**. Have this force descend upon Ramshorn from the west. Every other round, bring in one of the spider encounters from the Ramshorn wilderness to join the fight until the wilderness is empty.

If the undead knights are still a threat but the spiders are not, the Vlatla lines completely collapse and they flee to Ramshorn much the same way they do in week six if the knights and the spiders are both still active (which they may have done already, if the spiders were only neutralized last week). Give the skeletons an additional twelve regular **skeletons**, four **skeleton infantry**, and six **skeleton archers** from the ossuary, and add them to the horde that exits the catacombs when the Vlatlas are completely driven out. This horde attacks Ramshorn.

If the undead knights and the spiders are both still a threat, then good news! The undead horde from the undead knight version of this week spreads out in groups of four or five skeletons a piece to attack spider encounters in the wilderness, and each pack of spiders so preoccupied will not be able to join the spider assault on Ramshorn, nor will the skeletons be able to wade through all the spiders to join in. If players manage to fend off the spiders from Ramshorn (or if they just scapper), they can take advantage of the fighting between the skeletons and spiders to thin the numbers of both sides. The undead knights will also leave the catacomb to direct their minions in battle, the dark aura sustaining them having expanded throughout the entire region. Dame Callai will reinforce herself with a few leftover bones from the crossroad crypts and attack the spiders through the breach in her tomb. Sir Sylvas joins the skeletons hunting spiders in the wilderness, targeting the huntsman first if it's still alive, otherwise a tarantula if one's available, and failing both of those, any random spider clump out in the wild. Sir Tobias and his skeletons are attacking the spider nest through its main entrance. Sir Bolivar has gathered up all the spare skeletons left in the catacomb to stand guard in the ossuary and kill any stray spiders that come through (or any attempted counterattack by players who've managed to fight their way through this unlikely but totally rad apocalypse scenario).

ONE WEEK AFTER THE SPIDERS HAVE BEEN NEUTRALIZED

Regardless of what state the rest of the map is in, if the sahuagin are still active the week after the spiders have been neutralized, move the patrol guarding at I5 to the Order of the Bear's canyon ambush at II. If there are any living tokens there, kill them now and leave the sahuagin patrol there. If the male huntsman is still alive, move a second sahuagin patrol to its location at 20, kill one sahuagin, and have the others hiding out nearby, looking for a chance to bring it down and mop up the spider problem. If the male huntsman is already dead, leave the second sahuagin patrol on the crossroads at 10, and kill any other tokens that previously occupied that area.

TWO WEEKS AFTER THE SPIDERS ARE NEUTRALIZED

If it's been two weeks since the spiders were neutralized, the sahuagin start raiding. Goldblum's business will start to take a hit from them each week (including this one), if he isn't taking a hit already from other threats. See week 3 for the first hit, week 4 for the second, week 5 for the third, and week 6 for the fourth and final hit, which destroys Goldblum's business entirely.

WHEN THE BERYL CLAN ARE THE LAST ONES LEFT

If the players have taken a long rest since neutralizing the last threat other than the Beryl Clan, Vain comes to find them when they're eating breakfast at Bruen's tavern. She asks them to come to the wilderness with her so she can show them something relevant to a Tiamat infiltration cell operating in the area (this should get the players' attention if they have recovered and deciphered any of the clues as to the Beryl Clan's activities in the region, and even if not it's common knowledge that Tiamat is the bad guys) or, if they insist on finishing breakfast first, to meet her there later. If the players follow Vain immediately, her disguise is still in effect when she leads them into an ambush by the rest of her clan, but she'll drop the act just before they strike. If the players meet her later, then her illusion will have already expired when she and her clan attack. This is a straight mirror match in which the Beryl Clan resorts to direct confrontation to try and kill the party. Their plans may have been foiled for now, but only because the characters intervened, so if the Beryl Clan can kill them now, they can concoct a new scheme to destroy Ramshorn, this time without such fierce opposition.





FACTIONS

THERE ARE FIVE (potentially) friendly factions active in the Eastern Frontier: The Order of the Lion, the Lunatic Court, the Order of the Wyrd, the Third Eye, and the Vlatla Clan. Each of these factions are technically allied to one another at least insofar as having a common cause against the various threats to the Eastern Frontier, but they are not close friends and many of them are on collision course with one another.

FACTION RELATIONS

Each faction can have one of five states with another faction:

- **Military alliance**, in which the two factions see one another as close allies and will defend one another in war.
- **Political alliance**, in which the two factions are generally friendly to one another and tend to coordinate with one another on major decisions in the region, but won't necessarily fight a war on behalf of one another.
- **Neutral**, in which the two factions have no formal relation. An alliance of convenience is maintained against common enemies, they do not tend to reinforce borders with one another and instead focus troops against those common enemies, and troops from one faction are generally friendly to troops from another, but they do not work directly with one another.
- **Closed borders**, in which the two factions have become suspicious of one another and suspect that war is nigh. Members of one faction are barred from the territory of the others, with force, if necessary, and they tend to dedicate as many troops to fortifying any shared borders they have as to fighting the common enemies they are actively at war with.
- **Open war**, in which the two factions are actively trying to destroy one another.

The party has a favor score with each faction going from 0 to 5, with 0 representing *no particular familiarity*, 1 representing a *good impression*, 2 representing a *basic and friendly attitude* in which the party's advice is valued, 3 representing a *strong alliance* in which the faction will generally be willing to do small favors ("small" in this case including giving the players a patrol to command if they ever find themselves in over their head facing an enemy), 4 representing the *particular trust and confidence* of the faction leader, such that players have significant input into region-wide faction decisions, and 5 representing the *total trust and confidence* of the faction leader.

In order to advance from 0 to 1, players must make a favorable impression on the faction. There are plentiful opportunities to make a good impression on the five factions in dealing with the threats facing Ramshorn, but just as many opportunities to rub them the wrong way. Each quest has an **Aftermath** section detailing under what circumstances a player can get their first favor point from one of two factions. If players get the favor point for one faction, they lose their first favor point from the other, but only if they haven't got a second one. For example, if the players side with the Order of the Wyrd while storming the spider nest and destroy the egg chamber, they will gain a favor point with the Order of the Wyrd if they don't already have one. The Vlatla Clan wanted the players to capture the egg chamber so the Vlatlas could breed an army of spiders, so if the players had exactly one point of favor with the Vlatlas, they would lose it. If they have no points with the Vlatlas, there's nothing to lose. If they have two or more points with the Vlatlas, they've made close enough friends with the Vlatlas that deciding against them in a quest like this won't change the Vlatlas' opinion significantly.

This adventure does not have explicit opportunities to gain third, fourth, or fifth favor points with the faction. Generally speaking, however, characters with two favor points may find themselves called upon to assist one or two of the faction leaders directly in a side quest, which will get them a third point of favor, while the fourth and fifth points of favor tend to be tied to the character arc of faction leaders (or sometimes their named lieutenants). Advancing these character arcs usually involves completing a side quest, but not just any side quest as with the third point of favor. These side quests see faction leaders forced to choose between their motivations, and the player characters being able to define the future of the faction by convincing the NPC to choose one way or another.

FACTIONS OF THE EASTERN FRONTIER

THE ORDER OF THE LION

Overview

Philosophy: The Order of the Lion believe that upholding law and order will bring prosperity back to the Eastern Frontier. Safety, stability and predictability are the cornerstones of a good life, such that people can grow up, find love, and raise a family in peace. The young and foolish might yearn for adventure, but the wiser know that predictable contentment is a better deal.

Forces and Strongholds: The Order of the Lion have already occupied Karis and have begun a campaign into the Great Forest to quell the goblin and elf rebels. Already they have at least some troops positioned in the major trade hub of Rivermet and have occupied Goblintown in the Great Forest, though they have not yet moved into Mithrallavien, the elven town within the woods, and goblin rebels remain active throughout the forest, striking from hidden camps. Though the Lion have overwhelming power, the rebels both goblin and elven know the terrain better and are able to melt away from unfavorable battles to strike where the Lion is less well defended.

Lion patrols are led by a **lion knight**, a defender of the realm ennobled by either Prince Darius or Duke Willhelm and sworn to uphold the laws of Vintaria, enforce the will of Queen Catherine, and follow their Order's commander wherever he should lead them. Many of them are second or third sons of lords in the Old March, the lands of Duke Willhelm. In the lion knight's entourage are three **lion infantry** and four **lion archers**. These are soldiers hired or, in times of emergency, sometimes levied into service. While a lord like Duke Willhelm is perfectly within his rights to donate his peasants to a knightly order indefinitely, the Order of the Lion has always preferred loyalty and discipline to sheer numbers. Although the Lions have recently swelled their ranks with levies from the Old March to grant them massive numbers, these men and women expect to be discharged within a few years to see home again, and are largely stationed on guard duty in the major cities, while the more committed volunteer soldiers are used for the patrols into the Great Forest.

Darius, the Bastard Prince

Backstory: Prince Darius is the bastard son of Queen Catherine and Duke Willhelm. Prince Darius has a long track record of quelling upstart nobles seeking to break away from the rule of his mother, branded a coward and even a traitor for capitulating to the elven invaders after their forces reached the western heartlands fifteen years ago. The unfavorable peace treaty signed in the aftermath has resulted in massive reparations, which in turn have led the knights of the Eastern Frontier almost entirely unsupplied. The whole region has devolved into near-lawlessness after fifteen years of being patrolled only by undersupplied and often corrupt knights.

In light of his past victories against the rebellious barons of the heartlands, Prince Darius has been assigned command of the Order of the Lion, formerly under the command of his father Duke Willhelm, and tasked with restoring order to the Eastern Frontier. Although Darius' belief in the power of law to bring peace and prosperity to the land is sincere, he has an ulterior motive. His brother, Galais, the half-common prince, is legally the heir to the throne, but many of Vintaria's nobles favor Darius due to his purely noble heritage. The succession crisis is inevitable, and by building up a power base amongst in the Eastern Frontier, Darius hopes to win it—despite the support for Galais amongst the many powerful nobles whose family members Darius imprisoned or even killed while putting down their rebellions.

Identity: Darius sees himself as noble, honorable, and valiant, upholding truth and justice in the Eastern Frontier. He views his half-brother Galais as manipulative, deceptive, and selfish, tricking people into acting against their own interests instead of dealing honestly with them and seeking the throne for himself out of rank power-mongering greed rather than any desire to do right by the people of Vintaria. In Darius' view, Galais, though possessed of a certain force of will, is cowardly and untrustworthy, and would lead a corrupt and indolent nobility that would leave Vintaria's people to be preyed upon by extortion within and invasion without. He considers Galais responsible for the coming war for refusing to cede the throne peacefully.

Motivation: In his heart of hearts Darius knows that he wants the throne simply to prove that his illicit birth does not make him any less noble than any other lord or lady of Vintaria. If he can become king and rule well, it will prove once and for all that he is a noble not just in station, but in the purest sense of the word: a noble man, great in both character and ability, one who has both the power and the compassion to defend the weak and uphold justice. He guards this inferiority complex very well and never makes mention of wanting to prove his virtue and capability in public. Darius' three other motivations all relate directly back to this first one. Darius wants to protect the people of Vintaria both to prove his virtue and out of a sincere compassion for those who cannot defend themselves. He also has great loyalty to those who support him despite his questionable claim to the throne or even to any kind of noble heritage, not just because he pragmatically needs their support, but also because their trust in his nobility—as evidenced by supporting his claim to the throne—reassures him that he is who he envisions himself to be. Finally, Darius must defeat his brother and claim the throne. If he is defeated in the fight for the throne, Darius will always be seen as a lowly bastard child grasping for power above his station. Petty though it may seem next to Darius' ideals of justice and nobility, this desire to shield his self-image as a great man hailing from a mighty bloodline drives much of his royal ambitions.

Lieutenants

Darius' spiritual adviser is **Bishop Cornelius**, who believes the Order of the Lion's greatest mission should be to keep the peace. Seeking to prevent the war from spiraling any further out of control, Cornelius supports making treaties with as many of the belligerents of the Eastern Frontier as possible. Not only is a vengeful attitude towards the people of the Frontier morally objectionable, it's also a waste of valuable military resources that must be carefully husbanded in order to bring Darius victory in the coming war with Galais. Cornelius even dares dream that a sufficiently large coalition in the East might give Darius a big enough military advantage to win quickly and decisively, without subjecting the kingdom to the horrors of prolonged war. Cornelius supports Darius in his desire to protect the weak and in his loyalty to those who believe in him.

It is important not to think of Cornelius as purely Darius' shoulder angel. Although he does generally encourage Darius' nobler impulses even if it comes at the expense of his ambitions, Cornelius does not believe the goblins or elves have valid grievances against the government, even in the face of being left unprotected in the face of pogroms, and in the goblins' case even after knights led pogroms against them. Cornelius seeks peace with them because he believes in forgiveness and, as much as is possible, in pacifism. He extends that forgiveness to anyone who is willing to forsake their rebellion, whether they're terrified goblinoids taking up arms to defend themselves against a government that is sacking their villages or the remorseless murderers of the Order of the Bear.

Dame Leona, the field commander of the Order of the Lion who served under Willhelm before Darius, believes that a message must be sent to the rebels that such insurrection will no longer be tolerated. Allowing the villains who have pillaged, raped, and murdered their way through the Frontier walk away in exchange for nothing but a promise not to do it again would be a hideous miscarriage of justice—and ensures that defeated enemies will rise up again as soon as the Lion's back is turned, perhaps during some sort of kingdom-spanning civil war for the throne, for example. She is particularly hostile towards the goblinoid population of the Great Forest, who are still making trouble even a hundred years after the fall of their kingdom. While Dame Leona does not admit to such an extreme position in public discourse, at this point she is convinced that only total eradication can end the goblin threat.

While Dame Leona believes what she believes out of a (particularly severe) commitment to the concept of justice, her contempt for those who rebel against Vintaria's rightful ruler and for Galais' manipulative ways and aversion to the battlefield fuel Darius' ambitions. To Dame Leona, the people of Vintaria have a duty to put the rightful ruler of the kingdom on the throne, and if some of them need to be sacrificed to that duty, then so be it. She herself risks her life in battle on a near-daily basis for her ideals, and she's happy to demand others do the same. This encourages Darius in his desire to secure the throne at any cost.

THE LUNATIC COURT

Overview

Philosophy: The Lunatic Court don't necessarily disagree with the fundamental bargain at the heart of the feudal contract: protection in exchange for loyalty. Rather, they consider the Kingdom of Vintaria to have thoroughly reneged on that contract. The Eastern Frontier is a war zone and the Orders of the Bear and the Reaper sent to protect the frontier instead preyed on its inhabitants and fueled the conflicts throughout the Great Forest. There has been no protection, only betrayal, and thus no loyalty is owed. The Eastern Frontier stands on its own and will not submit to the Order of the Lion.

Forces and Strongholds: The Lunatic Court has its origins in Rivermet and first became a major power in the Eastern Frontier after delivering a deathblow to the Order of the Reaper stationed there three years ago. Though the Court maintains no permanent seat of government, war orphans seeking to join their number and beleaguered peasants hoping the Court might come to their aid both make the journey to Rivermet to find them.

Lunatic patrols are led by a lunatic ringmaster. They are appointed from the bottom up. Any lunatic courtier who can get at least a half-dozen other lunatics to follow them around and do what they say is a lunatic ringmaster. They don't need the blessing or permission of the leadership apart from having been accepted into the Court at all. A typical patrol is comprised of a lunatic magician, red jester, white jester, and four lunatic acrobats, but a patrol can consist of any number of any type of lunatic courtier. Self-appointed ringmasters leading patrols that consist entirely of newly masked lunatic acrobats are generally looked down on as poseurs, but they exist. Formally speaking, they are as valid as any other ringmaster, but formality doesn't matter as much in the Lunatic Court. Reputation matters, which is why the support of the experienced and respected jesters is seen as a prerequisite to being a "real" ringmaster.

Harlequin, the Lunatic Queen

Backstory: Harlequin was originally Anne Valdaven, one of the scrawnier orphans of Rivermet and known to be easily pushed to tears. She was also sneaky and clever, and while Anne was weak and easily upset even amongst eleven-year old peers, her peers were eleven-year olds, so being even worse at what they were all bad at counted for less than being better at what they were all good at. As Anne grew older, however, rooftops could no longer hold her weight noiselessly and she could no longer fit into spaces not meant for humans. Most of the orphans graduated into the ranks of the organized crime of Rivermet, but Anne didn't have the stomach for violence and especially murder. Considered a weakling by the adult criminals, she stayed with the orphans well into her early teens when her peers had moved on, soaking up the street kids' admiration as the biggest kid by far but also quietly ashamed that all of them would eventually grow old enough to realize that a fourteen-year old slumming it with the street urchins could only be a failure.

Anne changed the night she put on the mask. Goblin raiders, seeking revenge for raids led by the Order of the Briar, snuck into the city and began to pillage. The Order largely left the slums to its own devices, and goblins pushed out of the markets and estates raided there 'till dawn. The thieves' guilds provided protection to their membership, but the orphans were left to fend for themselves—Anne among them. Pushed into a shop selling "magic masks" for

prices too cheap to possibly have any real magic power, Anne donned one of the blank masks out of desperation. In truth, the mask was powerless, but the combination of adrenaline and the mask's effect on her psyche pushed Anne to kill one of the goblins menacing an orphan friend. The blood splatter from the goblin's severed jugular would later be painted onto the mask and serve as her distinguishing mark. Anne went on to pursue the remaining kidnapped orphans into the woods, where the goblin rebels planned on holding them ransom, having drastically overestimated how much the Order of the Briar cared about children just on the principle that they were human.

Anne did not remove her mask except to eat and drink, and then never when anyone was looking, during her pursuit of the goblins, and the sense of anonymity and power it gave her pushed her to become more and more violent and brutal. By the time she found her friends and released them, she had adopted the name Harlequin. After killing their captors, Harlequin learned from her released friends that they had not really been held captive after the first few weeks. The goblins kidnapped them seeking not revenge, but leverage against their enemies in the Briar. After it became clear that the Briar did not care about them one whit, the goblins had become their friends—until Harlequin killed them all. Recoiling from the concept that she had murdered people on nothing but prejudice and misunderstanding, Harlequin drastically revised her personal self-image to one of unpredictable, lunatic bloodlust. She hadn't killed the goblins out of misunderstanding, she convinced herself, but because their raid had caused her an awful lot of inconvenience and she took exception to that.

This bloodthirsty self-image led Harlequin to become vengeful throughout her later teen years, killing those who had rejected her from the thieves' guilds and absorbing the lower ranking members into the Court. Even as she became a rising star amidst the Rivermet underworld and fiercely defended her reputation as a remorseless killer, she never killed or authorized the killing—or even non-lethal assault—of anyone who wasn't already a violent criminal. Though she never disclosed why, she often sought retribution against criminals and, increasingly, guardsmen or even knights who were known to prey on the people of the slums, especially the urchin gangs. This culminated in an alliance with the goblins of the Great Forest and a years-long campaign to wear the Order of the Briar down through attrition, which ultimately successfully resulted in the disintegration of the Briar. This strike against the knights of Vintaria made Harlequin and her Lunatic Court the face of the growing independence movements throughout the Eastern Frontier, and those seeking to fight back against the tyranny of Queen Catherine and her bastard prince came flocking to Rivermet, seeking to join the growing Court.

Identity: Harlequin still thinks of herself as a remorseless and sadistic killer, but as she grows older and the Court is packed more and more with pro-independence enemies of tyranny and others who see the Lunatic Court as a beacon of hope, the coming dawn at the end of the Eastern Frontier's long night, she has come to identify as a hideous retribution against the corruption of Vintaria's nobles, a blade thirsty for the blood of the wicked. She still has not shed the lunatic identity that propelled her to the top of the Rivermet underworld, however, and likes to maintain an aura of unpredictability and capriciousness.

Motivation: Harlequin's helpless childhood on the streets informs both of her primary motivations. She wants to protect

those who are vulnerable and she wants to terrify others to the point that no one will think of her as vulnerable. Something deep down in Harlequin still believes that she won't be safe unless everyone around her is so scared of being the target of her wrath that they wouldn't dare try to attack her. She was a scrawny overgrown street urchin until she found the will to kill, at which point she began a rapid ascent to power and prestige, an ascent that only accelerated the more comfortable she became with killing.

At the same time, she doesn't just want to personally be safe from the ravages of poverty and war that defined her childhood. She has compassion for others and most of her more brutal kills are motivated by that compassion—the people she slaughters with the most sadistic glee are the bullies, the tyrants, the ones who have themselves tormented those who could not fight back.

Harlequin has a third motive to her brutality—she doesn't want to admit she's made horrible mistakes. The Harlequin persona of bloodthirsty caprice may have picked up a homicidal antipathy for bullies and tyrants, but at its core, Harlequin's mask is that of someone who kills whoever she wants and only coincidentally gets easily aggravated by injustice, while the truth hidden underneath is someone who still hasn't dealt with the guilt of having killed—horribly—some mostly innocent people, not because she didn't care if they were innocent, but because she never thought to check.

Lieutenants

Pantaloone is a silver-tongued magician and Harlequin's most trusted adviser. He was the owner of the mask shop Harlequin took her mask from during the goblin raid. After her first kill, he traced the blood splatter that had sprayed across the mask, cleaned off the actual blood, and painted in the traced splatter. He went on to become the mask maker for the Lunatic Court. Pantaloone encouraged Harlequin to leave Rivermet to find her friends, guided Harlequin through her reacquainting herself with the city after she returned with them, and encouraged her most sadistic tendencies. In modern day, he encourages her making the Lunatic Court the face of the Eastern Frontier's independence movement, but also to retain a vicious edge. He wants Harlequin to rule so he can ride her coattails into a position of power, and he wants Harlequin's regime to value loyalty over virtue so he can profit from it.

Though he does respect Harlequin's skill and spirit, he ultimately uses her as a tool to advance his own power. To that end, he wants Harlequin to be as morally flexible as possible. He limits himself to advising her only and does not personally engage in acts of particular cruelty, which is how he survived the Lunatic Civil War when Harlequin purged many of the more violent members of the Court, after they had absorbed most of the thieves guilds' membership but before they'd begun their campaign against the Order of the Briar.

Pierrot is a skilled assassin and cynical to the point of ruthlessness. He does not have a particularly cruel streak, and killing people even tends to make him melancholy, but he will absolutely kill anyone who threatens himself or his friends. He does not believe the Lunatic Court can meaningfully change the situation in the Eastern Frontier, as he considers war and tyranny to be natural products of human frailty. He does not particularly oppose the idea of fighting back against tyrants, but is pessimistic about ever running out of targets. He has a powerful loyalty to Clown in particular, whom he followed into the Court soon before the decapitation strike on the Order of the Briar.

Clown is a gentle giant and one of the first recruits to join the Lunatic Court after their defeat of the Order of the Briar. Clown is an idealistic bruiser who likes to think of himself as a protector of the small and a terror to abusers and exploiters everywhere. In sharp contrast to Pierrot, Clown believes the Lunatic Court will bring justice and peace to the Eastern Frontier. He joined the Court (bringing Pierrot with him) during their campaign against the Order of the Briar, where his bravery and sheer strength in the face of the knights quickly earned him recognition amongst the Court.

Colombina was one of the urchins of Rivermet when Anne Valdaven returned from the Great Forest as Harlequin and began her bloody campaign against the thieves' guilds who had previously rejected her. Harlequin always took a particular interest in defending the urchins, and Colombina was one of those who grew from urchin to street thief under her wing. She was also one of the ones who advocated most strongly against the extortion and kidnapping that the Lunatic Court began engaging in after absorbing the lower ranking thieves' guild members. She did not intend to set Harlequin down the path of violent purges that led to the Lunatic Civil War, but she is remembered amongst the Court's most senior members for doing so, with mixed opinions on whether she's treacherous, a zealot, or just too naive to realize that simply telling people to please stop being violent criminals wouldn't have worked. The latter is closest to the truth. Colombina is a healer, not a fighter, and while she understands that violent horror exists quite plentifully in the Eastern Frontier, she has fairly little understanding of why and mainly just wants it to stop. She lets Harlequin worry about how, and focuses her own efforts on healing the sick and wounded on the way. She is by far the most vocal opponent (though never in public) of Harlequin's violent tendencies, and Pantaloon disapproves of her, calling her naive. Harlequin leans more towards his perspective than Colombina's, but always hears Colombina out anyway when she advocates for mercy and negotiation over terror. Ultimately, Harlequin is fighting for people like Colombina, even if she thinks she would quickly lose that fight if she listened to Colombina too often.



THE ORDER OF THE THIRD EYE

Overview

Philosophy: Knowledge is power. To the Order of the Third Eye this is the ultimate truth and the motivation behind everything they do. Ignorance and laziness are the ultimate roots of suffering in the world, with malice and cruelty only taking root because of decaying social (and sometimes literal) infrastructure as a result of foolish leadership and insufficient capability. With enough understanding of the universe, the Order of the Third Eye will be able to reshape the world into a utopia.

Forces and Strongholds: The Order of the Third Eye has academies in three different cities throughout Vintaria, linked by magic portals that allow for instantaneous travel. Their academy in the Eastern Frontier is located at Valence to the north, past the kingdom's de jure border and in the neutral territory between Vintaria and the Clans of Tiamat. They have a second academy at Sormont, at the southern end of the kingdom and not far from the Ramshorn region. Though the hills between Sormont and Ramshorn are too choked with underbrush and rock to permit the passage of large armies, it is easy enough for a single wizard with a small entourage to pass through, and it is from here that the Third Eye makes their trips into Ramshorn when they have business there.

The Order of the Third Eye command thaumaturgical construct minions created by Grand Magus Balthazar, the Order's leader. His development of these magical automatons is the leading reason why he was appointed Grand Magus upon the death of the Order's former leader and remains the Order's greatest accomplishment. It is near-dogma in the Order that the en masse production of these constructs would change the world drastically and for the better, but unfortunately the steep material costs and difficult construction process have so far prevented their spreading much beyond the teams used by the Third Eye. Even these rarely leave their tower strongholds for fear of losing valuable working automatons to banditry or rebellion out in the Eastern Frontier. The leaders of the Third Eye largely rely on their own considerable magical power to defend themselves and advance their agenda.

Evoker Magus Caspar

Backstory: Caspar was born in the Sormont region, where the Order of the Third Eye assessed Caspar as having magical potential by the time he was eight years old. He was taken from his family as a child in exchange for a generous "dowry" and brought to the Sormont academy. He did not leave again until he was a knight of the Order. His fellow students were his siblings, and his teachers were his parents. He was taught that he was part of the most important organization in the world, in pursuit of the most important goal there could be.

This ideal endured into Caspar's adulthood. Talented in evocation from the start, as a knight it became his specialty. Dedicated as he was to the art, Caspar left his peers behind and became the Order's premier evoker. Due to the obvious combat applications of that particular school, Caspar has been the Order's deadliest field agent for years, sent afeld to secure valuable research materials and specimens in dangerous locations. As such, Caspar is well-traveled in Vintaria and beyond and is no stranger to the planes. His belief in the mission of the Third Eye remains adamant. He and his siblings are striving for a better world, and their opponents are misguided or shortsighted when they are not simply evil. Nevertheless, his years in the field have taught him that even a mighty wizard is not invincible, that he needs friends and allies to accomplish his goals, and that understanding the immediate concerns of others is necessary to forging coalitions with them. Even if those immediate concerns are foolish, they are an opportunity for alliance.

Identity: Caspar sees himself as wise and noble, but also down to earth and friendly. He makes friends and allies with knights of other orders, unenlightened to the knowledge and calling of the Third Eye, by being sympathetic and, when possible, helpful to their concerns. Other knights of the Third Eye might see these concerns as petty and shortsighted compared to the grand reshaping of the world that the Third Eye pursues, and Caspar doesn't disagree in principle, but he doesn't think it matters. What matters to someone is not what's most important in the world, but what's most important to them, and sympathy to that is necessary to winning their friendship. Whether Vintarian peasants or efreeti of the City of Brass, Caspar prides himself on his ability to understand the perspectives of others and make friends of them. He likewise prides himself on his loyalty to his friends and allies, and on the terrible magical power he can bring down on those who would wrong them.

Motivations: Most of Caspar's motivations tie back to the mission ingrained into him as a child: Caspar wants to fix everything. This gives rise to Caspar's most noble and immediate motivation, which is that he wants to help the people around him, especially those who can't help themselves. No matter how much he tries, though, there is always more suffering. His ambition is nothing less than putting an end to all suffering in the entire world. His empathy for others is sincere, and he knows that in the kingdoms across mountains, oceans, and planar boundaries there are more problems than he could ever hope to solve on his own. In order to make more than the most insignificant dent in the suffering of the multiverse, he must help the Third Eye unlock the mysteries of the universe and use them to uplift sapient life to utopia.

This seemingly-noble goal hides a deadly hubris: Caspar ultimately bends the majority of his efforts towards accruing power and lore for the Order of the Third Eye, because he will not settle

for simply making the world better, but instead insists on solving every problem across every plane of existence within his own lifetime. The grand scale of Caspar's ambitions provide justification for the darker side of the Order of the Third Eye, a darkness that Caspar certainly is not aware of, as deeply enmeshed in the organization as he is. Recognizing his temperament is ill-suited to abducting experimental subjects, they rely on more morally flexible wizards (like Melchior) for these tasks, but while Caspar is not personally assigned to kidnap test subjects or release a swarm of mephits into a nearby village to see what happens, he is aware that the Order of the Third Eye does this kind of thing at least semi-regularly.

Caspar's justifications that the Order's ends justify their means is derived in part because the Order of the Third Eye are the only real chance he has of ever helping more than just a few hundred people in the Eastern Frontier with their immediate problems, but it is also deeply tied to Caspar's final motivation, the only one not directly tied to his desire to fix everything. Caspar wants to believe the Order of the Third Eye are good people, and will resist the idea that their excuses are just that and the reason that other knights of the Order are assigned to do things that would cause him debilitating psychological trauma is because those other knights are terrible people who do not care about others and simply aren't affected nearly as much by causing suffering. It is not impossible to convince Caspar of the truth of this, because he wants to help the people around him and the simple truth is that many of the Order of the Third Eye's membership abuse the people around them, but his motivation to avoid seeing his siblings in the Order as villains makes the path difficult.

Other Members

Melchior is the primary field agent employed by the Order for things that Caspar would shy away from for moral reasons. Melchior is the one who kidnaps people so that the Third Eye can see if you can make an artificial sorcerer by pumping them full of quiddity (answer: no, it just burns them up from the inside), who takes by force the magically gifted children of Sormont whose parents will not be bribed out of them, who runs experiments on unsuspecting villages and destroys evidence that magical plagues and monstrosities are the result of the Order of the Third Eye. For him, the Third Eye's dreams of utopia are an excuse that permits him to do whatever he wants in pursuit of knowledge.

He believes there is no virtue except curiosity and no sin but willful ignorance, which seems very noble right up until he locks infants in totally isolated cages and uses constructs to feed them to see if humans raised who are physically provided for but raised in total isolation would develop language on their own (answer: they all died in infancy from what was apparently a lack of will to live—they just stopped eating after a while). It's not like there was a direct link between that experiment and the utopia the Third Eye is nominally dedicated towards achieving (such a utopia would obviously not be raising infants in total isolation anyway). He just wanted to know what would happen, so he ran the experiment to find out, with the only justification being that he couldn't know for sure that the experimental results wouldn't be helpful to establishing utopia until he had run the experiment and collected the data.

Melchior is everything wrong with the Order of the Third Eye, and just as Caspar makes excuses for the Third Eye in general whilst keeping his distance from the worst of their crimes, he makes excuses for Melchior in particular as well. Melchior is on friendly

terms with Caspar, and does not bring up the gory details of how he gets his experimental results out of professional courtesy to a fellow knight. Caspar does not want to hear these details because he finds them personally upsetting and is certain that whatever's been done, it was done after proper consideration and for a good reason.

Balthazar is the Grand Magus of the Third Eye. His formal title in the chivalric orders is Commander, although few in the Third Eye use it. As the leader of the Order, he is heavily, but indirectly, involved in the actions taken by knights like Melchior. Although he doesn't personally participate, he is the one who approves of the actions and, when necessary, gives Melchior the resources necessary to carry them out.

Coming from the preceding generation of knights as Caspar and Melchior, he was one of the instructors that Caspar looked up to as a child. That admiration has since been reaffirmed when the magi of the Third Eye, the Order's most esteemed members, elevated Balthazar to the position of Grand Magus after the death of his predecessor (who really, actually died of natural causes—the point of Caspar's arc is not that the Third Eye has been taken over by a maniac, but that its dark side has always been there and his refusal to look too closely has made him complicit), and again when Balthazar subsequently granted Caspar himself the title of magus.

But despite Balthazar's claims and Caspar's affirmations, Balthazar's actions give the lie to his alleged concern for the people of Vintaria, especially in Sormont, which he rules directly. Balthazar is not a blatantly evil tyrant. If his villainy were too obvious and overbearing, Caspar and others like him would be unable to make any justifications and would turn on him. Nevertheless, he approves of what Melchior does and the reasons why he does it, both in the sense of liking Melchior more for doing it and in the sense of giving him official permission to use Third Eye resources to do it. Balthazar's importance to Caspar's arc is that he is the one Caspar trusts to weigh short term sacrifices against long term benefits—and he doesn't. The sacrifices of other people mean nothing to him. He only cares about advancing the mission of the Third Eye, to accumulate greater understanding of the mysteries of the universe, and talk of utopia is just excuses and justifications.

THE ORDER OF THE WYRD

Overview

Philosophy: Balance and harmony must be maintained. This does not mean prolonging destructive conflicts by helping whoever is losing. Nothing is less harmonious than war, and no organization with such a philosophy has ever existed in all of human history. “We must preserve the balance between good and evil” demonstrably fails to motivate people to violent action, and there is nothing about elves or dwarves or halflings that would make them more prone to it. Maintaining balance and harmony does not mean constantly switching sides mid-war in order to help whoever’s losing, it means maintaining the balance of power and influence between different interests such that they do not go to war. The Order of the Wyrd considers it a loss when war breaks out for any reason, and when they take sides in a war (which, once a war has already begun, they often do), they do so with the aim of ending the war quickly and creating a new, more stable balance of power in the aftermath.

The Order of the Wyrd also recognize that they have essentially no hope of achieving the total cessation of conflict. It is an ideal which they strive towards, but do not expect to achieve. Nevertheless, they celebrate what victories they are able to achieve.

For the Order of the Wyrd, the concept of “destiny” or “inherent nature” is vital. They believe that ultimately people cannot control their inherent nature, and that seeking harmony means seeking a world where one person’s fulfilling their nature does not choke someone else off from theirs. One cannot hope to create harmony by changing others, but rather by finding a way everyone can coexist as they are. At the same time, this is often impossible—sometimes a creature’s nature is vicious and predatory, and while hypothetically the Order of the Wyrd would like to find harmony with it anyway, in practice they can’t always do so. This is often phrased as “either the lion will starve or the lamb will be devoured,” and while it is an unpleasant truth, it is truth.

Forces and Strongholds: The Order of the Wyrd maintain nomadic outposts throughout the Eastern Frontier. Due to their long friendship with the elves of the Forest, their most consistent stronghold is Mithrallavien. They do not maintain any kind of permanent garrison there, but it is a popular enough destination that there are often at least a few Wyrd patrols stationed there.

The Wyrd have also traditionally maintained a friendly relationship with the goblins of the Great Forest, but that relationship has always been at odds with those seeking goblin independence from the conquering Vintarians. The Wyrd wish to see the goblins protected and integrated into the realm, but they also support a balance of power whereby the goblins are subject to Vintaria—a balance of power which, goblin independents are quick to point out, benefits the Order of the Wyrd as a knightly order of the victorious kingdom. This strained relationship has been exacerbated as the Wyrd now serve as advance scouts for the Order of the Lion. Although they do not report the mere existence of goblins to the Lion, they do report goblin rebels—and as the situation in the Eastern Frontier worsens, most goblins are friends of friends of friends with rebels. Rebels who often turn up dead when the Wyrd leads the Lion to their hiding spots in the woods. Although Goblin town was once a Wyrd pseudo-stronghold the same way Mithrallavien was, they are now welcome there only because the Order of the Lion are occupying it.

Order of the Wyrd patrols are led by Wyrd knights, ennobled by Sharra to maintain the peace in the Great Forest. Despite what the rank might imply, Wyrd knights are rangers rather than melee focused fighters, and many of them are recruited from amongst the ranks of the Wyrd scouts and Wyrd warriors. These men and women are commoners who joined the Order of the Wyrd, because they believe in the Wyrd philosophy of harmony, because they had a love of the wilderness, exploration, and adventure and joined the Wyrd to pursue it, and some to escape plague or poverty. There is no particular hierarchy between scouts and warriors, but scouts are usually de facto apprenticed to knights and being groomed for knighthood themselves, while warriors tend to be too loud, too headstrong, or sometimes just too new to receive such attention. Most Wyrd patrols consist of two scouts and four warriors in addition to the knight.

Sharra, Grandmother of the Wood

Backstory: Sharra has been watching the wilderness for over fifty years. She was knighted by Sir Sylvas, the Order’s first leader, and spoke with many of the Wyrd’s founders in the twilight years of their lives. When she was first accepted into the Order, Vintaria’s conquest of goblin lands was still in living memory (though it was before her time), and the goblins and elves remained in a state of near constant civil war. It was Sharra’s generation that brought peace, and Sharra herself who spearheaded many of the efforts to do so. Winning praise for her level-headedness, foresight, and empathy, she was elevated to the council of elders in her 30s, and a decade later would be appointed the order’s leader by the same council.

Sharra’s term as commander of the Order of the Wyrd has been a difficult one. Soon after she was appointed, war broke out with the elves, and the Order was called upon to help navigate the mountains in the west. Far from their usual territory, the Wyrd did the best they could, but suffered heavy losses. The Order of the Storm, the Wyrd’s long time ally in the Eastern Frontier, was so utterly shattered by the losses of the war that they completely disintegrated soon afterwards. The Order of the Wyrd, left to contain the chaos alone, soon found itself overstretched and losing control. In response, the Order of the Bear was sent to hold Karis and the Order of the Reaper to hold Rivermet—both of these would ultimately succumb to the chaos of the Frontier.

The Order of the Third Eye, stationed as they were in Valence and Sormont, were not quite in the Eastern Frontier, but they were close enough to help. Unfortunately, their magical experiments have mostly only made things worse. Though the Wyrd have yet to find proof sufficient to convince Queen Catherine to take disciplinary measures against them, the Wyrd have plenty of evidence that the Third Eye are responsible for the proliferation of freakish monstrosities in the Frontier—owlbears, manticores, and the like.

With their allies constantly winnowed down and some nominal friends making the situation worse, the Order of the Wyrd under Sharra’s command has only been able to slow the Eastern Frontier’s descent into violent anarchy. Despite this, she has still earned the title “Grandmother of the Wood” for her consistent dedication to maintaining peace as much as possible, and though many of her successes swiftly erode, she is remembered for the small victories she has won along the way.

Identity: Sharra sees herself as helpful and kind, a friend to those in need—at least as often as she can be. The last two decades have been long and difficult and she is often forced to turn away those who wish her aid because so many people need help and there is only so much time she has to help them. More and more, she feels old and tired.

Motivations: Sharra's perception of herself is more or less accurate, shortcomings and all. Her primary motivation is the same as it has always been: She wants to provide shelter to those who need it. But the peace and harmony she was able to help build as a knight and elder have been undone during her tenure as leader of the Order. She has few regrets, in that there was rarely much more she could do in the face of the odds stacked against her, but she has many promising pupils killed before their time and has spent two decades attempting to preserve what she spent forty years prior building. Sharra is tired and does not want to keep fighting this war, especially now that it appears as though the final years of her life will be consumed by the succession crisis between Darius and Galais. Sharra continues on out of a sense of duty, but has largely given up hope that she and her Order will be able to keep what little peace remains.

Lieutenants

Talon was a werewolf before she was ever a member of the Order of the Wyrd, turned as a child by one of the lycanthropes who stalk the Great Forest far from the roads and villages. Reviled and outcast by her friends and family, the Order of the Wyrd took her in and taught her to control the bestial urges of her new alternate form. According to the Wyrd, this transformation, though clearly capable of harming everyone around her if she was not careful, could only be overcome if it were to be embraced. In keeping with their philosophy of balance, the beast must be fed enough to keep its hunger at bay. Following these teachings, Talon embraces the fury within her, refusing to be controlled by it and yet not seeking control over it either, but instead a symbiosis, in which the instinct is followed in such a way as to benefit the long term goals of her conscious mind. This makes Talon a viciously protective knight of the Wyrd, and the Order's principle field captain. She is quick-tempered, violent, and fiercely loyal. Talon sees the last twenty years as an extended war against the enemies of harmony and balance, those who seek to exacerbate the discord for personal gain. She believes that now, when things are coming to a head, the Order can punch through and establish a new balance of power, restoring peace to the Eastern Frontier. It might be a bloodier road than the Wyrd would like, but that is often true.

Vincent joined the Order of the Wyrd for a love of adventure, and advanced to become one of their premier field captains for a love of his fellows in the Order. Though perfectly willing to resort to violence when necessary, he is gentle and compassionate, preferring to win hearts and minds with his soft-spoken kindness. He is well aware that his soft talking works only because of the big stick he carries, but he nevertheless believes that actually swinging that stick is almost never necessary. For him, the chaos of the Eastern Frontier must be fought with diplomacy. Embracing discord should not be the path to harmony.

Unlike many of the other factions, it is extremely unlikely that the Order of the Wyrd will face internecine conflict over differing interpretations of the faction's philosophy. More likely, Sharra will turn de facto leadership of the Wyrd over to one or the other and the transition is virtually guaranteed to be peaceful (internally—

externally, it is very possible that the new leader will immediately join the Vintarian civil war on one side or another). Despite their disagreements, Vincent and Talon are good friends. Each recognizes that the other may be correct, and that whatever the Order of the Wyrd does when the war finally comes, they must do it together.

THE VLATLA CLAN

Overview

Philosophy: The Vlatla Clan are essentially nihilists. They believe there is no overarching meaning to the universe, no point in having any ideals. They believe that mortals should suffer whenever it would benefit their clan for no better reason than because their clan is powerful enough to compel the obedience of mortals. They know that someone bigger and stronger might happen along and do the same to them, and they'd rather that didn't happen, but being nice to those weaker than them won't actually do anything to stop someone stronger from coming along and abusing them. Idealists can opine all day about how much nicer things would be if only, but in reality, people are self-serving and the only reason the Vlatlas appear to be more so than usual is because they're strong enough to get away with it.

Forces and Strongholds: The Vlatla Clan primarily operate out of the catacombs that span for miles between Ramshorn and the western heartlands. They keep to the eastern edge, but where Ramshorn buries their dead. So long as the corpses keep coming in, the vampires have no reason to go out and make some more. Vampires must feed, but the Vlatlas aren't stupid, and can see the benefit in tapping their victims in Ramshorn without draining them. If they started killing, the townspeople might flee, and the steady influx of dead bodies to work with would cease.

In theory, a Vlatla patrol is led by a **Vlatla thrall**, some unfortunate creature sired as a vampire and enslaved to the will of Petre Vlatla and his childer, and consists of three **skeleton archers**, three **skeleton infantry**, and one **skeleton mage**. In practice, the Vlatla Clan have recently lost control of their skeleton forces, which are now restless and uncontrolled in the catacombs. The Vlatlas hold them at bay from the main ossuary, but if that were to fall, the berserk magics of the catacomb would spread into the ossuary, animate the many, many bones there, and drive the Vlatlas from their stronghold. As alternative to that, the Vlatlas plan to destroy their own army of skeletons and start from scratch—which means that in practice, a Vlatla patrol is one of the five primary clan members with a couple of thralls in tow.

These are especially common as a hunting pack due to the way the Vlatlas siphon blood from Ramshorn up to clan patriarch Petre Vlatla through many intermediaries. Lidia, Natalia, or Nicolae will lead a pack of thralls to drink from the people of Ramshorn, careful to keep them on a tight enough leash that they do not drain any of them dry. Whichever of the three is leading the pack will often feed themselves directly from Ramshorn, but the other two waiting back at the catacomb will then feed from the thralls instead. Tereza Vlatla feeds from the three of them, and Petre feeds from her.

Lidia Vlatla

Backstory: Like her siblings, Lidia hardly cares about who she was before she was sired into the Vlatla Clan. She came from far away, and followed her parents her over a hundred years ago to set up shop in a new kingdom, with a fresh start. Since then, she has preyed on the mortals of Ramshorn while casually desecrating their dead. Progress on breaking the usual limits of control on the undead has been slow, but vampires have nothing but time.

Identity: Lidia sees herself as fun, charming, and witty. She wants to have fun and is apathetic to whether or not other people suffer in the process. She acknowledges her lack of morals, but views herself as more honest and straightforward than most for admitting as much up front. Others may make pretensions of being moral, but no one actually is. Everyone pretends to be morally upright because if they don't then everyone else will ostracize them in order to maintain their pretense of morality because if that pretense fails they'll be ostracized. It's all circular. It's plain to see from people's actions that no one actually cares if poor people live or die, and we'd all have a lot more fun if everyone admitted as much and stopped making a fuss when Lidia eats them.

Motivations: Lidia is decadent and eternal, and those two attributes form the foundation of her two primary motivations. Lidia wants to have fun and Lidia wants to live forever. "Fun" is complicated. Lidia needs peers who can be her friends, underlings who can be her fawning admirers and devoted servants, and victims who can be her playthings and/or prey. For maximum fun, Lidia needs all this and enough power over her immediate surroundings to do whatever she wants. This is why she wants her sire Petre Vlatla dead. Petre holds the Vlatlas in his thrall, and while he rules with a light touch, Lidia has nevertheless long satiated herself on the joys that Petre permits her and longs to get him out of the way so she can pursue those he forbids. She knows that Tereza will stand with Petre. She'd prefer that Nicolae and Natalia take her side, but if she has to stake them and sire new siblings, she can do that. It'd be harder, she'll have to wait longer for opportunity, but it'll come sooner or later.

The other side of the coin is that Lidia wants to live forever. She has nothing else but time and is perfectly willing to wait in order to secure her goals rather than take risks to make them happen sooner. She wants Petre Vlatla dead, but she won't move against him unless she feels like she has good odds of succeeding. She wants to be vampire countess over a terrified and hapless population, and one with a big enough income for her to throw decadent parties on the regular, but she doesn't want it so badly that she'll throw caution to the wind and risk her eternal life getting one out of the current war. If this war looks like too much of a toss-up, eh, she'll wait twenty or thirty years and see if the next one looks better.

Other Members

Petre Vlatla is the patriarch of the clan. He sired all four of the other major members and a decent number of the thralls. He knows that they resent his dominion over them, but also that they do not wish to give up their eternal life. So long as he rules with a light enough touch, Petre thinks, he will never face retribution for keeping his "family" in his thrall for eternity. He believes he is entitled to their loyalty for giving them eternal life, and that his clan as a whole are entitled to the unconditional submission of all mortals for their superior physical and mental capability and their indefinite lifespans.

The distinction between Petre's bride **Tereza Vlatla** and their "children" is purely one of social standing and seniority. Tereza was sired and enthralled by Petre soon after he became a vampire, taking her as his bride so that he would have a companion in the eternal night. Tereza was no one exceptional before and was thrilled beyond words to have been elevated to such power, and unlike their three children, Tereza's loyalty has never since waned. She remains devoted to Petre to the point of co-dependence. It takes a lot of pressure to get her sense of decorum to drop, but when it does, she is desperate for Petre's approval and constantly haunted by how cold and distant he has grown. Deep down inside, she knows that she has been discarded, but she will never admit it to herself.

Natalia Vlatla is the eldest of the three Vlatla children, and the most loyal. She lacks Tereza Vlatla's fanatical loyalty in that ruling the night forever with Petre is not her terminal goal, however she does see her own ambitions as aligned with her sire's, at least for now. She resents the fact that she is kept under Petre's thrall, but eagerly pursues his goal of unlocking the secrets of massively increasing the number of undead a single necromancer can command, and Petre does not make the thrall so unbearable as to provoke her to constant rebellion. It lurks in the back of her mind that once this project is completed, she will have little reason besides the thrall to continue being dragged about by Petre, having a good chunk of the blood she takes from her thralls sucked out her neck by him, but at least for now, being part of his family is worth the cost.

Nicolae Vlatla is the closest thing to an anti-hero amongst the Vlatlas. He loves to play the part of the hero, bringing villains to justice and soaking up the adoration of the helpless townsfolk in the aftermath. He prefers to seduce the blood out of his victims rather than hunting them. Make no mistake, however: Nicolae is a vampire, and preys upon humans just like the rest of his family. If he cannot seduce the blood out of his current beau, he'll hunt someone down instead—and the only thing that keeps him from draining victims dry after these frustrated rebound hunts is the explicit order of Petre, and then only because Nicolae is magically compelled to obey his commands.

Nicolae knows he's only play-acting, and while he has intense antipathy for those who intentionally disturb his fantasies of heroism, he does not have any genuinely heroic inclinations nor any delusions to the contrary. He fights only monsters and villains who pale by comparison to his vampiric puissance, and vanishes into the night with a laugh and a bow when his adoring public is threatened by something that stands any real chance of killing him. Despite his lack of genuine heroism, his pretensions made him the bridge between the Vlatla Clan and the Lunatic Court. The Lunatic Court might not find his facade of heroism so endearing if they knew the only thing keeping him from sucking people dry was the explicit command of his sire, but they don't.



EVENTS

EACH WEEK an event takes place in Ramshorn involving two factions, usually some kind of celebration or council. To be invited to one, the party must have a favor point from at least one of the factions. Once at the event, players can win a first or second (but not third or more) point of favor if they do well socially. The party can get two points of favor with a faction without ever taking their side in a quest by being invited to both of that faction's events through the faction they share the event with, however they are likely to have disadvantage on their social rolls with members of a faction they've sided against. For example, if players side against the Vlatla Clan in both the spider nest and catacomb quests, they can still be invited to both the Lunatic Fete and the Occult Conference by having a favor point from the Lunatic Court and the Third Eye (respectively), and if they muscle through their disadvantage with the Vlatla faction members at both events, they can win a favor point with the Vlatla Clan at each event.

In order to win favor with a faction, the players must win the approval of that faction's leadership. Each event has a certain number of approval opportunities. If players successfully get the faction member(s) to approve of them during that opportunity, they get an approval point. If they get enough approval points from one faction to reach that faction's approval threshold for the event, they gain a first or second (but not third or higher) point of favor with that faction.

Usually an approval opportunity comes in conversation. Each conversant in a conversation represents an approval opportunity, for which the player may roll a skill check, usually Persuasion, against a DC of 15, with advantage or disadvantage as appropriate depending on how the conversation went. This means that after a single conversation a player will be rolling a skill check for each NPC in that conversation. If they pass the check, they get an approval point for the faction that NPC is a member of. As many players can attempt the check as were in the conversation, there is no penalty for failing the check, and only one player needs to succeed for the party to get an approval point from the conversant, however there is a maximum of one approval point per conversant per conversation. If three players are in a conversation and all three of them succeed on a Persuasion check to get an approval point from a conversant, they still only get one approval point from that conversant—it's still useful to have multiple rolls at each conversation, however, so as to maximize the odds of success.

At the GM's discretion, a conversation may be so thoroughly botched that the approval opportunity is completely forfeited, but this should be reserved for conversations that devolve into shouting matches, erupt into outright violence, or otherwise end in spectacular failure. If a character was generally cantankerous or disagreeable, that's what disadvantage is for. NPCs from factions the player has sided against will be hostile and antagonistic, and if the players respond in kind, this will usually grant them disadvantage on their roll not only for that NPC, but any others in the same conversation. If the players end up in an argument with the Third Eye, an Order of the Lion member like Dame Leona or Bishop Cornelius will probably be frustrated with both of them rather than side with either.

Also at the GM's discretion, some things a player does might represent a brand new approval opportunity. A player should never get approval points out of the same opportunity, because that's what advantage is for, but if players start a conversation on a subject not already covered by other pre-planned conversations at the event, that might represent a new approval opportunity being created, and likewise if players give some generous gift or do some favor for one of the event's attendees, that might get them an approval point totally independent of the pre-planned like opportunities for that event. Generating new approval opportunities does not affect the approval threshold for the event.

Be wary with gifts—while it's perfectly acceptable for players to pursue a strategy of being approved of because of their generosity, this strategy relies as much on knowing what people want and giving it to them as it does on simply having the resources to give a gift. With the exception of characters who specifically want lots of money, a giant pile of gold will not get an approval point by itself. It's also worth noting that the Order of the Third Eye and the Order of the Wyrd both have little concern for material goods and the leadership of the Order of the Lion and the Vlatla Clan are already wealthy, which means gifts for these would usually have to be more along the lines of unique items that are hard to acquire with any amount of money and personally meaningful to the recipient, although i.e. Lidia Vlatla would be happy with the thought if a character gets her something shiny as a token of affection, and the Lunatic Court is generally poor and would generally like not to be, which means quite a few of their lieutenants can be won over just by buying them something moderately expensive and relevant to their personality and interests.

Similar to being wary with gifts, don't let players get approval points out of promising to complete quests (although doing so might grant advantage on Persuasion checks). Acting in the faction's best interests is what got them invited to the event in the first place, and shouldn't be allowed to substitute for actually talking to NPCs. If players take the approach of winning approval by doing favors for faction leaders, those favors should be more personal than promising to rout some goblins. While the events are a great chance to hand out side quests, their actual purpose is to allow the party to establish friendly relationships with the faction leaders beyond receiving briefings on a quest and then later giving reports on how it went.

A final note on new approval opportunities is that while it is fine for players to get an approval point out of getting a large number of generic mooks to like them, but they should not be getting approval points out of getting just one generic mook to approve of them, even if it's a Lion Knight or a Lunatic Ringmaster. If the players end up doing some really cool roleplaying with a mook NPC, give them the same reward they'd get for doing that in any other context: Inspiration. On the other hand, if a Bard wants to perform for a crowd of Lion Infantry and turns their exploits in the Great Forest into song, that could represent an approval opportunity even if no named lieutenants are around.

Approval points do not carry over from one event to another, and approval points with one faction do not affect the approval of another. Players must hit the approval threshold before the event is over to get a favor point, and if they fail, all approval points are lost. Approval points also do not carry over from one faction to another. Players who hit the threshold for one faction don't get a point of favor for the other unless they hit that faction's threshold as well.

THE LUNATIC FETE

Lunatic Court approval threshold: 2

Vlatla Clan approval threshold: 2

The Lunatic Fete is the event for the Lunatic Court and the Vlatla Clan. It is held at the start of week 2 (after players have taken their long rest at the end of week 1), and only if the players have captured either Sir Brander or Sir Dagai and turned him over to the Lunatic Court.

Conversation 1 (Colombina, Lidia Vlatla): The Lunatic Court has come to town and has invited their friends from the Vlatla Clan over. As the festivities begin, various Lunatics put on a show for the villagers (including, on the off chance that it's relevant, the goblins rescued from Sir Dagai), juggling, performing magic tricks, and so on. Colombina and Lidia Vlatla are watching and commenting on their favorite, a sword swallowing red jester.

Conversation 2 (Pantaloone, Nicolae Vlatla): Pantaloone and Nicolae Vlatla discuss the situation in Ramshorn. In the (likely) event that the Order of the Bear has recently been defeated, Pantaloone divulges that Harlequin is optimistic that Ramshorn may be in no further need of assistance. Nicolae claims the spiders are going to be a problem in the very near future if something isn't done about them, but is hopeful that the Vlatla Clan may be able to bring them under control and turn a threat into a bulwark.

Conversation 3 (Harlequin, Pierrot, Lidia Vlatla, Natalia Vlatla): Harlequin and Pierrot have finished setting up for a Lunatic Trial. Sir Brander (or, if the players got here by siding with the Lunatic Court in the goblin quest, Sir Dagai) is brought forth to face justice—though nominally the accusation is “crimes against fashion” and Harlequin states that, due to stalling negotiations with the Lawyers' Guild, she is going to be playing the part of prosecution, defense, and judge. The trial very swiftly (and nonsensically) comes to an end, with Harlequin coming to the conclusion that both lawyers were so well-spoken and stunningly beautiful that she isn't sure which to side with, and puts it to a vote of the gathered townspeople. None speak out in defense, and when asked who will speak out in condemnation of the accused, there is plenty of shouting, especially for Sir Brander. Lidia Vlatla also raises her hand. Harlequin shrugs, says it's good enough for her, and tosses the unlucky victim to Lidia and Natalia, who devour him. There is no immediate opportunity for approval points here, it's just a vignette, however go ahead and let the players be creative if they think of some way to get involved. The trial is a farce, so Harlequin won't mind anyone stepping in so long as they don't try to derail its ultimate conclusion.

Conversation 4 (Nicolae Vlatla, Clown, Pierrot): Nicolae and Clown are sitting at the edge of a bonfire in which the recently condemned's body is burnt while celebratory villagers dance. Pierrot joins them shortly. The three of them discuss the festivities, comparing wine to blood (Pierrot and Clown also have some disagreement on how much sweetening is appropriate, with Clown preferring mead that's basically a spiked mug of honey while Pierrot prefers a sprinkling of local spices), and commenting upon the best dancers in the festivities. A character can join the dance and roll Perform instead of Persuasion for their approval points from this conversation.

Conversation 5 (Harlequin, Natalia Vlatla): As the festivities wind down, Harlequin confronts Natalia, a full patrol of Lunatics dragging a captive Vlatla thrall behind them. They throw the bound thrall at Natalia's feet and Harlequin claims the thrall was caught feeding on a villager and demands an explanation. Natalia tears the thrall's head off, and it disintegrates into dust. Natalia says she's certain word will get around to the others about how she feels about violating the hospitality of their allies, with a pointed glare at the thrall waiting upon her. The thrall shrinks back in fear, and Harlequin nods in approval, leaving Natalia be.

Curious why the Lunatic Court has an unusually low approval threshold in this event? Player characters might reasonably stay out of the final conversation entirely, since the stakes there are higher than others, so the number of approval points required is decreased by one to compensate. Somewhat similarly, it's difficult to see how players could get involved in the “trial” of Sir Brander/Dagai. These are still counted as approval opportunities for Harlequin, Pierrot, Lidia, and Nicolae, but they do not count towards the threshold because it's not obvious how players would actually get an approval point out of it.

THE TOURNAMENT

Order of the Lion approval threshold: 3

Order of the Wyrd approval threshold: 3

The tournament is the event for the Order of the Wyrd and the Order of the Lion. It is held at the start of week 3 (after players have taken their long rest at the end of week 2). The Order of the Lion have come to Ramshorn to host a tournament and hunt with the Order of the Wyrd.

The tournament has three events: The archery contest, the melee, and the joust. During each event, a character may either speak with someone or participate in the event, but not both. The conversations available are the same regardless of which event they take place during, except when a character in the conversation is in the event (so the Vincent/Darius conversation is available any time but the archery contest, the Talon/Leona conversation is only available during the archery contest, and the Cornelius/Sharra conversation is always available).

Archery Contest

The archery contest begins with a qualifying round, in which participants must make a DC 10 ranged attack with a bow of their choice. The target is only fifty feet away in the qualifying round, putting it within range of most ranged weapons, but later rounds will move the target further away—in the final round as far as 200 feet, making it unavailable.

After qualifying, a preliminary round is played. There are four different preliminaries with four shooters each. Each preliminary round by default contains a **Wyrd Scout**, a **Wyrd Ranger**, and two **Lion Archers**, but one of the **Lion Archers** is replaced by **Vincent** in one of the rounds. Any PCs participating will replace **Lion Archers** in other rounds or, if at least four are participating and made it past the qualifying round, will replace the spare **Lion Archer** in facing **Vincent** (and possibly the spare **Lion Archer** in some other rounds, if more than four are participating). During each preliminary round, a character fires three arrows at a target 80 feet away and scores points equal to the results of their attack roll minus 14 (on a 14 or lower, they have missed the target entirely and score no points), to a maximum of 10 points for an attack roll of 24 or higher (bullseye!). Any roll of a natural 20 automatically scores 10 points for that arrow. The total score for all three arrows is totaled up for each contestant, and whoever has the highest wins the round. If there's a tie, there is a one-arrow tiebreaker round between the tied contestants.

In the final round, the winners of the previous rounds face off against each other. If the PCs weren't involved in some of the rounds, don't bother playing them out in their entirety, just assume **Vincent** wins his and the **Wyrd Rangers** win any others. Likewise, if no players have gotten this far, assume **Vincent** wins the competition. In the final round, six arrows are fired a piece at targets 150 feet away. Anyone not firing a longbow (or similarly long ranged weapon) will be at disadvantage, and now 19 is subtracted from the attack roll to determine score, with a DC 20 required to hit the target at all and a 29 or higher required for a 10-point bullseye. As before, a natural 20 always hits the bullseye. If at least one player gets to the final round with **Vincent**, the party gets an approval point from **Vincent**.

The Melee

During the melee, characters must fight using rebated great swords that deal 1d4 bludgeoning damage. Wearing at least medium armor is encouraged but not required, as rebated weapons deal no damage against creatures in medium armor, and half damage to creatures in light armor. When hit by an attack by a rebated weapon, a character must make a CON save. If their CON save equals or exceeds the attack roll, they're fine (except for damage, if they're under- or unarmored). If they fail their CON save, they are knocked over and eliminated from the round. A character who rolls a natural 1 has thrown themselves off-balance and takes disadvantage on their CON saves to remain afoot until the start of their next turn. The last man standing is the winner. Two **Lion Knights**, three **Lion Infantry**, a **Wyrd Scout**, a **Wyrd Ranger**, and **Talon** (in human form) participate in the melee in addition to however many PCs wish to get involved. The entire messy melee happens at once, no separate rounds or qualifications. If players join and at least one NPC goes down before they do, they get an approval point from **Talon**.

The Joust

Characters will need a horse of their own to enter the joust. The rebated lances of the joust deal only 1d4 bludgeoning damage, but it's doubled to 2d4 if used as part of a mounted charge, adding the STR bonus of both the mount and the rider—and horses tend to be pretty beefy. Characters in heavy armor are immune to lance damage, and characters in medium armor are resistant to it. Characters in light or no armor take the full damage. When two characters joust, each makes an attack roll with the lance against a DC of 15 to strike their opponent's shield. There's no dodging in a joust, nor does it matter how heavy your armor since the goal is not to penetrate it, so the DC is the same regardless of armor bonus or DEX score. If a hit is landed, a damage roll is made (keeping in mind that the mount's STR is added to the attack, as well as the rider's), and if it deals at least 12 points of damage, the lance tip shatters explosively for two points. A rider who is struck must roll an Animal Handling check, and if their result is less than the damage (not attack) roll of the attacker, they are carried off their mount completely, with the attacker scoring three points. The two jousters continue to list at one another until one side or another has scored three points. If both score three points in the same list, the winner is the one who scored more points on that list specifically (i.e. if one jouster scores one point and the second scores two points, bringing both of their totals up to three, then the second jouster is the winner). If both scored the same score in the last list, they will continue to joust until one of them has more points than the other.

Other than the players and **Leona**, the tournament roster is filled with **Lion Knights**. Players should be kept as far apart from one another as possible in the lists so that they will only face one another if undefeated in the finals or (if there are three or more of them) semi-finals. Likewise, **Leona** should be placed far away enough from the players that she won't be confronted until the semi-finals if possible (though with four or more players in the joust, someone has to face **Leona** right out the gate), and if only one player has entered, she should be reserved for the final joust. If a player jousts against **Leona**, the party gets an approval point from her (win or lose).

Conversations

Conversation 1 (Talon, Dame Leona): During the archery contest, Talon and Leona are boasting of their victories in previous hunts and promising to outdo one another in the coming one, in which Darius and Sharra hope to slay the male huntsman roaming the Ramshorn wilderness. The boasting between the two begins with what are probably mostly true stories about having hunted a manticore or a hydra, escalating up to barely plausible stories about hunting dragons single-handed, and finally into what is basically a game of Munchausen where they claim to have hunted things like Tiamat or the sun. If the players express incredulity at one of the stories, the other will chime in to mention that they can verify it really happened because they were there, but that's nothing because this one time they hunted two tarrasques.

Conversation 2 (Vincent, Prince Darius): After the archery contest, Vincent and Darius discuss the situation in the Great Forest. Darius is optimistic that the Order of the Lion should be more than enough to deal with the goblin and elven separatists there, while Vincent cautions that the Order of the Bear thought the same thing until they realized how hard it would be to find the bastards, and how vulnerable their overstretched supply train was in the meantime. Darius is confident in his ability to protect his baggage train on account of his superior numbers and in his ability to garrison all important villages while the rebels winnow themselves down one by one. It may take a while, but Darius believes victory is inevitable. He and Vincent both agree that the vermin hive is the greatest concern in the region and should be the immediate focus of their efforts. Darius wonders if perhaps they could seal the entrances to the hive and let them starve, or find a way to divert the river into them, while Vincent is anxious to hear back from scouts sent into the hive to recon as far as they could and hopefully get a troop count.

Conversation 3 (Bishop Cornelius, Sharra): Throughout the tournament, Cornelius and Sharra discuss a wayward disciple of Cornelius'. Cornelius will not mention his name, only that he has grown lazy and though he professes continued faith, his actions indicate he fears no retribution for failing in the oath he swore to the Seven. He and Sharra are brainstorming together means of encouraging him. Both quickly agree that this kind of half-disgruntled acolyte will not be motivated by disciplinary action, but instead discuss the possibility of giving him some kind of nominal promotion or other honor, which might inspire a need to live up to it?

The Hunt

At the end of the tournament is a hunt. While hunting any wild beast is generally considered commendable (the medieval population of Vintaria isn't nearly large enough to do things like threaten to drive bears extinct, so the Order of the Wyrd is perfectly fine hunting them—humans, elves, and so on are apex predators, and hunting forest animals is entirely in keeping with the natural order), this hunt in particular has a target: The male huntsman roaming the Ramshorn wilderness. Both a huge threat to supply and trade caravans and an abomination against the natural order that's destroying the local ecosystem, the Orders of the Lion and the Wyrd are equally eager to see it slain, and Leona, Vincent, and Talon are all headed out to try and bring back its eight eyes as a trophy (ordinarily, the Order of the Wyrd would also eat the kill, make clothes from the hide, etc. etc. so as not to waste nature's bounty, but this tradition does not apply to abominations against nature).

If the party hunts with Talon, she will wolf out and track the huntsman for them. If the party have encountered the werewolf Greyclaw in the Ramshorn wilderness, they may ask Talon about him. Talon will tell them that he hates the huntsman for killing his mate, but also hates non-lycanthropes. She isn't sure which he hates more, and she's pretty sure the party can take the huntsman as it is, so she recommends against speaking with him. If the party speaks to him anyway, it is a DC 15 Persuasion check to convince him not to attack, and DC 20 to convince him to help hunt the huntsman.

If the party hunts with Vincent, he will lead them to location 1 on the wilderness map to retrieve an herb from which he can make a potent anti-spider poison. While in the area, the party will stumble across the brown bear fighting the wolf spiders (unless that encounter has been cleared), and Vincent will insist upon saving the bear. After that fight resolves one way or another, Vincent will concoct the spider poison, coating up to 50 arrows with the stuff. He'll take thirty for his own quiver and offer the other twenty to the player characters. It takes a double dose to coat a slashing weapon, and bludgeoning weapons cannot be poisoned properly. Any spider who takes at least one point of piercing or slashing damage from an envenomed weapon is poisoned (as in, the actual condition poisoned) for 24 hours with no save. Other creatures who take at least one point of slashing or piercing damage from an envenomed weapon must make a DC 13 CON save and are poisoned if they fail. Poisoned creatures who are not spiders can make another CON save at the end of each of their turns to try and shake the effect. After concocting the poison, Vincent will lead the party to the huntsman.

Leona doesn't have any ranger tricks, and will freely admit that she's haphazardly applying her skills in field battle to hunting a giant spider in a forest where she can't even line up a really good lance charge. Unless the players take the lead (and she will gladly concede to the expertise of any Rangers in the party, or even someone with a wilderness-related background), she will lead them right past location 2B, 13, and 12 and before finding the huntsman at 2E (some of these encounters may already be cleared from previous weeks' adventures). She is the only Order of the Lion option, though, so if players really need another Lion approval point, she'll have to do. Besides, terrible tracker or not, she is still a mid-level melee blender.

If the players successfully kill the huntsman with an ally, they gain an approval point from the faction of that ally automatically. If the players set out to kill the huntsman alone and succeed, they may make a report of the hunt to Darius and Sharra, which does count as an approval opportunity, although they must make a Persuasion check like normal. They may also make a Perform check to spin their tale into a gripping story or song.

The Occult Conference

Vlatla Clan approval threshold: 4

Order of the Third Eye approval threshold: 2

This event is an informal meeting between the Vlatla Clan and the Order of the Third Eye. It is held at the start of week 4 (after players have finished their long rest at the end of week 3). Depending on whether the skeleton situation has been resolved, it takes place either in the large hall near the entrance to the ossuary with Vlatla thralls on hand to serve refreshments or else in the ossuary chamber just down the hall from the central crypts with the Vlatla thralls standing guard against possible attacks by the dead knights and the Vlatlas ready to run off to fend off an attack at a moment's notice. Either way, all five members of the Vlatla Clan are present along with three of the Third Eye magus knights: Balthazar, magus of Transmutation, Caspar, magus of Evocation, and Melchior, magus of Abjuration.

Conversation 1 (Balthazar, Petre Vlatla, Tereza Vlatla): Balthazar, Petre, sire of the Vlatla Clan, and Tereza Vlatla, his dark bride, are discussing the possibilities of magical augmentation of dead flesh to create some kind of servant. Petre believes it is in principle possible to create a sort of "flesh golem" at the intersection of Transmutation and Necromancy. Balthazar agrees it is a fruitful avenue of investigation, but has concerns that the Order of the Lion might not approve. Tereza supports her husband's ambitions in principle, but is sympathetic to the Third Eye's need to avoid antagonizing the Order of the Lion. A player who approaches this conversation from the perspective of discussing the possibilities of flesh golems or similar constructs can make their skill check using Arcana instead of Persuasion.

Conversation 2 (Caspar, Nicolae Vlatla): Caspar and Nicolae Vlatla discuss the ongoing situation in the Eastern Frontier, and in particular the growing spider problem. Both quickly agree that the tiresome Order of the Wyrd are likely to stick their noses into the region, but Caspar wonders if perhaps they're approaching a Godzilla threshold where even having the Wyrd burning everything down to "restore the natural order" might be better than letting the problem go unabated. Nicolae isn't ready to give up a chance to study the creatures just yet. They were created to be controlled, after all. If the players have already cleared the spiders (for example, if that's how they got this invite), a similar conversation is instead had concerning the vermin hive in the Great Forest. A character who approaches the conversation mainly from the angle of how the spiders (or other vermin) might be controlled and how to study or make use of that can roll using Arcana instead of Persuasion.

Conversation 3 (Lidia Vlatla, Tereza Vlatla): Lidia Vlatla is wallflowering with her glass of blood and reluctant to get involved. Tereza, her "mother," is displeased, almost contemptuous, of her child's unwillingness to be a part of the function. Lidia insists that she isn't going to mingle with a bunch of stodgy academics. She's already made the requisite two minutes of polite conversation and now finds the tiling on the ceiling utterly fascinating. Tereza won't succeed on getting Lidia to move on by herself, but the players might convince her, particularly if she gets along with one or more of them.

Conversation 4 (Melchior, Natalia Vlatla, possibly Lidia Vlatla): Melchior and Natalia Vlatla are having a flirtatious argument about whether Natalia should come back to the Ventrus Academy back west to study. Melchior thinks her study of necromancy could be significantly advanced by exposure to other fields, and that the academy would likewise benefit from her perspective on an underexplored field. Natalia is fairly certain her study of necromancy is best served by studying necromancy, and if Melchior wants to see more of her so badly, he should come to the catacomb. Depending on the outcome of the last conversation, Lidia might show up to make innuendo out of as many statements as she can, and profess innocence, purest, virginal innocence, should anyone bring it up.

The War Council

Order of the Lion approval threshold: 4

Order of the Third Eye approval threshold: 3

This event is a meeting between Order of the Lion and the Order of the Third Eye to discuss the Clans of Tiamat and the possibility of an attack from the north. It is held at the start of week 6 (after players have finished their long rest at the end of week 5). The two orders are meeting in Ramshorn so as to check on the town, as its stability or lack thereof could have serious implications on the campaign for the Great Forest, now that they know it must be conducted rapidly. As a council rather than a celebration, every party member is automatically present for every opportunity, which each happen in turn. Due to the somewhat stiff and formal setting of the war council, checks for approval points are DC 18 rather than DC 15, but characters can get advantage easily by offering to help with the problem, which should more than offset the increased difficulty. Note that Dame Leona and Bishop Cornelius spend a lot of time arguing with each other and the characters are likely to get disadvantage with one and advantage from the other if they take sides (and that they can cancel out this disadvantage with advantage from offering to personally deal with the problem—Leona and Cornelius aren't so hostile to each other that they'll hate anyone who supports the other, and both still appreciate the party's willingness to help in dire times).

Conversation 1 (Prince Darius, Balthazar): Darius and Balthazar receive the characters' report on the current status of the town and the threats presented to it. The roll is made with advantage if the only threat left in the Ramshorn region is the Beryl Clan, or if there are none left at all. It is made with disadvantage if there are at least three threats still active in the Ramshorn region (including the Beryl Clan). Offering to help does not affect things one way or another, because at this point it is well known that the characters are already committed to the defense of Ramshorn.

Conversation 2 (Melchior, Bishop Cornelius, Dame Leona): Melchior delivers his report on the situation in the south. The area around Sormont is mostly secure. There are some rebellious peasant militias that he suspects are the doing of Beryl Clan infiltrators, but they should be easy enough to deal with should war break out. The only reason they haven't already been crushed is because they're still playing with kid gloves on to try and avoid making the peasants indolent through the whole region. Worst case scenario, if war breaks out, the Third Eye will smash them quickly and move on. Cornelius applauds their level-headedness and suggests that he and his clergy may be able to help talk some sense into them. Leona recommends stamping them out now to maintain maximum readiness for an attack to the north. What are indolent peasants going to do, revolt again?

Conversation 3 (Caspar, Dame Leona, Prince Darius):

Caspar has a report from the north. The situation there is more dire. The Beryl Clan and the Sable Clan have been moving through the region in large numbers. Fair enough, the Beryl Clan are traditionally merchants, but the Sable Clan are assassins. Rumor has it that the Ashen Clan has been mobilized in the north. They're primarily farmers and ranchers, but they're levied for their large numbers in times of war. The academy at Valence is defended by several Third Order knights and their construct guards, but they won't stand a chance against an Azure Clan spearhead. Leona is quick to point out that an effort to hold them at Karis would require leaving their rear open to attack from the Great Forest, if the Beryl Clan and the Sable Clan have been infiltrating behind their lines, and they certainly seem to be doing so.

Darius speaks. Valence cannot possibly be held without mobilizing the Order of the Lion to defend it, which would provoke a war. Going to war now, while the Great Forest is swarming with goblins and the Great Hive could reawaken any day, would leave the rear and supply train open to attack. As such, it must be assumed that Valence will be lost. Give the order to the Third Eye knights stationed there to do what damage they can when the attack comes, but to prioritize a safe retreat through the portal to Sormont. The Third Eye in Sormont must sever the portal between the two when the town falls. Balthazar reluctantly agrees that this will be necessary, although re-establishing the portal in Valence once the town has been recaptured will be costly, possibly prohibitively so. Then the issue is how best to pacify the Great Forest as rapidly as possible. The Order of the Wyrd maintains fairly good relations with the troublesome elves. Taking too harsh measures against them would harm Wyrd morale, while leaving the elves to run amok could tie down the Wyrd in fighting them off or even cause the Wyrd to withdraw from the fight entirely, leaving the Order of the Lion blind in the Great Forest.

Dame Leona is reluctant to give any leeway to rebels and traitors, but Caspar points out that they have a lot of problems right now and can't bring down maximum force on all of them, and Dame Leona is reluctantly forced to concede that it may be necessary to be more lenient with some of the rebels at least for now simply for lack of troops necessary to round all of them up. She maintains that lenience will lead to further trouble down the road, but can see the wisdom in kicking some of their problems down that road to make the ones they have to deal with immediately more manageable.

Conversation 4 (Prince Darius, Bishop Cornelius, Caspar, Dame Leona, Melchior): Measures against the goblins might provoke the Lunatic Court to side with the Clans, and they could plausibly capture Rivermet on their own and open up a second front to the south. Dame Leona supports a rapid strike, and Melchior supports her—the situation in the Great Forest is different from that of Sormont, in that it is both closer to the front lines at Karis (once Valence falls, as seems very likely) and a significantly bloodier conflict already. Cornelius and Caspar prefer a more hands-off approach, believing that the same tactics that are effective in Sormont will be effective in the Great Forest (Dame Leona objects that the tactics used in Sormont are already less effective than just putting the rebellion down). Only Balthazar remains silent.

The Harlequinade

Lunatic Court approval threshold: 3

Order of the Wyrd threshold: 2

This event is a spontaneous celebration by the Lunatic Court and attended by their friends from the Order of the Wyrd. It is held at the start of week 5 (after players have finished their long rest at the end of week 4). The Lunatic Court puts on several events in Ramshorn, and the Order of the Wyrd shows up to provide food freshly hunted from the wild.

Conversation 1 (Pierrot, Vincent): Pierrot and Vincent discuss the devolving situation as the feast begins. Pierrot says that he suspects the Eastern Frontier will soon see total war unless Darius stands down soon. And why would he do that when he has just arrived with his army? There will be fighting all throughout the Great Forest, and then, when the queen dies, Galais and Darius will go to blows as well. Vincent says that he is convinced Sharra will talk sense into Darius before his ambitions destroy the region. Pierrot is skeptical. He's not wholly opposed to knights, who have an actual job to do and a dangerous one at that, but nobles are only in it for themselves. Their alleged "nobility" is just self-righteous delusion.

Conversation 2 (Sharra, Talon): With the entire Harlequinade preparing for their performance towards the end of the feast, Sharra and Talon take in some of the sideshows together. Their conversation soon wanders into philosophical musings on creation and destruction. These festivals are the very best of peace and prosperity. How strange, then, that they are put on by those who seem drawn so inexorably towards slaughter.

Conversation 3 (Colombina, Pantaloon): The Harlequinade is on! Harlequin plays Puss in boots, and Pierrot the seemingly unlucky miller's son who inherits her. Colombina is the princess of the land, and Clown plays the role of the fearsome ogre. After the performance, Colombina and Pantaloon come out to discuss how they set up the show. Pantaloon discusses the show from an artistic perspective, and insists that although it is lighthearted and fun, it's also an exploration of what it means to be noble—the fact that Puss in boots can fabricate a noble from nothing just by threatening townspeople and killing the inhabitant of a castle is a bold subversion of the chivalric conceit of noble bloodlines. The ogre is a villain and the audience is meant to cheer for Puss when she kills him, because that gives the play a happy ending rather than having some poor innocent man slaughtered, but it's also plain to see that she could have killed anyone with a castle, villain or not, in order to raise the miller's son to the nobility. Colombina tends to share more backstage anecdotes, like the time Pantaloon got after Harlequin for speaking so quickly she could barely be understood, so for her next line she spoke with a dramatic pause two or three times a sentence.

Conversation 4 (Clown): As night falls, Clown has gathered a small crowd of children around to tell the story behind Pierrot's mask. It comes from the story of the sea monster Leviathan, mother of all krakens. She was a common village woman, but beautiful beyond compare and the lord of her land demanded that she marry him. She refused, and instead married for love, and was happy for many years, bearing three sons. One day, however, the lord declared that her husband and all of his sons were engaged in a criminal conspiracy as smugglers, and had them all hung, even the youngest, only seven years old. She protested at their hanging that

everyone knew them to be innocent, but when the lord asked if any would vouch for them besides her, none of the village dared speak up, so the hangman threw the lever.

Filled with an unholy thirst for revenge, Leviathan began to slaughter entire households as they slept each night. When she was discovered, she fled into the woods, from whence she continued her reign of terror. No one could catch her, not the guards nor the rangers of the lord.

Finally, a mighty wizard was called in, the greatest of the kingdom, and he divined Leviathan's location and cursed her to transform her into an octopus and cast her into the sea. There, she ate and ate until she grew massive and began to pluck the village fishermen off their ships and devour them whole. One day, a particularly faithful fisherman prayed for salvation, and the gods filled Leviathan with venom. As she howled in pain, the fisherman escaped and began swimming to shore, but Leviathan filled the sea around herself with a cloud of venomous ink, and the fisherman choked on the venom and died.

The tentacles on Pierrot's mask, Clown says, are the tentacles of Leviathan, for when she was wronged, no one could stop her vengeance, not the lord and his rangers nor the wizard and his magic nor even the gods themselves. "Best be polite around that one," Clown concludes, "there's a man who takes his revenge seriously."

Conversation 5 (Harlequin, Vincent): As the children go to sleep and the party becomes more racuous, Harlequin looks on from a rooftop. Vincent joins her there, and asks why she's looking from afar. Harlequin doesn't answer directly, just says that once the war comes, there won't be any time for any of this, that every time she puts on a Harlequinade, she wonders if it'll be the last. Vincent tells her there doesn't have to be a war, but Harlequin says she expects the two princes will insist on it. Vincent asks her if she's planning on fighting Darius. "We've got so much killing to do," Harlequin says, "seems best to get it started early and get it over with." "Maybe we could try to avoid killing altogether," Vincent suggests. "A sensible plan, and that's its flaw," Harlequin says, "in a mad world, it's wise to be a lunatic." Despite seeming like advocacy for literal insanity, the phrase has deeper symbolic meaning: The war between Darius and Galais concerns no one but themselves, and no one but those two has any real reason to fight over it. Despite this, entire armies are going to fight a massive war that will likely devastate the country over it.



RAMSHORN

TAVERNS AND INNS

An army marches on its stomach—and so do small mercenary parties. In order to long rest, characters need both food and shelter for a week, which means perhaps the most vital services in Ramshorn are its three competing inns: Bruen's *Majestic Stag*, Dayle Gryphon's *Accidental Gryphon*, and Old Man Ash's *Forgotten Heart*.

Majestic Stag Inn

Bruen is the loud and friendly keeper of the *Majestic Stag Inn*. He claims that it's the best inn in town and doesn't mention that it's also the most expensive. He mainly sells to merchants trading from Karis to Rivermet and small bands of mercenaries who sometimes use the town as a base of operations when they've got jobs in the Great Forest. With the state that the town is in the past few weeks, Bruen is grateful for any customers and gives the players the odd free meal or drink if they stay there over the course of a long rest to thank them for their patronage. Thus, while Bruen's ordinary prices are 1 gold daily (7 gold for a long rest) for a single occupant modest lifestyle room on the bottom floor or 2 silver daily (14 silver for a long rest) for a spot in one of the crowded poor lifestyle rooms upstairs, the actual cost (after including the occasional free drink and such) will come out to 9 silver for the modest room (63 silver for a long rest) and 15 copper for the poor one (105 copper for a long rest). Bruen doesn't advertise this, though—he isn't having an actual sale, he's just glad enough to have customers that he'll give out free drinks, thus bringing down the price of a stay.

Jason Silverain often plays at the *Majestic Stag*, and once she arrives, Trym Tosskobbe does, too. Standard tip for the performance is a few coppers, with the dream being that a few dozen different donors will add up to a gold piece per day. Usually it's more in the neighborhood of 4–5 silvers, though.

Accidental Gryphon Inn

Dayle Gryphon is Bruen's strongest competition. He runs the *Accidental Gryphon Inn and Stables* which, as the name suggests, includes a stable. His good rooms—the ones with proper beds—are as crowded as Bruen's top floor rooms, and his bad rooms are little more than fresh hay dumped on the floor, but while rough, they're not unhealthy, and Dayle has more up his sleeve than just the economy option: Anyone who stays at his inn gets a 10% discount on stable services, including horse or donkey purchases. His Gryphon stout is also the best ale in town.

Forgotten Heart Inn

Old Man Ash runs the *Forgotten Heart Inn*, and his main selling point is that neither Durn nor Tin'kan—the two town guards—bother spending much time there, so no one's going to get you in trouble if you start a bar room brawl. His prices are also slightly cheaper than Bruen's, and cheaper than Dayle's if you're looking for an actual bed.

The players might want to skip out on paying room and board to camp out in the wilderness instead. They still need to pay one silver per day for food and basic maintenance of their gear. They can eat from rations for as long as those hold out, but in the long run those are much more expensive than eating in town. Additionally, camping in the Ramshorn wilderness means that one of the wilderness encounters might stumble into their camp at night. Spiders are particularly active at night, and the male huntsman stalks the wilderness not far from the entrance to Ramshorn. If the party is ambushed by random encounters in the night, it will occur before they've healed, during the "characters pay for accommodations" step (see the adventure overview and timeline for more details on resting).

The Majestic Stag Prices

Service	Price
Bottom Floor Room and Board	Nominally 1 gold per day, actually 9 silver—7 gold nominal/63 silver for a long rest
Top Floor Room and Board	Nominally 2 silver per day, actually 15 copper—14 silver nominal/105 copper for a long rest
Ale*	4 copper per mug, 4 silver for round—daily drinks included in room and board
Meal*	3 copper for soup or sandwich—+4 copper for dessert, +3 copper for side dish

*meals included in room and board, including dessert and side dish for bottom floor guests

The Accidental Gryphon Prices

Service	Price
Room and Board—Bed	2 silver per day—14 silver for a long rest
Room and Board—Floor	1 silver per day—7 silver for a long rest
Ale (incl. Gryphon stout)*	4 copper per mug, 4 silver for round
Meal*	3 copper
Stable services	12 copper per day per animal, 1 silver flat for inn guests
Draft horse	50 gold—45 gold for inn guests
Riding horse	75 gold—65 gold for inn guests

*meals and drinks included in room and board

The Forgotten Heart Prices

Service	Price
Room and Board	18 copper per day—126 copper for a long rest, but Ash will gladly round it up to 13 silver if you don't want to bust out the small change
Ale*	3 copper per mug, 3 silver for round
Meal*	2 copper

*meals and drinks included in room and board

HEALING SERVICES

It is of paramount importance that the party take as few long rests as possible while defending Ramshorn, as every rest gives the various threats harassing the town time to grow more deadly. As such, healing services, which can make the difference between taking a long rest or going on a second dungeon run, are perhaps the second most important service the town offers (after the ability to safely take a long rest in the first place). Better still, the two clerics in town offer their healing services free of charge for so long as the characters are defending the town—although on the downside, the town offers significantly fewer healing spells in total because of the constant stream of injuries to farmers in their fields caused by the marauding creatures slowly spilling out of the wilderness.

Once the goblins, sahuagin, Order of the Bear, and spiders have all been neutralized, there are no more active threats to Ramshorn in the wilderness—the skeletons don't menace the roads until they launch their assault on the town, at which point healing services shut down completely with the rest of the town (see the **Adventure Overview and Timeline** for details), and the Beryl Clan are a (direct) threat only to the party themselves, not to the town as a whole. At this point, Pilate and Bryce Tavisham begin charging for their services, but can also offer their full set of spells for healing. Ranya Summers is not an actual professional healer—her services are always free, but are also not advertised. She'll just offer healing if she happens to encounter a visibly wounded party member, and the party might think to seek her out to have more wounds healed in the future.

Pilate

Pilate is ordinarily a calm halfling Cleric who runs a local church of Selemis, goddess of compassion and mercy, converted from one of the market town's many inns. His usually placid demeanor can give way to righteous fury when Ramshorn is threatened. He's a relative newcomer, having shown up just three years ago from across the hills to the west to try and help the people of the Eastern Frontier in their trying times. Pilate offers poor quality rooms for free to those who cannot pay for one of the inns, and a DC 24 Deception check can convince him that the players are in need. The DC is only 19 if the players aren't carting expensive arms and armor around. In any case, Pilate can't feed that many people, so the PCs are still on their own for food.

Service	Price
<i>Prayer of Healing</i> (2 nd Level)	20 gold, no charge to town defenders (available twice per week)
<i>Cure Wounds</i> (1 st Level)	5 gold, no charge to town defenders (available once per week)

Pilate can cast two level 2 Cleric spells and four level 1 Cleric spells each week, which he uses to help the town. Except when under attack, he rarely expends all of his spells in any given week, so when the players are trying to avoid taking a long rest, Pilate typically has both second level spell slots available to cast *Prayer of Healing*, and usually at least one first level slot for *Cure Wounds* (the other first level slots are mainly tied up in healing farmers attacked by spiders or starving wolves, something which is beginning to happen several times a week, but what's Ramshorn gonna do, learn to photosynthesize?). Pilate is happy to cast his spells free of charge for anyone who is actively helping Ramshorn.

If the players' quest involves other places (i.e. they've moved on to the Great Forest arc or later, or if you're recycling Ramshorn into a different story arc altogether that doesn't involve direct threat to the village) but they've done significant help to Ramshorn in the past, Pilate will still offer them at least a single *Prayer of Healing* for old times' sake, but won't expend all of his spare Clerical mojo on them the way he will when they are using his help to press on in actively defending Ramshorn from imminent threats. It's usually a DC 15 Persuasion check to convince Pilate that a threat that doesn't seem like an immediate threat to Ramshorn will threaten the village in the long run (for example, goblin separatists in the Great Forest might not be a threat to Ramshorn today, but if they take over the region, Ramshorn might be next on the menu).

Bryce Tavisham

Bryce Tavisham is a cleric of Rapha, god of the forge and, more generally, of making things into better versions of themselves. Bryce himself has no particular skill with at blacksmithing, but instead embraces the more philosophical end of the god's doctrine, that of self-improvement. He does his best to help the town's inhabitants achieve whatever goals they set for themselves—although in recent years, that is largely limited to "don't die." Bryce and Pilate get along well—their gods are not especially opposed, the town needs all the help it can get. Bryce has two first level spells each week and spends one of them assisting townsfolk, but will offer the other for free to the party so long as they are defending Ramshorn.

Service	Price
<i>Cure Wounds</i> (1 st Level)	5 gold, no charge to town defenders (available once per week)

Ranya Summers

Ranya Summers is not a cleric at all (like most of Ramshorn, she farms for a living), however as a particularly potent aasimar she is able to heal up to twelve points of damage with her healing touch each week. She has six points of this healing to spare for the characters while Ramshorn is still besieged and all twelve once it's safe. Ranya Summers never charges for her services, but also doesn't advertise them. If she sees a visibly wounded party member, she will offer to heal them, including if they seek her out specifically because they are wounded. If the party doesn't tend to frequent the same places Ranya does, they may never even realize she's a source of healing.

MAGIC SHOPS

Inns and clerics allow characters to heal up between battles, but magic shops help them win those battles, selling consumable healing and magic items. While ultimately less important, these shops are usually the ones a mercenary is most excited to hit up after getting their hands on a treasure hoard.

Unfortunately for the party, Ramshorn has just a staggering number of con artists for a town of its size.

Goldblum's Magical Imports

Goldblum is a shrewd halfling businessman who runs the aptly named *Goldblum's Magical Imports*. He's just about impossible to ruffle or faze, reacting to almost any turn of events with a blase, businesslike approach. He mainly sells magic items crafted in the western heartlands, offering them at a modest mark-up to local nobles or, more often in recent years, mercenaries operating in the area. He makes only one sale every week or two, but at even just 15% profit margins that's several dozen gold, enough to keep him well paid.

Goldblum is happy to lend out magic items to anyone who needs them for a specific purpose to the benefit of Ramshorn, but expects to receive the items back in good condition.

Item	Price
Immovable Rod	125 gold
Ring of Swimming	125 gold
Rope of Climbing	125 gold
Mariner's Studded Leather	150 gold
Cap of Water Breathing	250 gold
Helm of Comprehending Languages	250 gold
Lantern of Revealing	250 gold
Robe of Useful Items*	300 gold
Cloak of the Manta Ray	350 gold
Saddle of the Cavalier	400 gold
Bag of Holding	500 gold
Driftglobe	500 gold
Elemental Emerald	500 gold
Mithral Half-Plate	1250 gold

*Robe patches: 2×dagger, 2×lantern, 2×mirror, 2×pole, 2×hemp rope, 2×sack, 2×iron door, 2×mastiff, 1×lightning bolt scroll, 1×portable ram

Goldblum only has one of each of these magical items. He can special order a replacement from Karis, however this comes with several drawbacks. Number one, the party must pay up front, but will not receive the item for another week (it will be available for pickup after their next long rest). Number two, every time Goldblum's caravans are intercepted (see the **Adventure Overview**

and **Timeline**), any items on import are lost. Goldblum will not provide a refund if this happens, but he will warn anyone hoping to special order up front about the risk.

Goldblum has two additional items that are in theory for sale: *goggles of night* and a *philter of love*. The problem is, these items' most obvious uses are illegal, and in the former case could involve robbing Goldblum's own shop. If Goldblum trusts the party, however, he will offer to sell these items for 250 gold and 350 gold, respectively.

Goldblum will buy gems, art items, and any magic items the party doesn't want and sell them to caravaneers or mercenaries who pass through, but the prices aren't stable the way coins are. The party cannot simply exchange a gem for 50 gold flat, although they can get 50% of the fee with no price if they decline to haggle. In order to sell the items, the players must haggle with Goldblum. If the players have never done this before, roleplaying this scene is a great opportunity to set up the encounter with Vain (see the **Adventure Overview and Timeline**, week 1), but if the players just want to take a stab at renegotiating the rate (or if Goldblum is forcing another negotiation because he didn't like the last result) let the players roll the dice and get on with it if they prefer.

The actual mechanics of haggling is a simple Persuasion check with the following results:

Players Roll...	Goldblum Pays...
1-4	25% of normal value
5-9	50% of normal value
10-14	75% of normal value
15-19	100% of normal value
20-24	125% of normal value
25+	150% of normal value

If Goldblum has been haggled into paying more than 100% of normal value last time the players sold off some gems or art objects, he will insist on a new negotiation the next time they do so (although it's fine to resolve this as a single Persuasion check rather than an entire scene).

Mieke de Graaf

Mieke de Graaf does not have a permanent shop here and does not have any magic items to sell. She's actually one of Goldblum's suppliers, and sold all her magic items to him before attempting to leave. After both her caravan guards bit the dust and the goblins took most of her money on hand, she's fled back to Ramshorn until this all blows over. Or the town gets overrun and she gets stabbed to death. So long as she's stuck in town waiting for the roads to clear up, though, she's happy to buy gems and art items from them. While Mieke does have some legitimate jewelry and such (she does buy the stuff from Goldblum), her main source of income is forgery, and she really only wants to buy valuables from the PCs so that she can mix her fakes in with them. She pays slightly more than Goldblum does (see below table) because she's used to paying the markup Goldblum adds so he can make a profit, but she evaluates every item brought to her as being worth 10 gold (for gems) or 25 gold (for art objects), no matter how valuable they actually are.

Players Roll...	Mieke Pays...
1-4	25% of normal value
5-9	50% of normal value
10-14	100% of normal value
15-19	125% of normal value
20-24	150% of normal value
25+	200% of normal value

Kerandas Potion Shop

Kerandas is a changeling fugitive from the Order of the Third Eye who runs the Kerandas Potion Shop. Almost nobody in Ramshorn knows Kerandas is a changeling—most think he's just a regular human. Kerandas gets a significant number of his magical ingredients from the menagerie of small magical creatures he keeps in the back of his shop, but he relies on Goldblum's imports for a number of them, which means his ability to supply them will slowly be choked off as his stocks dwindle unless the roads are made safe for travel again.

Kerandas only stocks so many potions at a time. If no one's buying potions of animal friendship, Kerandas won't brew any more of them until someone starts buying. As such, Kerandas still only has three potions of animal friendship to sell in week five, not fifteen, even if no one's been buying them in previous weeks.

At various points in the **Adventure Overview and Timeline**, Goldblum's trade is intercepted. Every time this happens, Kerandas' business is damaged. The first time this happens, Kerandas is no longer able to brew restorative ointments, potions of growth, or potions of resistance. The second time, Kerandas is no longer able to brew oils of water breathing, dusts of disappearance, potions of slipperiness, and potions of greater healing. The third time this happens, Kerandas is no longer able to brew anything but ordinary healing potions. The fourth time it happens, Kerandas loses the ability to even brew ordinary healing potions. In all cases, Kerandas retains any leftover stock from previous weeks, but will not be able to brew any more until the goblins, sahuagin, spiders, and Order of the Bear have all been neutralized (this clears the roads and allows Goldblum to safely order a large resupply for Kerandas).

Item	Price
Potion of Climbing	25 gold (2/week)
Potion of Healing	50 gold (5/week)
Potion of Animal Friendship	50 gold (3/week)
Dust of Dryness	50 gold (1/week)
Potion of Water Breathing	75 gold (2/week)
Oil of Slipperiness	75 gold (2/week)
Potion of Growth	100 gold (1/week)
Potion of Resistance	100 gold (5/week)*
Dust of Disappearance	150 gold (1/week)
Potion of Greater Healing	250 gold (1/week)
Potion of Hill Giant Strength	250 gold (2 in stock)**

*usually stocks two poison, two fire, one lightning, but can change next week's stock at party request)

**cannot restock due to trade problems beyond Ramshorn

Sigmund's Wands and Scrolls

Sigmund runs the self-explanatory Sigmund's Wands and Scrolls. Sigmund is not much of an entrepreneur, but he is a good wizard, and uses his magical business to pay the bills while indulging his experimental curiosity. Sigmund can replace most of the items in his shop, but he can only replace one item per week, except for scrolls, which he can replace three of per week in place of replacing one of his wands, staves, or other magical doodads.

Item	Price
Cantrip Scroll†	50 gold
1 st Level Scroll	100 gold
Wand of Magic Detection	125 gold
Wand of Secrets	125 gold
Pearl of Power†	400 gold
Wand of Magic Missiles	500 gold
Circlet of Blasting*	550 gold
War Wand +1**	600 gold
Medallion of Thoughts*	600 gold
Staff of the Python*	600 gold
Wand of Web*	750 gold

*Sigmund cannot replace this item. He has one in stock, and once bought, it is gone forever.

**Sigmund cannot replace this item. He has two in stock, and once bought, they are gone forever.

†Sigmund can replace these items, and tries to keep a stock of three around—although he can still only make one per week, so he might fall behind if the party is buying them all up.

‡Sigmund does not know all spells. He can create scrolls of the cantrips Mage Hand, Mending, Message, and Prestidigitation, and of the 1st level spells Alarm, Feather Fall, Find Familiar, Fog Cloud, Grease, Mage Armor, Shield, Sleep, and Unseen Servant.

Others

Hawk Silverthorn, Finneas Rathbone, and Lucan are also wizards of various sorts, and can also make scrolls, however they do not advertise their services. If the party is after a specific cantrip or 1st-level spell from the Evocation, Conjunction, Divination, or Necromancy schools, Sigmund will recommend they seek out Hawk (for Evocation and Conjunction), Finneas (for Divination), or Lucan (for Necromancy). However, these wizards don't have all the spells of their respective schools.

Hawk Silverthorn knows the cantrips acid splash, fire bolt, light, and shocking grasp, and the 1st-level spells burning hands, chromatic orb, magic missile, and thunderwave. Finneas Rathbone knows the cantrip true strike and the 1st-level spells comprehend languages, detect magic, and identify. Lucan knows the cantrip chill touch and the 1st-level spells false life and ray of sickness. They charge 75 gold for cantrip scrolls and 150 gold for 1st-level spells.

WEAPONS AND ARMOR

For the most part, the party has enough weapons and armor at start to last them until the end of the battle for Ramshorn. In particular, probably no one cares that Seyra and Edda Jelmjorn can make armor, because the armors they make are so cheap that the party almost certainly already has them. Ront and Andie's smithy might see more use, though, both because they'll buy enemies' weapons and armor as scrap metal and because the half- and full-plate armor they sell is out of reach of starting characters, so the medium and heavy armor users of the party will actually have to buy it.

Ront is the town blacksmith, taciturn but respectful. His silent exterior conceals a nihilistic conviction in the inevitability of a descent into chaos. He is unmoved by appeals for discounts to the impending doom because even only beginning to approach middle age he is already doing little more than marking time until the grave, and is not especially concerned if that time should come sooner or later. He is roused to passion by the actual sight or sound of his fellow townsfolk suffering, but nothing less will convince him to budge.

Andie Lake, Ront's partner, is an aggressively extroverted contrast, and handles most of the actual sales. She's as unwilling to budge on price as Ront is (outside of situations when the town is actually under attack right now).

Ront and Andie sell all weapons and armor at standard prices, but don't keep everything in stock all the time. If the party orders something they don't have in stock, it may be a week or even several before the item is actually available. On the bright side, armor custom forged is significantly lighter than generic armors bought

Item	Availability
Light/medium weapons and shields	Always in stock
Heavy weapons	Ready 1 week after order
Medium armor except half-plate	Ready 1 week after order
Half-plate, heavy armor (except full plate)	Ready 2 weeks after order
Full plate	Ready 3 weeks after order

off the shelf from a mass production operation in a major city. All heavy armors weigh 15 pounds less, scale armor and half-plate weigh 10 pounds less, and chain shirts and breastplates weigh 5 pounds less. The minimum Strength for all armors is also 1 fewer (i.e. 12 for chain, 14 for splint and plate). Disadvantage on Stealth checks is unaffected. If one of Ront or Andie is dead but not the other, add one week to the time of every item that isn't always stocked (if both are dead, then the smithy is of course closed).

Ront and Andie are the only ones in town who will buy spare weapons or armor retrieved from fallen enemies, and they won't pay much. It doesn't matter what shape the metal is in now, they pay one silver per pound for the raw materials. This is a drastic undervaluation and Ront knows it, but listen, outsider, he's not gonna find a buyer for that half-plate armor in town, he's going to melt it down and make horseshoes, hatchets, and arrowheads, so to him it's just forty pounds of metal, and that sells for four gold.

Seyra is the town butcher and tanner. She sells leather, studded leather, and hide armors at standard rates. All of them are ready the same week they're ordered—she does have to kill a cow and tan its hide, but that doesn't take more than a few days, and it doesn't make a big difference whether the party sets out two days later, so long as they don't spend more than half the week loitering in town.

Edda Jelmjorn is the town's tailor. He can make padded armor, if, for some weird reason, the party ever needs that, and can also sell clothes, whether common, traveler's, fine, or costume.

MERCENARIES

The threats besieging the town of Ramshorn are significant and have completely choked off trade. Goldblum has begun hiring mercenaries to guard his caravans, but he can only afford so many at any given time. Those he doesn't hire, the party might, so as to bolster their numbers or fill in party roles that they can't fulfill.

Starting from week 2, Ramshorn is home to a motley collection of a dozen hirelings brought on primarily to help guard caravans and serve as village guard during the nights. The exact defense needs of the town and its merchants varies from one week to the next, which means there are a randomly selected number of leftover hirelings that the characters can employ to help them in their adventures. These are not player characters, which means they do not gain levels nor do they count as PCs for purposes of calibrating encounters (for example, the Beryl Clan does not become more numerous if the players have some hirelings in the party when confronting them).

Roll	Hireling
1	Diesa Balderk
2	Euphemia Greenbottle
3	Fodel Dumein
4	Grunt
5	Imsh Starag
6	Kara Stormwind
7	Lindal Thorngage
8	Luther Helder
9	Milo Hilltopple
10	Naivara Homilion
11	Seipora Bursk
12	Trym Tosscombe

To determine which hirelings are available, roll 4 times on the d12 chart below. If you roll the same result twice, then the roll is wasted. The odds of getting the same result four times in a row are 20,736 to 1, but if that happens, then there's only one hireling available that week. If it happens twice, your players have been cursed by an angry god. Consult your local supernatural expert for advice on how to appease or combat it.

The price of hiring any hireling is 15 gp per week, doubled for each party member who's been killed during the game. So, if one party member has been lost, a hireling costs 30 gp per week, if two have been lost, they cost 60 gp, and so on. It doesn't matter if the lost party member was a PC or another hireling. If the hirelings notice that the party frequently comes back with fewer people than they left with, they'll start charging more (eventually much more) to adventure with them.

Once paid, the hireling will act on the characters' orders up until they complete their next long rest and a new batch of hirelings is rolled up. Hirelings should be assigned to a player's direct control so that a party can freely hire all four of them without resigning themselves to watching NPCs fight each other through 75% of a combat. However, each hireling does have a specific (and hidden!) personality type that determines when they flee from battle. When the conditions are right (i.e. their hit points are low enough, another party member has been downed, etc.), certain hirelings will flee from battle regardless of what the players want them to do. On the other hand, some hirelings will refuse to flee even if the rest of the party is running.

Hirelings working for Goldblum have a chance of being killed in the process. The first time Goldblum's caravan is intercepted, there are no casualties. The second time, one hireling at random is killed in the battle. The third time, the entire guard complement for one of the caravans is wiped out, three random hirelings slain. The fourth time, another three are slain.

Durn and Tin'kan are certainly not mercenaries. They are the local town guard. However, they may be persuaded to join the party while they're acting in the defense of Ramshorn. A DC 15 Persuasion check will convince one of them to leave defense of the town to the other. A DC 20 Persuasion check will convince them both to leave. If one should die, the other will be extremely displeased and will require a DC 25 Persuasion check to be convinced to accompany them. This also counts as losing a party member for purposes of hiring prices.

Xavier Benedict and Rory Bales Jr. have hunted or patrolled the wilderness at times in the past, but haven't been past the outskirts of town in weeks. Any or all of them can be persuaded to accompany the party for a share of the loot by succeeding on a DC 15 Persuasion check. For every party member who's died, whether player character or NPC, the DC increases by 5.

Lycus Andelion is one of the local farmers, but he's also handy with a bow and will offer to join the party if there are any elves among them. This includes if they've hired Naivara Homilion.

Item/Service	Price
Cart	15 gold purchase—15 silver for one day rental
Wagon	35 gold purchase—35 silver for one day rental

TEAMSTERS

Rinn Taylor runs the local teamsters business. He employs Lucan as his wainwright and also sometimes hires town carpenter Bazalel Domine to help when there's too much work for Lucan to handle alone. If the party would like to buy a cart or wagon, Rinn Taylor will sell one to them, but he also rents them out for quick trips, if the party just needs help getting a haul of treasure back to Ramshorn.

SAGE

The town's sage is Ethan De'Nham. There are lots of townsfolk with reasonably good Intelligence based skills who might be paid to make checks on behalf of players, but for Ethan, this is his actual job. Ethan is usually called upon to use his high Investigation to appraise items for town merchants, but he knows all kinds of things. He will answer a single question for two silver, and will offer his services for an entire day for two gold (a better deal if the characters need more than ten questions answered).

OTHERS

Towns have a lot of services which aren't directly relevant to adventurers, but which adventurer-relevant services rely on. Some of these other artisans keep one or more of the town's adventurer-related services going. Others just prop up the economy in general. Either way, these artisans are more important to the town than they would first appear.

Izbaja Slysmile is the town baker, and Seyra is the town butcher. Izbaja is also in exile from his family in the western heartlands of the kingdom, scheming for an eventual return to power. And also baking. While the farmers of Ramshorn are perfectly capable of baking simple bread and stew for themselves, if both of these should die, the more advanced cuisine offered at the taverns will suffer. Starting the week after these two die, Bruen will no longer

be able to offer his superior meals and his bottom floor rooms degrade to the same quality as the top floor (they also degrade in price, since part of the cost of those bottom floor rooms is the assumption that characters will be buying the good meals during the week they're long resting).

Seyra is also the town tanner, which makes her the source of parchment (which, fun fact, is just extremely thin leather). Without Seyra's parchment, neither Sigmund nor any of the other minor wizards in town will be able to craft scrolls. Sigmund's existing stockpile of blank parchment will allow him to craft three scrolls in any given week, but if Seyra is dead, he will not be able to restock.

Jerry Gammidge is the town brewer. If he dies, every tavern in town will feel it. The week after Jerry's death, Bruen's bottom floor rooms degrade to the quality of his top floor rooms, and all other rooms degrade to the quality of Dayle Gryphon's floor.

If all three of Izbaja, Seyra, and Jerry are killed, then the town's inn-keeping industry will implode. All rooms in all inns are reduced to the quality of Dayle Gryphon's floor, and the innkeepers wheedle what money they can out of people who need a bed, since they can no longer afford anything else.

Bazalel Domine is the town carpenter. If he dies, the good news is that the town inns consume beds and floors at a very slow rate, so they won't run out of beds in a week the way they will food or booze. The bad news is, they will eventually break all of their beds and not be able to replace them. If Izbaja, Seyra, Jerry, and Bazalel are all killed, the innkeepers are done. Rather than squeeze extra money out of their establishments while they last, they hold a fire sale on what furniture they've got left and close up shop. Once the roads are clear, they'll leave town. If Bazalel dies but at least one of the other three are alive, the innkeepers suffer no immediate ill effects.

Isaac Greykeep is the town mason. Ramshorn's ability to repair and expand itself depends on his continued survival, but his death will not lead to any immediate damage to local services.

Rory Bales Jr. is still making periodic excursions out into the woods for materials. He'd rather not, what with all the spiders and goblins and such, but it's his job and if he doesn't he makes no money and will starve to death. If Rory dies, he will no longer be bringing herbal ingredients to Keradas, reducing the number of healing potions he can craft per week from five to three.

Terithus is a pretty boy of negotiable virtue. Most of Ramshorn would not consider him an "artisan" and would classify him with the vagabonds, but enough of them pay for his services (and these are not wholly exclusive to the first group) to keep him in business, which means he does contribute to keeping money circulating around town just like the other artisans. His death won't affect town services much at all, though.

Farmers form the backbone of any community. Pinky, Lycus Andelion, Bairrfind Titanoak, Loghain mac Mannanan, Ranya Summers, and Edda Jelmjorn are all farmers, in some cases in addition to providing other services on the side. Every single NPC with no vignettes is also a farmer—a total of over a hundred.

Chalia Liaris is an independently wealthy noblewoman-in-exile. She doesn't actually do anything, she just brought a chest full of coins and gems and pays for her expenses out of that. There's well over a thousand gold (in various denominations) left in there, despite what she's lost to the Order of the Bear.

Grokken and Brokken Frostfeet, Larea Darkeyes, Newt the Hatter, and Tebryn Greycastle are vagabonds, beggars, or scam artists. Their only value is whatever the inherent worth of sapient life is. Your party may or may not measure that value in coppers.

VIGNETTES

WHenever the party finishes a long rest in town, or at any other time they're in town and you want to spring a quick scene from the town on them, roll a d20 and a d6. If the d6 is 4–6, add 20 to the d20 result. If the d6 is 1–3, take the d20 result by itself, without adding anything. Then look up the vignette corresponding to the total. Alternatively, just run whichever vignette looks interesting to you.

- 1) Bazalel Domine, the local carpenter, is arguing with Pinky in Dayle Gryphon's tap room by the stables. Pinky is on about the elves again—it's been halfway impossible to get him to shut up about them since the elf rebels brought the spiders here a few months ago, even after they all got eaten by them—and Bazalel is trying to convince him that the local elf farmer Leuthera is a member of the community like anyone else, and that Naivara Homilion is doing her part to keep the town safe, and there's no reason to judge them, and so on. Pinky is not pleased that Bazalel is taking the knife ears' side, and after getting enough drinks in him, does what he does best and starts a bar room fight. Grokken and Brokken Frostfeet join in immediately, just for the Hell of it, and Tin'kan steps in to try and pull the fight apart while declaring that "it is uncivil to assault your fellow citizens like this!" Rando Barstool—and he insists that is his real name—stumbles drunkenly over to try and get everyone to calm down by proclaiming how much he loves you guys and instead winds up dragged into the growing brawl. Dayle wonders aloud why this crowd showed up at his tavern, when Old Man Ash runs a perfectly good dive bar across town.
- 2) Izbaja Slysmile, local baker, is meeting with the beggar Larea Darkeyes, who collects stale and burnt bread from his stock at the end of the day in exchange for any interesting gossip she's heard around town. She cracks open a particularly burnt loaf and notices it rose just fine inside, and asks if he really can't sell it. This causes Izbaja to stare into space for a while, lost in internal monologue. "How fitting, for just as this bread, though I have been burnt, my ambitions shall rise again as surely as yeast in—" "Izbaja?" Larea interrupts. "Oh, right. Go ahead and take the bread." Larea tells Izbaja that Goldblum suspects Mieke's jewelry are fakes. If this vignette occurs in weeks 1–3, Larea says that Goldblum doesn't seem like he's doing anything but grumbling about it, but if it's week 4+, she says that he was trying to convince Bazalel Domine to buy one of her items and bring it to him and Durn for examination.
- 3) Lycus Andelion, who's always had a fascination with elves and elven arrow magic, is shooting arrows with Naivara Homilion. She doesn't know much to do about magic, but she's definitely a good shot. Lycus is saying that Pinky doesn't seem to like having another elf around. Naivara says she doesn't care what Pinky thinks—he's a barroom brawler and she's a sniper. The worst he can do is force her to go to the trouble of cleaning off an arrow.
- 4) Rory Bales Jr. is a local hunter selling a few stray rabbits to Seyra, the butcher, at her shop. If the spiders have not been neutralized, Rory has a funnel weaver's corpse strapped to his back, which causes Seyra more than a little concern. Rory explains he's going to bring it to Sigmund and see if that guy can figure out how to make an anti-venom out of it. That guy seems to know a little of everything. If the players express interest, they can accompany Rory to Sigmund's house, where he can indeed make an anti-venom, which works as a potion of poison resistance which works only against poison damage dealt by spiders. If the spiders have been neutralized, Rory instead comments that game is getting easier to come across now that the spiders are no longer devouring the countryside.
- 5) Mieke de Graaf is selling counterfeit jewelry and small statuettes for 25 gold a piece. Her latest customer is Finneas Rathbone, who's only in this town because it's near the catacomb and he wants to investigate the dead buried there. He's not thrilled with what the Vlatlas are doing to the place, but right now they leave him alone and he doesn't want to rock that boat. He doesn't have any such need for Mieke. She doesn't even live here, she's an itinerant merchant who got stuck here a few weeks ago when the spider population boom hit and made the roads too unsafe for travel. As such, Finneas is perfectly willing to confront Mieke about selling counterfeits, which is what he's doing now. Unfortunately for Finneas, his temperament being equal parts sullen and aloof has not left the rest of the town with a whole lot of confidence in his accusations.
- 6) Bairrfind Titanoak approaches the characters and asks if they know the local mason, Isaac Greykeep. Isaac was a mercenary before he got turned to stone fighting some Third Eye creation. The wizards tried to put him right, but he's still pretty stiff. If the party seeks out Isaac for details, he will explain to them that yes, he was a mercenary, yes, him and his party were contracted to hunt down a medusa for the Order of the Third Eye, yes, it turned him to stone, and yes, the Third Eye's healing wasn't fully effective and he's still pretty stiff. That was all years ago, but Bairrfind still seems to think that every heavily armed stranger who wanders into town must be on a first name basis with him.
- 7) Newt the Hatter has stolen Seyra's colorful hat. She demands he give it back, but Newt insists that it's his. He is a hatter, and he made it. No one else in town has a hat anything like Seyra's, however, and eventually she tackles Newt and wrestles the hat away from him.
- 8) Tebryn Greycastle approaches the party and offers them a special deal, potions of greater healing for just 100 gold pieces while supplies last. He's got three such alleged potions, all of which are actually a tincture of water and dirty water. A DC 15 Arcana check will reveal the deception if one of the party members thinks to examine the goods. Tebryn knows that most of the town has caught onto his tricks and that he needs to make a sale before someone comes along to warn the party off, so he pushes the party to make a sale as fast as possible, claiming he's got a lot of other interested buyers and just brought it to them first since they seem to have the most immediate need, what with the adventuring and all. If the party does indeed spend more than a minute or two deliberating, Loghain mac Mannanan (it's pronounced "Logan") happens along and Tebryn scampers off immediately (taking whatever gold he's already received with him). Loghain warns the party that anything Tebryn is selling them is fake.

- 9) Old Man Ash, the proprietor of the Forgotten Heart, is arguing with Seyra, the local butcher and tanner. He's claiming that the smell from her business—right next to his—is keeping customers away. Seyra suggests that maybe it's the terrible quality of his inn that's keeping customers away.
- 10) Pilate, Bryce Tavisham, and Ranya Summers are discussing the town's medical supply situation. There's no immediate shortage of materials, however. If the party inquires as to details, the three will be evasive unless someone succeeds on a DC 15 Persuasion check. Pilate will then confide that they are planning triage in case the town suffers a major attack, but asks them not to spread it around. They don't want people jumping to conclusions and thinking they have any particular reason to believe an attack is coming. They don't, they're just planning for the worst. That kind of context gets lost in the gossip mill, though, and it might start a panic.
- 11) Edda Jelmjorn is speaking to Rinn Taylor, asking him for advice on how to talk to Chalia Liaris. Rinn is busy feeding his pet owl Ozzie and has no idea why Edda would think he would have the first clue how to woo some half-noble bastard from the other side of the mountains. Edda says that since they're both half-elves, he figured Rinn would know...half-elf...things? Rinn stares blankly before explaining that no, he does not know "half-elf things."
- 12) Edda Jelmjorn is trying to convince Sigmund to brew him a potion that will make him stronger. Sigmund asks why he doesn't go to Kerandas, and Edda says that he can't afford it, but he thought maybe Sigmund would be more interested? Like, maybe it could be an experiment? Sigmund says that he's not going to use Edda as a human test subject for potioneering. It's not even his specialty, and he'd probably get Edda sick or killed.
- 13) Edda Jelmjorn is in an alley between two buildings vomiting. If asked why he's sick, he explains that he bought a potion of strength from Tebryn Greycastle, but it doesn't seem to be working quite right. Maybe...maybe it just has to get the bad stuff out first?
- 14) Tin'kan passes by the party, greets them with "hail, citizens!" and asks if they are having any luck tracking down the threats in the wilderness. Regardless of their response, he asserts that he's certain luck is on their side today, and that their next expedition will be a success.
- 15) Andie Lake and Ront forge weaponry in the smithy together. Andie chatters constantly. Andie could be talking about anything—pick something you can go on about at length easily. If you're drawing a blank, she's talking about how they're starting to run out of the really good steel since the roads have been so dangerous. Ront occasionally grunts in response, but does not seem to mind the background noise. Ront is listening, but has little to add, and mostly uses Andie's chatter as something to listen to in order to keep the verbal part of his brain occupied while he works.
- 16) Grokken and Brakken Frostfeet are standing on a roof staring at the sky, looking for signs of the apocalypse. Specifically, they are standing on Chalia Liaris' roof, ignoring her repeated insistence that they get off.
- 17) Xavier Benedict, Chalia Liaris, and Rinn Taylor commiserate over drinks together. Between the extortionate Order of the Bear, marauding goblins, and the ravenous spiders, neither of them have been to the woods in weeks. Alternatively, if the Order of the Bear, goblins, and the spiders have all been neutralized, they celebrate the wilderness being safe enough to roam again.
- 18) Hawk Silverthorn and Sigmund are discussing magical brewery with Seipora Bursk. Her experimentation is significantly more practically focused than their more theoretical work, less "testing hypotheses" and more "I'm going to try every combination of herbs that grows near my house until I find something that'll get this stain out." Sepiora knows all kinds of weird ways to brew potions of various energy resistances. She never did get that stain out, though.
- 19) Larea Darkeyes loiters near Goldblum's shop until he throws some coppers at her to shoo her away.
- 20) In the grey light of early dawn, Larea Darkeyes brings a pile of scrap wood to Bruen, who pays a few coppers and tosses them in his fire place, and then hands off a silver to Hawk Silverthorn to get the fire started.
- 21) Hawk Silverthorn lays a (non-magical) scroll in front of Chalia Liaris, saying he's deciphered that script she brought him. Chalia tells Hawk that she gave him that script two months ago, and she's since figured it out herself. It turns out it was a pretty mundane message anyway—it was pulled from her father's diary, but was just him practicing writing in the cipher so it wouldn't take so long in the future.
- 22) Grokken and Brakken Frostfeet lie passed out in a heap behind Old Man Ash's tavern.
- 23) Ranya Summers is using her celestial powers to repair Tin'kan. If asked the reason for his damage, Tin'kan says that he's been looking for a lost child. He found the little anklebiter—a few hundred yards past the village limits, being chased by spiders. Fortunately, Tin'kan is immune to spider poison! Unfortunately, he is not immune to spider fangs, but still, he was able to get the kid home.
- 24) Ranya Summers is speaking with a solemn-faced Grunt about Grunt's departed friend Khemed. Grunt takes long pauses between each sentence, not because the grief is all that fresh—it's been several months—but just gathering his thoughts. Ranya does not interrupt.
- 25) Kerandas and Goldblum are haggling over Goldblum's ring of swimming. Kerandas is hoping he might bring the price down since he's had it in stock for over a year with no sales, but Goldblum doesn't want to let it go without turning a profit. After all, it's a ring. Rings don't take up much storage space.
- 26) Kerandas is at Ront's forge getting an item examined while Andie Lake is working the forge. Some stray sparks land on Kerandas, and for a brief moment his skin freaks out as he changeling form is revealed. If asked what's up, he claims it's a side effect of some potions he's been testing.

- 27) Terithus, a local pretty boy of negotiable virtue, has come to Kerandas, potioneer and occasional magic item dealer who (unbeknownst to much of the town) is also a changeling, looking for appearance-enhancing potions. Kerandas offers Terithus a “beauty potion” that he demonstrates by shapeshifting himself into a slightly more attractive version of his usual disguised form. The potion is in fact one of Tebryn Greycastle’s patent-pending tinctures of water and dirty water.
- 28) An extremely drunk Lucan pesters Ethan De’Nham about how he’s going to be a great necromancer some day. Any day now, he’ll unlock the secrets of mastery over death and then he’ll be powerful enough to save the world all by himself. The Vlatlas will wish they’d taught him what they knew once he makes it big, that’s for sure. Ethan just wants to be left to his drink in peace.
- 29) Diesa Balderk is setting a child’s arm to mend after breaking from a fall. A worried mother asks if he’ll be okay. Diesa asserts that yes, he’ll be perfectly fine in a few weeks this time, but the next time one of his friends dares him to try to jump from one rooftop to another, he should reflect on the fact that this “friend” isn’t lining up to jump themselves.
- 30) Euphemia Greenbottle and Ront are woken up by a bucket of cold water tossed over them by Dayle Gryphon, having been dragged off to a corner to sleep off a hangover after blacking out during a drinking contest. Euphemia asks who won. Gryphon tells her that he and Jerry Gammidge won (on account of having sold them all those drinks), but she and Ront are welcome to try again that night.
- 31) Fodel Dumein converses with Edda Jelmjorn. Edda says he thinks he’s seen Fodel around here before. Has Fodel ever taken on guard work for the caravans before recently? Fodel tells him not to stick his nose in others’ business.
- 32) Grunt is in the market, and has accidentally knocked over the better part of a fishmonger’s stall while attempting to peruse its wares, and is now doing his level best to put it back together. The fishmonger claims that stall and its contents are worth at least a dozen gold, and now they’re ruined. Grunt is apologetic but also somewhat confused. It’s not like the fish have gone anywhere. They aren’t smashed or charred or anything.
- 33) Imsh Starag is having a bit of a disagreement with Edda Jelmjorn, the local tailor, over the price of a new set of traveling clothes, and subsequently over how many limbs Eddaneeds attached to do his job. When Ront arrives with the crowd, he questions how many Imsh needs to do his, but despite Ront’s valor, he is badly outmatched if it should come to violence. Durn arrives shortly thereafter and tries to de-escalate the situation. If violence does ensue, Durn will take Ront’s side.
- 34) Kara Stormwind greets the players as they enter the inn and informs them that she has received an omen that today is a good day for battle, yet none of the caravaneers have hired her on. She offers her services at half the usual price and asks in exchange only that the players chase the bloodiest battle they can so as not to shy away from her god’s will. Kara’s omen is not unfounded. If the players dive into any particularly dire battle, such as with the spiders or the goblin camp, they each receive inspiration.
- 35) Ask the players to make a DC 16 Perception check. Anyone who succeeds notices that Lindal Thorngage is picking a villager’s pocket in the inn’s common room. If reported, Bruen throws Lindal out and tells him never to return. Lindal will begin lurking in Old Man Ash’s tavern instead.
- 36) Luther Helder is confronted by either a Lion Knight or a Red Jester accusing him of killing a towns person (which he has—remove one of the farmers at random). Luther confesses nothing, but offers little in the way of defense and is more perturbed than anything. Left to their own devices, things quickly escalate to violence and Luther may end up captured or killed (if the former, he returns only as one of the Beryl Clan’s assassins).
- 37) Milo Hilltopple and Goldblum discuss supply routes to the west and the possibility of pooling resources to import some rare magical ingredients together. Goldblum is interested in some giant parts which Keradas has been hoping to use in some particularly potent potions, and Milo is running out of alchemical salt, with local supply being a poor substitute, as well as sulphur, which is altogether irreplaceable nearby.
- 38) Naivara Homilion just wants to be left alone, but Pinky demands that she answer for the crimes of the elves of the Great Forest. After a few rounds back and forth, Naivara pulls a short sword on him, he backs down, and she finishes her drink and leaves. Pinky grumbles afterwards that this is exactly the kind of violent thuggery that you can expect from an elf.
- 39) Seipora Bursk and Izbaja Slysmile discuss gardening together. Seipora doesn’t seem to distinguish between primroses and six-foot tall, ambulatory, carnivorous plantlife.
- 40) Trym Tosscombe and Jason Silverain are having a musical duel at Bruen’s tavern. The two have been fighting over it since Trym showed up with the other hirelings, and have now decided that the only way to settle this is a rock-off.



THREATS

RAMSHORN WILDERNESS

When the party attempts to travel through the Ramshorn wilderness to move from one location to another, roll a random encounter on the table below. Once the encounter has been neutralized, cross it out (you will want to make a copy of the encounter table for these purposes). If the party rolls a crossed out encounter, they slide up or down the chart towards their ultimate destination until they hit an encounter. If they roll an encounter adjacent to their destination on the table (i.e. if their destination is the Catacomb and they roll up the Catacomb Approach encounter), they must clear the encounter to get in, but after clearing the encounter they arrive at their destination automatically, with no further encounter rolls needed.

Sneaking past an encounter does not clear it permanently, but does clear it for the duration of the trip. The party won't have to worry about it again on the way to where they're going, but may run into them when returning or going somewhere else. If the party sneaks past an encounter that is adjacent to their destination on the chart, they arrive at their destination automatically.

Some encounters link to one another, i.e. foes from one encounter will flee to another. If the party pursues them, they end up at the new encounter's position on the chart.

The term "rally" is used frequently to describe the circumstances under which a previously fleeing enemy will turn and fight. This has no further mechanical implications other than that. An enemy who has rallied does not get any extra HP or get to ignore any levels of exhaustion or anything like that.

It is important to note that no encounter has an exact geographic position. If the party is headed towards the hobgoblin caverns at 18 and they first roll 17, then 1, then 18, that does not mean they got most of the way to the camp and encountered the bugbear ambush, then got turned around and walked to the spider/bear confrontation, then turned around again and arrived at the hobgoblin perimeter outside their caverns. It means they traveled in a more or less straight line towards the hobgoblin camp, and along the way they were first ambushed by bugbears and then came across a brown bear fighting several giant wolf spiders before finally arriving at the hobgoblin perimeter.

Roll	Encounter	Destination
1	Brown bear/spider confrontation	Ramshorn
2	Spider hunters (funnel weavers)	Spider Nest
3	Spider hunters (jumping spider ambush)	
4	Spider hunters (tiger spiders)	
5	Vlatla skeletons	Vlatla Catacombs
6	Black bear	
7	Spider hunters (wolf spiders)	
8	Wolf pack	
9	Spider/Bear infantry confrontation	
10	Order of the Bear (Sir Ornas)	
11	Order of the Bear—Canyon Ambush	
12	Order of the Bear—Box Canyon	
13	Order of the Bear—Hilltop	Order of the Bear Camp
14	Threeway confrontation	
15	Sahuagin patrol	Sahuagin Temple
16	Owlbear	
17	Bugbear ambush	
18	Hobgoblin perimeter	Hobgoblin caverns
19	Werewolf pack	
20	Spider hunters (hunterman)	

Brown Bear/Spider Confrontation

The battle between one **brown bear** and four **wolf spiders** is ongoing when the players arrive, and a lot of which side wins is going to come down to luck if the players let it play out without interference. Every swipe of the brown bear's claws or bite is very likely to do enough damage to a wolf spider to send it fleeing, but it only takes three, maybe four hits from the spiders to paralyze the bear. If the spiders win initiative, they might down the bear in a single round, before she can even retaliate.

The brown bear is smart enough to distinguish between spiders and humanoids and will not attack the party if they engage the spiders, however the spiders are not smart enough to tell the difference between humanoids and a bear and will blindly attack the party even if they're focusing their fire on the brown bear. If the brown bear survives the battle, she'll turn towards the party, stand up on her hind legs, and growl a warning. If that warning is ignored, she will charge the party to get them out of her territory. Bear of brown, just lay down: The brown bear will not give up her attack unless the party either appears to be incapacitated (she will make no effort to finish them off if they just collapse for seemingly no reason) or she has been reduced to one quarter of her hit points (8 HP or less), at which point she will attempt to flee, but will rally for a desperate last stand if the party pursues.

Spider Hunters

The various spiders in the forest all have fundamentally the same behavior: They will engage anything that moves, but will flee back towards their nest if they drop below half health (regardless of how other spiders are doing). If chased and unable to escape (for example, most spiders can be run down by medium size creatures), the spider will turn to make a last stand. Other spiders will make no effort to assist a spider making a last stand except by coincidence (i.e. if a healthy spider happens to stumble across a spider making a last stand, the healthy spider will attack just to try and get prey). The exact number of spiders for each encounter are:

- **Funnel weavers:** Two funnel weavers.
- **Jumping spider ambush:** Three jumping spiders. As the name suggests, this encounter begins when the spiders launch themselves from maximum range at the party.
- **Tiger spiders:** Two tiger spiders and one tarantula.
- **Wolf spiders:** Three wolf spiders.
- **Huntsman:** One huntsman. This spider hunts differently from the others. Rather than just attacking on sight and hoping for the best, the huntsman will grapple a single creature in its jaws and then flee with them (regardless of its health) to finish them off alone. After one such character is immobilized, the huntsman will return to grab another and bring them to the same spot. If the rest of the party follows the huntsman to where it's stashing its paralyzed prey, it will fight like normal to avoid being driven off from its catch. Once the huntsman is reduced to half its health or less, it will return to wherever it's stashed its paralyzed prey (if not there already), grab one, and attempt to cart them back to the nest to feed. If the party is not where the huntsman left them when it dragged one of them off, it will not make any attempt to track them (it has no idea how) and will instead just start carting the already paralyzed prey back to the nest one at a time.

While the egg chamber in the spider nest is still intact, half of all dead spiders in the wilderness will be replaced each week (meaning, whenever the party takes a long rest). Destroying or capturing the spider nest won't cause the spiders in the wilderness to stop hunting or flee the area, but it will stop new ones from spawning. They'll still flee back towards the nest, even if it's full of Vlatla spiders who will kill the rogues on sight. Likewise, capturing the nest will cause all new spiders to spawn as Vlatla spiders, but existing spiders will still be regular, uncontrolled spiders, and therefore hostile.

Vlatla Skeletons

Three **skeleton archers** are posted on the road to the catacombs. As they were outside the catacomb when the trouble with the dead knights began, they are Vlatla controlled even after the skeletons in the catacomb go rogue. They're under orders to kill any spiders they see coming down the road, but not to move more than thirty feet from their initial positions, and to return to those positions if a spider retreats out of range. If attacked by a non-spider, the skeletons will sit and do nothing while they're destroyed.

The one Tereza **thrall** nearby is under orders not to attack any non-spiders, but isn't mindless and will act to defend herself if the players ignore her attempts at explanation. If it's daylight, she's camping out in the shade of a tree. If reduced below half health, she'll retreat to the catacombs to inform her masters that she's been attacked. If asked about the spiders in the first week, the Vlatla thrall enthuses about how good she is at killing them. From the second week on, she remains happy to talk about killing them (out of boredom if nothing else), but she will also mention with a bit of bitter disappointment that her masters have reprimanded her for letting some spiders into the catacombs, but she's positive none of them have gotten past her. The whole subject causes her mood swings as she's caught between her supernatural compulsion to adore her masters and having been blamed for a failure that she's certain isn't her own.

Lurking nearby are three **goblins**. They're hidden, so roll their Stealth against players' passive Perception when they approach. These goblins have been sent to keep track of the growing spider problem and the Vlatla Clan. They've figured out that the skeletons neither report their presence to the Vlatlas nor behave with hostility towards anything but spiders, and thus tend to lurk near the skeletons for help against any spiders who discover them, retreating only when non-spider, non-skeleton creatures come near. The goblins don't stand a chance against nearly any threat and they know it, and will flee in random directions from anyone who finds and attacks them, using their Nimble Escape trait to attempt to hide after every round. A detected goblin will fire an arrow at range before moving and hiding, while one detected in melee will use their action to withdraw instead.

The goblins only speak Gultari, but are very open to negotiating for their lives with anyone who spots them, especially if they're cornered or the enemy has demonstrated some capability for ranged attacks. They will reveal the location of the goblin caverns if interrogated, even without any rolls (they're hoping that the heavy defenses there will kill the party, though they do not voice this out loud).

Black Bear

This one **black bear** is relying more and more on what berries and honey he can get his hands on now that the spiders are hunting all the game to extinction. He's hungry, but not hungry enough to fight the party to the death in hopes of eating them. He's also sick to Hell of fighting these goddamn spiders and his short temper may well lead him to run after and possibly take a swipe at anyone he sees in his neck of the woods, running them down to eat them if they flee. Bear of black, fight back: As soon as he takes any damage at all (or even gets his snout booped) he'll retreat. If pursued, he'll rally and fight to the death in an effort to defend himself, but will not pursue anyone who flees from him after he's been injured.

Northwest Wolf Pack

This is a pack of five **wolves**. They ordinarily roam most of the territory between the roads leading to the catacomb and the old watch tower, but have been pushed into a corner by the explosive growth of the spiders in recent years. As the territory the wolves can safely hunt in shrinks, they're growing more and more hungry, and will chance an attack on humanoids when ordinarily they would not. The wolves will attempt an attack from stealth, however if the rest of the "herd" (in this case, most likely the party) does not flee and break off leaving them to finish off the injured prey, the wolves will flee rather than engage the entire herd at once. If one of the wolves is injured and cannot escape, the rest of the wolves will rally to defend their own, and the wolves will make a last stand if somehow cornered, but otherwise they will run away and stay away. Wolves aren't stupid, and will remember being nearly killed by the party (and possibly losing some of their number to them) and will not engage if they see the party again.

Bear Infantry/Spider Confrontation

Two **Bear infantry** are being attacked by two **wolf spiders**. The Bears (not to be confused with any of the actual bears) will fight to the death, but will not pursue the spiders if they flee, which means the Bears are reasonably likely to come out on top. If the party engage the spiders but not the Bear infantry, the infantry will thank them for their help and will be generally friendly, but not so much as to risk their lives for them. Particularly, while the infantry won't help the party in any battles, they'll introduce the party to the rest of the Order of the Bear as friends. If the party hasn't attacked any of the Order of the Bear—or if they haven't left any survivors to report who was responsible—the party can take advantage of this to get all the way to Sir Brander at the old watchtower without a fight.

Order of the Bear

The **Bear infantry** and **archers** will demand a toll from anyone passing through so long as they have them outnumbered or they appear to be unarmed or lightly armed (a party comprised mostly of casters and lightly armored classes like Bards may find themselves mistaken for easy pickings). Their usual toll is five silver pieces per head. If the party is intercepted by multiple Bear patrols, they will be asked to pay multiple times.

Sir Ornas

Sir Ornas, at the crossroads at 8A, is the only Bear on this map who makes any attempt at maintaining a sense of professionalism, although the three **Bear infantry** and two **Bear archers** in his immediate entourage play along so long as he's in earshot. When the party passes through, Ornas will stop and demand to know their business in the area. This is mostly a formality, and Sir Ornas will only feel obligated to further interrogate them if they are either overtly hostile towards the people of Vintaria (for example, if the players explicitly state they are going to kill everyone in Ramshorn) or if they let slip something that implies the Order of the Bear isn't safe. The two most obvious ways they might do the latter are by declaring association to the Order of the Lion, which will alarm Sir Ornas as the Lions might seek to take his head for dereliction of duty and/or banditry, or if the players declare open antagonism to the Order of the Bear.

Regardless, once Sir Ornas is satisfied that they aren't a threat, he will tell them that there is a state of emergency in the area of Ramshorn due to severe casualties incurred at the hands of goblin and elven separatists and an awakened hive of vermin in the Great Forest, and as such he demands a toll of five silver pieces per head. If the players protest that they've already paid, Ornas asks for proof of payment from the bridge. Although Sir Ornas has given the Bear soldiers at the bridge tokens to hand out to those who pay the toll, they don't bother to actually do so unless asked to directly, and Sir Ornas has no sympathy for those who claim they received no tokens. If the players can give Sir Ornas neither the bear tokens distributed at the bridge nor five silver pieces per head in the party, he will threaten them explicitly, and if that fails (or if the players ever attempt to threaten him or flee), he will attack with his troops.

The group at the crossroads with Sir Ornas will flee if they lose half their number or if Sir Ornas falls. Sir Ornas himself will second wind and then immediately flee if he drops to one quarter health (11 HP) or lower, and Ornas' men will flee with him if he runs. Fleeing Bears will head towards the ravine encounter, where they will rally. If defeated there, they will flee to the box canyon encounter and rally again.

Ravine

Three **Bear archers** are posted at the top of a ravine. They won't bother demanding a toll from anyone passing through, because they'd have to clamber down to collect it, but if they recognize the party as enemies (for example, if the party have attacked the Bear camp in the past or are pursuing fleeing Bear soldiers from another encounter), they will open fire. If at least half the Bears in this encounter (including any who arrived in it by fleeing from another) are killed, the survivors will flee towards the box canyon.

Box canyon

Three **Bear infantry**, one **Bear archer**, and one **rogue elemental** have a small camp in this box canyon. If the party stumble across them, they will demand their toll of five silver per head. If other Bears are fleeing here, then this is where they make their last stand. They're trapped in here and must fight to the death.

Hilltop

This hilltop marks the beginning of the rockier terrain where the Order of the Bear are encamped (see the section on the Order of the Bear for details). It is guarded by three **Bear archers** with one **Bear infantry** to intercept anyone who attempts to charge up the switchbacks to attack them. The route around the hill is patrolled by two **Bear infantry** and three **Bear archers**. If at least half their number are slain, the rest will flee.

This hilltop guard post is just outside the main Order of the Bear camps throughout the hills to the north. Survivors of this encounter who notify the camp will return after 10–15 minutes with 3d6 **Bear infantry**, 2d6 **Bear archers**, 1d3–1 **ogrillons**, and 1d6–4 **rogue elementals** (minimum zero). These troops are pulled from Sir Daniel's cohort, and if three such waves are all destroyed, he will have no more troops to send (he will also have no more troops to send if the Order of the Bear has been neutralized, meaning remnant Bears from the hilltop guard post will not be able to summon reinforcements). They will not pursue the party far unless the party has killed Sir Ornas and subsequently taken a long rest. At this point, Sir Brander will order more aggressive pursuit.

Three Way Confrontation

The party bumps into an ongoing confrontation at the riverbank between three **Bear infantry** and two **Bear archers**, six **hobgoblin rebels**, and four **sahuagin**. Neither willing to cede territory to the others, the fight devolves into a three-way (four-way, if the party gets involved) fight for control of the territory. There shall be no touching of the hair or face.

Sahuagin Patrol

These three **sahuagin** are scouts for the Empire of the Deep, patrolling the river for anyone who gets too close to their outpost. The sahuagin do not speak any local languages and aren't interested in any kind of diplomacy, but nor are they particularly aggressive. They will kill on sight any land dweller who enters their territory, but will not pursue any who flee from it and have no long term ambitions in the area except to monitor the growth of the vermin hive and maybe get a bit of raiding in on the hated surface dwellers if the opportunity arises. If at least half of a sahuagin patrol is killed before they draw blood, the remainder will flee, however if driven to a blood frenzy by the smell of blood, the sahuagin will fight to the death.

Owlbear

A single **owlbear** roams the wilderness here. The Knights of the Wyrd are still sore about these things. A Third Eye experiment from decades ago that proved a failure and was subsequently turned loose in the wild, owlbeats have proven tenacious survivors despite a dedicated campaign by the Wyrd to exterminate these unnatural creatures. Fortunately for the Wyrd, owlbeats occupy much the same ecological niche as native wolf packs (both being similarly good at finding prey, which is the bottleneck on the owlbear's success as a hunter—it's far better at actually killing prey once it's tracked some down) and haven't devastated the ecosystem by being overly competent hunters the way that, for example, the rapidly growing spider nest has.

Owlbeats are aggressive predators and more than happy to chew on humanoids, but do not preferentially target creatures that large who travel in such large groups. Far from the spiders, prey in the owlbear's neck of the woods is abundant enough that it does not have to resort to any desperate gambles for food. Upon spotting the party, the owlbear will make several garbled roaring noises and, if the party does not back down, will then attack. If reduced to a quarter of its HP (14 or less), the owlbear will flee. If pursued, it will rally for a desperate last stand.

Bugbear Ambush

The three **bugbears** and seven **goblins** along the road will ambush any party they outnumber walking along it unless that party contains one or more goblins (and the goblins do not appear to be prisoners). The bugbears will attack from ambush with their javelins from one side, taking advantage of their surprise attack if possible. The goblins, positioned on the opposite side of the road from the bugbears, will spend one round waiting, and once any front line fighters have run to engage the bugbears, they will spring their own trap, firing a fusillade of arrows into the backs of unprotected casters. They will focus their fire on anyone who isn't visibly armored on the back line—they're probably a wizard, sorcerer, or warlock. The goblins will use their nimble escape

ability to attempt to hide after they reveal themselves by making an attack, and afterwards will move a few squares around, making it difficult to retaliate against them and relatively easy for them to sneak around the sides to get a clear shot at the back line. If the bugbears are slain, the goblins will flee towards the hobgoblin perimeter encounter.

The goal of the goblin ambush is to bleed Ramshorn and the Order of the Bear white by picking off their caravans and patrols one by one (bonus for killing any spiders in the area). So far as the goblins are concerned, Ramshorn and the Order of the Bear are a single faction, albeit one prone to sporadic internecine warfare. The bugbears will hesitate if there is at least one goblinoid present in the party, and if the players move quickly down the path, that hesitation will cost the goblins their opportunity to ambush and they will not reveal themselves. If the players hesitate in the area for whatever reason, however, the bugbears will eventually get over their ambivalence and attack, though they will avoid attacking the goblin for as long as possible.

If the goblins are detected and attacked before the bugbears engage, they will flee back towards the river where the hobgoblins have their perimeter. Once the hobgoblins there begin their volley, the goblins will rally, giving the hobs their bonus for attacking enemies who are adjacent to their allies, however if half or more of the goblins are killed, they will attempt to flee across the river to cower behind the hobgoblins. If the ambush is sprung successfully but the bugbears are killed in the first round before the goblins spring their ambush, the goblins will remain hidden rather than attacking the victorious party.

Hobgoblin Perimeter Guard

There are two squads of **hobgoblins** stationed across a river to guard the approach to the goblin caverns to the south. One squad contains four **hobgoblin rebels** and a **goblin scout** on their own, while the other has four **hobgoblin rebels**, the one **goblin** as scout, plus one **hobgoblin lieutenant**. There are also two **goblins** nearby hidden and used as a picket to warn of incoming danger. The hobgoblins will attack any non-goblin who attempts to cross the river, all eight using their bows until the enemy has made it to their side of the river, at which point one squad will move to melee range to activate their martial advantage ability. The hobgoblin lieutenant's first action, regardless of range, is always to activate his leadership ability. If the forward squad falls, or if the enemy breaks through and begins attacking the back squad in melee, the goblin stationed with the back squad will flee towards the goblin caverns to alert them.

The goblin pickets will yell a warning should any enemies approach from the side, and the hobgoblins will reorient themselves to deal with the attack from the new flank. Both squads are armed with both long swords and longbows, so if an attack comes from one direction the back squad will draw swords and become the front squad, engaging in melee while what was the front squad pulls out their bows to support from afar. If attacked on two or more sides, the hobgoblins will retreat back to their lair for reinforcements.

Werewolf Pack

This is not a pack entirely of werewolves. It's one **werewolf** leading a pack of seven **wolves**. His mate was abducted and carried off by the huntsman to feed on. Their neck of the woods hasn't been depopulated for food, so they're a lot more reluctant to attack humans. If attacked, the werewolf will lead the pack to defend their territory to the death, but if the werewolf dies, the rest of the pack will flee, rallying only to help one of their own escape if they've been cornered. As the wolves aren't particularly hungry, they will only pursue prey that has failed to do any damage to any of them.

The werewolf leading the pack has sworn revenge on the huntsman who killed its mate, and if one is led to the other, the werewolf will direct is wolves in an all out attack on the huntsman, regardless of the odds. The werewolf also despises spiders to a lesser extent, and will attack any spider pack it has at least even numbers on. The wolves will flee like normal if the werewolf is slain or otherwise incapacitated.

The werewolf doesn't much like to talk, but he is perfectly capable of both speaking and understanding Vintari. He and his pack will growl and snap at any trespassers on their territory, but it'll take several minutes of this stalemate before he'll attack, preferring instead to deliver the message that this is his pack's territory and they're willing to fight for it rather than actually start a fight with every single potential rival who sets foot on it. If the initial growling and snapping doesn't work, he'll switch to verbal threats in Vintari. He can be negotiated with, especially if it involves an alliance targeting the spiders, but his only interests are keeping his pack safe and well-fed, his territory secure, and revenge on the spiders for his mate. He's still mourning her passing and isn't currently interested in a new mate (not that it's clear how the party would go about providing one), and as such the only thing he wants that he doesn't already have is dead spiders. He would much rather fight, even against overwhelming odds, than yield to threats to his pack or territory. His concern for them is strong, but his pride is stronger. As such, about the only thing that players can use to bargain with him is the promise to help him kill spiders, especially the huntsman. The werewolf also has a pre-existing relationship with the Order of the Wyrd and will treat the party as friends—at least so far as allowing them to pass through territory unscathed—if one of their knights vouches for their trustworthiness.

ORDER OF THE BEAR

THE FALL OF THE BEAR

A collection of over four score knights and several hundred men at arms primarily responsible for the defense of the Eastern Frontier, the Order of the Bear were already stretched thin by the goblins ever-chafing against the occupying forces of Vintaria, and as time wore on found themselves regularly in contact with the Great Forest's elven minority as well. Once welcomed as the best friend a human or halfling could ask for in strange woods, ever since the war with the elven kingdom across the mountains the Vintarian elves have been the target of growing prejudice, blamed for the war that led to the growing lawlessness of the Eastern Frontier. As the violence

against them grew worse, many of the elves began to take up arms, hoping to overthrow the rule of Vintaria over the Great Forest and declare themselves independent or even seek vassalage under the elven kingdom in the west. When the Clans of Tiamat noticed the constant low-grade war caused by these twin rebellions, they, too, began to send raiding parties to test the strength of the northern defenses—though these are officially denounced as bandits by the Five Mothers.

In addition to the growing military threats, the Knights of the Bear found themselves cut off from food supplies as Vintaria struggled to pay war reparations to the elves as their end of the treaty. Able to do only two of feeding her heartlands, placating the elven kingdom, and feeding her troops in the east, Queen Catherine had elected not to feed her troops in the east. The Eastern Frontier was relatively laxly taxed as part of a plan to quiet the rebellions of the region, the underdeveloped area being relatively poor in any case, and the plan even worked for a time, but the undersupplied Knights of the Bear eventually took it upon themselves to begin implementing a tax of their own on the locals. The Eastern Frontier is far more dangerous than it is profitable, and it is not able to supply an army as large as the Bear on its own. The avarice of the Bears thus never ended, which further stoked the fires of rebellion as peasants faced with starvation began to turn to the rebels for food, rebels who knew how to secrete their stashes of food where the Bears did not know to look.

Already stretched thin, the breaking point for the Order of the Bear came when elven rebels discovered the slumbering vermin hive in the Great Forest and successfully awakened and seized control of the spiders there. The elves fled from the hive to the Ramshorn wilderness, and the Bear ignored them for the time and concentrated on the vast tide of vermin spilling forth from the hive to consume the Great Forest. In a bloody stand, the Bears successfully killed the attacking vermin, every one of which fought to the death. Scouts into the hive confirmed that it was still moderately populated. The Bears had taken such massive casualties in the fight, however, that there could be no hope of storming it to finish them off. The Bear remnants moved into the Ramshorn wilderness to pursue the elves, but soon gave up the chase (the elf situation sorted itself out when they lost control of their spiders and were devoured) and instead settled into the wilderness to recover their strength. Having lost all their most courageous knights in the battle against the Hive (if not in the years of grinding attrition before), the Knights of the Bear adopted a policy of "taxation" that amounted more than ever to outright banditry, with only a handful of their members maintaining even the thinnest veneer of upholding any kind of law.

WHAT REMAINS OF THE BEAR

The Order of the Bear is now led by Sir Brander, with only three other remaining knights: Sir Ornas, Sir Mortimer, and Sir Daniel. Sir Daniel is in charge of defending the camp, Sir Mortimer with extracting wealth from Ramshorn, and Sir Ornas with patrolling the wilds and guard the bridge for any caravaneers attempting to dodge the tolls. Neither Sir Daniel nor Sir Ornas are particularly interested in squeezing any more gold out of Ramshorn, but they have nowhere else to go. The Great Forest is full of rebels eager for a chance for revenge against the hated Bear, and most of the major towns like Karis and Rivermet are full of Lunatics who make a hobby out of killing corrupt knights and their soldiers. Daniel and Ornas just want to walk out of this alive.

Sir Mortimer and Sir Brander, on the other hand, are more aggressive and more greedy, respectively. Seeing so many of his comrades dead and having only survived by cowardice, Sir Mortimer is desperate to prove his worth as a knight by solving any problem that presents itself or anything that sounds like it might be a challenge to his honor or authority with violence. Sir Brander is convinced this whole “knight” thing is a suicide mission and is trying to squeeze out enough money from this place to build up a retirement nest egg and flee to another kingdom.

Each of the four remaining knights commands a cohort of about sixty soldiers. Sir Daniel’s and Sir Brander’s troops are kept at the camp and take the form of a total of five waves of troops that fling themselves at the players if they should attempt a direct assault (see section on the Old Watchtower below). Note that while there are at least five waves of troops at the Bear camp, only three of these waves will actually engage a party attempting a direct assault. The rest will flee after the first three waves are defeated (though this is no easy feat!).

Sir Ornas commands the patrols in the wilderness and at the bridge, as well as the troops who extort money from Ramshorn—and thus the ones who are first attacking the village when the players arrive. He has one wave of troops at the camp in addition to these, and he will call on that wave to reinforce himself if his troops in the wilderness are thinned out too much (see the **Wilderness Encounters** handout for details).

Sir Mortimer commands three more waves usually kept at the camp, but his entire cohort will be deployed in the retaliatory raid on Ramshorn in week 2 if the characters do not neutralize the Order of the Bear before then.

THE RAMSHORN BRIDGE

The Order of the Bear will be the very first people the players encounter in the Ramshorn region, unless for some reason they contrive to avoid the bridge. The Order of the Bear are collecting a toll on every caravan that passes from Ramshorn to Karis, and will demand five silver per head to anyone trying to pass through either way. The east end of the bridge (where the party approaches) is guarded by three **Bear infantry** and one **Bear archer**, while the west end is guarded by one **Bear infantry** and two **Bear archers**. These remnants of the Bear have had all respect for law eroded and will not make exceptions regardless of what legal authority the party was granted by the government in the west. Fortunately, they aren’t exactly fanatics, either. Of those on the east side of the bridge, once any two have died, the others will flee to the far side of the bridge and rally there. Of those on the far side of the bridge, if any of them are killed (including any who have fled from the near side), they will all flee. Those on the far side will flee if one of them is killed via ranged attacks or mobility shenanigans even if the ones on the near side are still holding firm, and if this happens, when the Bears on the near side flee, they will not rally when they reach the far side of the bridge. Survivors from the bridge flee to Ramshorn and rally with the Bears sacking the town.

It’s also possible for players to talk their way past the guards. It’s a DC 25 Persuasion check to convince them to waive the fee, but only a DC 15 to convince them to lower it to two silver. If the party attempts to Intimidate the Bear soldiers, the Bear will make a Wisdom save against the Intimidate check. If he fails, he’ll claim he mispoke and the toll is only five copper. If the intimidating character demands they pass for free, the Bear will acquiesce.

The Bears here have a bag full of tokens they’re supposed to give people who’ve paid the toll so that the Bears in the wilderness will know not to charge them extra, but the Bears at the bridge won’t bother actually giving a token to anyone who pays unless the party specifically asks them about such a thing.

THE RAID ON RAMSHORN

When the players first approach Ramshorn (unless they for some reason dallied for an hour or more on the way), it is being raided by the Order of the Bear. Having finally grown sick of their “temporary” increased taxes, the town finally refused, protesting they would risk starvation if the Bears took any more, and the Bears are now sacking the town outright. All Bears in this battle will fight until at least one of their cluster has died (including anyone who joined their cluster after fleeing from another) and they have two or fewer Bears left in their cluster. Once they have both lost at least one member of their cluster and there are two or fewer Bears left in their cluster, any survivors will flee to the next cluster.

With the exception of the first, the Bear clusters are each threatening or outright attacking a villager, which usually provides players with incentive to continue following the fight from one cluster to the next. After all, players presumably joined this game because they were on board with the premise: Defending a town besieged on all sides and caught in the jaws of a brewing civil war. Now here is the town, under attack. In the event the players do wander away, the Lunatic Court will actually fend off this attack on their own—but not without casualties. Every villager in an encounter prior to the Court’s appearance in cluster X will most likely be killed before the Court can finish clearing the Bears out on their own (though you might pick one or two villagers to pull through if you particularly like them).

Unless they are, for some reason, completely ignoring the road, the players will approach the town from the east and the first group of Bears they will encounter will be three **Bear infantry** and one **Bear archer** loitering around near the entrance to town. Villagers cower in nearby houses, but these Bears do not pillage or plunder, being lazier than they are greedy. When the party approaches, the Bear soldiers will tell them to depart immediately, without giving a reason as to why (they have no specific instructions in that regard and these grunts don't really wrangle with legal justifications, not even paper-thin ones, the way their leaders do). If the party refuses to depart, the Bears will attack.

West of the first encounter, just down the road, one **Bear archer** is firing arrows into a blacksmith, where one **Bear infantry** at half health is fighting against Ront, also at half health. Andie Lake lies on the ground bleeding out, with one failed death save and no successes yet. If Ront survives at above one-quarter HP and Andie has stabilized or died, he will join the party to help fend off the Bears from Ramshorn until he is below one-quarter HP, but will return to his blacksmith after the battle is over (meaning, he will not accompany them into the wilderness). If Andie is still bleeding out, Ront will stay with her to try and help her pull through.

Just west of the smithy is the Forgotten Heart Inn. Inside, Old Man Ash, Brokken and Grokken Frostfeet, and Pinky are fighting with four **Bear infantry** and two **Bear archers**. The archers are at full health, but everyone else is at half health. Ash and Pinky will stay behind no matter what, but if both the Frostfeet brothers are above one quarter health or if one of them is dead, they will join the party for the rest of the raid. If one of them is below one quarter health, both stay behind. Just across the street is the brewer Jerry Gammidge, who's getting two **Bear infantry** drunk in hopes that they'll pass out and he can wait for this to blow over. From here, sounds of fighting can be heard in three directions: The carpenter shop to the south (encounter 4), the tanner and teamsters' post to the west (encounter 5), and up north in the marketplace (encounter 6).

In the alley next to the carpenter's shop one **Bear infantry** is beating Bazalel Domine, the town carpenter. Despite Bazalel's efforts, he got caught unarmed and isn't a trained warrior—he loses two HP each round while the Bear beats him to a pulp demanding more money until the party intervenes to distract him.

The butcher and tanner shop is right across the street from the teamsters' post here. In the tanning yard, Seyra is fighting off two **Bear infantry**, all three of them at half health, while a **Bear archer** at full health fires on her from afar. Rinn Taylor, also at half-health, is using the entrance to his teamsters' post as cover while two **Bear archers**, themselves at half-health, fire on him from a distance. Lucan cowers inside the teamsters' post. Seyra and Rinn Taylor will join the party in their fight against the Bear so long as they are above one-quarter health.

The open square surrounding the well in this marketplace is now the scene of a melee between the Lunatic Court and the Order of the Bear. A frontline of four **Bear infantry** fights with **Harlequin**, one **red jester**, and two **Lunatic acrobats**. Harlequin is at three-quarters health, the other seven at half. Two more **Lunatic acrobats** stand on nearby rooftops providing ranged support with their throwing knives, while a **Lunatic magician** and a **white jester** stand behind the Lunatic frontline providing magic support. Three **Bear archers** provide ranged support to the Bears. The round after the players arrive, four **Bear infantry** and two **Bear archers** arrive as

reinforcements for the Order of the Bear. Mieke de Graaf, Sigmund, and Keradas all hide in nearby shops, but are happy to let the Lunatic Court (and, once they arrive, the party) handle the fighting so long as they and their shops aren't being directly targeted. Once the melee is resolved, surviving Lunatics (regardless of their health) move north towards encounter 7 at the Majestic Stag Inn, but if the party came here before investigating encounters 4 and 5, it is worth reminding them that those fights are still ongoing. If the party ignores them, Bazalel will die for sure, and some or all of Rinn Taylor, Seyra, and Lucan may end up dead as well.

The door on the Majestic Stag Inn has been smashed in, and inside two **Bear infantry** are slowly beating Bruen to death, demanding he give them money they're sure he's hidden away somewhere (he does have a 10 gp emergency fund hidden under a floorboard). Further conflict is audible to the north at encounter 8.

The door of the local Church of Selemis, barricaded against intruders, is holding firm against two **Bear infantry** and one **Bear archer**, while Pilate shouts warnings/threats about the wrath of the Heavens upon them and entreats them to turn back before it is too late. Across the road, Goldblum is speaking to a single **Bear infantry** who's broken into his shop, attempting to haggle the very confused raider down on how much his shop will be raided for ("twenty gold and one magic item of your choice," "you can't haggle with me, I'm robbing you!" "alright, fine, two magic items, but I can't do any more than that," "I'm going to stab you!").

Raid Aftermath

After the Bears are dead, Harlequin will greet the players with acerbic sarcasm, never directly accusing them of being bandits in the making like the Bears were, but making extremely transparent implications and feigning shock if accused of doing so. The players are either knights or mercenaries, and Harlequin has a bad history with and distrust for both.

It is important to take note of two things during Harlequin's first interaction with the players: Number one, do they fight the Order of the Bear where she can see? Harlequin is plenty perceptive and will notice the players attacking any Bears in the marketplace. She's also smart enough to realize that someone killed all the Bears who are lying dead in the rest of town and it probably wasn't all Ront and Seyra, but she will be significantly more willing to believe that the players might be trustworthy further down the line if the first thing she sees of them is their stepping into the fray to defend Ramshorn.

Second, are the players polite to Harlequin or express gratitude for her assistance in defending the town, or do they take umbrage to her acerbic attitude? Harlequin is unkind to the players by default, but she isn't so deep in her cynicism that she won't notice she's being pointlessly cruel if the players have not only clearly demonstrated a willingness to protect the town, but also responded to her verbal attacks with grace, and will be more than a little embarrassed in that situation. She's too composed to stumble over her words or express surprise, but she will stop throwing barely-concealed barbs at them, and if the players pursue good relations with the Lunatic Court going forward, she will eventually apologize (this might happen as early as the Lunatic Fete event, especially since the players will have brought a corrupt knight to justice if that event is occurring at all, see the **Events** section for details).

Once Harlequin has stopped talking to the party, Goldblum will find them and ask what brings them to Ramshorn. Upon learning that they intend to defend the town (and especially if they're specifically responding to his summons for help), he'll offer 200 gold in store credit if they can put a permanent stop to the Order of the Bear's raids on his caravans. The Order of the Bear is massive, over 200 soldiers total, but Goldblum will also tell the party that both the Lunatic Court and the Order of the Lion are looking to find the Order of the Bear's hidden camp, but neither has had the spare troops to track it down. If the players could find it, they wouldn't have to storm it alone. If the players object to being paid in store credit, he'll offer to pay them in cash, but he can only do so once the caravans start moving again. He can give them money, but only if they neutralize the Order of the Bear and then take a long rest to give his caravans time to get flowing again.

INTERLUDE: TO THE WILDS

Unlike most of the Ramshorn quests, the Order of the Bear encounters in the Ramshorn wilderness aren't just hints of what's to come and possibly threshold guardians, but actually form the middle encounters of the subplot. See the notes on the **Ramshorn Wilderness** for details.

THE OLD WATCHTOWER

Upon approaching the Old Watchtower off the north end of the Ramshorn Wilds, the players can immediately see the vast number of Bears in the region. A half-dozen different camps each capable of holding at least twenty or thirty men are spread out across the north end of the wilderness, nestled against the hills. The central camp is built around an old watchtower at the edge of the hills, now fallen into ruin. This is where the de facto commander of the Knights of the Bear, Sir Brander, leads the remnants. Players are perfectly free to attempt a direct assault, a guerilla campaign to slowly whittle down the Bear numbers by themselves, or a stealth assassination of their leadership, but now is a good time to remind them that both the most powerful factions in the Eastern Frontier have a bone to pick with the Order of the Bear and are happy to storm the camp if someone were to tell them where it was located.

If the players attempt a frontal assault alone, they must fight through three waves of Bear troops to reach Brander. Each wave contains 3d6 Bear infantry, 2d6 Bear archers, 1d3-1 Bear ogrillons, and 1d6-4 rogue elementalists (to a minimum of zero). The final wave is led by Sir Daniel, a Bear Knight. When one wave has been reduced to six or fewer survivors, the next wave shows up to reinforce them, until finally if the third wave is reduced to six or fewer survivors (counting leftovers from previous waves), they flee and the path to Brander stands open. That's an average of ten infantry, seven archers, and one ogrillon per wave, with an elemental likely showing up in at least one wave. Although not impossible, it is unlikely players will be able to hack through this many. The first wave is a deadly encounter by itself, when the second arrives, that should give any players who haven't picked up on it yet that it's time to grab fallen comrades and run. The victorious Bears will pursue players through the Ramshorn Wilds, but the good news is that they ate all their horses a long time ago and won't be following very far.

If the players do punch through the Bear waves, then they still haven't killed more than maybe a quarter of the Bears' total number, it's just that after watching 50-60 people die including probably several ogrillons and possibly one of their few remaining knights, the surviving Bears are reconsidering whether they want to be the next ones into that breach. Even if an eventual Bear victory is inevitable just by weight of numbers, it seems equally inevitable at that point that the first guys to charge in chasing it are going to die, and no individual Bear wants to be those first guys, even if they'd win overall.

The players might attempt to sneak in instead. If so, they can sneak through the hills between camps with no trouble and only need to begin making Stealth checks when they reach Brander's camp at the old watchtower. However, if the enemy raises an alarm, it will only be two rounds before reinforcements show up from other camps in the form of the same waves of Bear troops as if they attempted the frontal assault. In this case, however, mark which troops are reinforcements and which are Brander's guard and part of the original encounter—a new wave arrives when the reinforcements are cut down to six or fewer survivors, regardless of how many of Brander's personal guard have been killed. Three reinforcement waves will arrive just like in the frontal assault, regardless of what happens to Brander and his personal guard, but unlike in the frontal assault Brander is already on the map, and players might be able to quickly kill him and flee. Though the Bear troops won't immediately panic upon the loss of their leader, they will lose coordination and break into smaller warbands that will be easier for Ramshorn to fight off and even mop up.

Probably the easiest way to deal with the Order of the Bear is to enlist the aid of either the Lunatic Court or the Order of the Lion. The Third Eye and the Knights of the Wyrd could hypothetically be convinced to make the attack, but both still consider themselves allies of the Bear, so unless the players have put off dealing with Brander for long enough to win three points of favor of one of the two, they will refuse to take direct military action against the Bear (though they won't mind if someone else does—they can see as well as anyone that the Order of the Bear is falling apart, they just don't want to be the one to drop the executioner's axe on their former allies). The Vlatla Clan lacks the forces unless the players have put off attacking the Bear long enough to re-establish their control over the catacombs and get their skeleton cohorts back, or alternatively given them command over the spider swarms. Any of these options will likely require a long rest at some point, unless the players are able to power through multiple quests without one, and see the week 2 events on the timeline for the consequences of taking a long rest before dealing with Brander.

Both the Lunatic Court and the Order of the Lion are willing and able to immediately commit troops to an attack on Brander's camp if the players can tell them where it is. If the players attack Brander as part of an overall assault, then they face only one wave of reinforcements and get an appropriate squad of backup NPCs depending on which ally they chose: One Lion knight, three Lion infantry, and four Lion archers for the Order of the Lion, or one Lunatic ringmaster, one Lunatic magician, one red jester, one white jester, and four Lunatic acrobats for the Lunatic Court. Divvy up control of the NPCs between the players as they prefer so you don't spend too much time knocking your own tokens against each other, however warn them in advance that you'll take control back if the NPCs' morale breaks. The Lion archers and Lunatic

magician will flee if the Lion knight or Lunatic ringmaster (respectively) is dead and they are attacked in melee, the Lion infantry and Lunatic acrobats will flee if at least half the players as well as the Lion knight or Lunatic ringmaster (still respectively) are incapacitated, and the Lion knight, Lunatic ringmaster, and Lunatic jesters are all either too bold or too crazy to flee under any circumstances.

Note that although Sir Brander has three abilities based closely on superiority dice abilities, they do not use superiority dice. Instead, each one can be used once before Sir Brander finishes a short or long rest. Sir Brander will always use Commander's Strike on the first round he makes an attack while one of his ogrillons are in melee to benefit from it, will use Riposte the first time any melee attack misses him, and will use Evasive Footwork as soon as enemies close to melee, backing out of melee and trusting his buffed AC to prevent him from being hit by any reaction attacks and then firing on the enemy from a distance. Both Sir Brander and the Bear archers will concentrate their fire on lightly armored enemies on the backline (likely wizards, sorcerers, or warlocks) and let the infantry and ogrillons focus on the front.

TREASURE

The Order of the Bear's individual members only carry small amounts of spare change on them. Even the nobles like Sir Ornas have been cut off from proper supply long enough that they carry only a few silvers on their person. If players want to loot each and every dead bandit, each one carries 5d6 copper and 3d6 silver, enough for a few days' minor purchases.

The main hoard held at the old watchtower is where they keep most of their ill-gotten gains. Though they've past the point of diminishing returns in raiding villages, their stored wealth is still sizable. The watchtower's hoard includes 2400 copper pieces, 1400 silver pieces, and 50 gold pieces, as well as two carnelians, a star rose quartz, a zircon, two bloodstones, and a jasper—known in the business as “50 gp gems,” though the exact value of the gems can vary by quite a bit. See the section on Goldblum's store in the notes on Ramshorn. There are five other major Bear camps scattered throughout the hills, all within a few hundred yards of the old watchtower. Each one contains 6d6×100 copper, 3d6×100 silver, and 2d6×10 gold. If the players captured the area with the help of the Lions or Lunatics, they'll lay claim to the riches in these outlying camps while letting the players take the riches of the watchtower, although the players might be able to convince them to part with the treasure of one of the outlying camps if they can make a DC 15 Persuasion check. The check is made with advantage if none of the allied NPCs died in the assault, and with disadvantage if all of the allied NPCs died or fled. If the PCs managed to take on the entire Order of the Bear by themselves, there's no one to stop them from looting all five of these additional camps.

Bear in mind that it's fifty coins to a pound, which means the loot of just the main camp (not counting gems) is nearly 200 pounds, and each additional camp will have similar weight. A full party of six can probably cram a good portion of that in their packs, but a skeleton crew of three may not have the spare carrying capacity (bearing in mind that an explorer's pack alone weighs right about 50 pounds even, and most adventurers carry one of those or something equally heavy in addition to weapons and armor, the average adventurer has somewhere between 50–100 pounds spare carrying capacity, which is preposterously high and

still not enough to carry back a haul like this in a single trip). The Order of the Bear knows where all of that loot is and will want to return to their abandoned camps to reclaim it before running off for good if at all possible, so the players will likely have to split the party to send some back to Ramshorn to commission a wagon or hire some grunts to schlep the coins into town or else accept that they're going to lose half or more of their potential loot while going back to get the wagon.

AFTERMATH

Like players, NPCs don't necessarily die when they fall, although also like players, they do tend to die when they're caught in a TPK, and unlike players that happens to them an awful lot. There are exceptions to that tendency, however, and Brander is one of them. Injured and incapacitated, he is still alive after a major battle, leaving the party to decide what to do with him. This does not happen if they assassinate him, however. In that case, Brander is dead as soon as the party reduces his hit points to zero—it's an assassination, after all.

If the party do capture the camp and Brander with it, this raises the question of what to do with him. If the players came here on their own, they can do whatever they want. If they brought the Lion along, the surviving knight or, failing that, one of his men will inform the player that they were given orders by Prince Darius to take Sir Brander alive if possible in order to negotiate a potential alliance between the Bear and the Lion. There are still lots of Bear troops heading for the hills, unless the party was very thorough in wiping out each and every cohort of them and only brought the Lions in at the last second. If brought before Darius, Brander will accept the offer to take his men and help guard Karis, freeing up more Lion troops to patrol the Great Forest for rebels. The Order of the Bear will no longer menace Ramshorn, though they will not face justice either. In this case, remove every single Bear token from the wilderness.

If the party brought the Lunatics, then the Lunatics will patch up Brander's wounds at least enough that he can walk, tie his hands behind his back and loop a rope leash around his neck, and start dragging him back to Ramshorn. If the players ask what they're doing, the Lunatics will explain that criminals like Brander must be tried by the Lunatic Court in full view of their victims (in this case, the people of Ramshorn). The “trial” is an intentional farce in which the alleged crimes are either trivial misdemeanors like “disturbing the peace with noisome racket after sunset” or total nonsense like “wearing too much orange” or “brazen affiliation with creatures known to steal the honest labor of innocent bees.” The sentence is always death. In this case, remnant Bear patrols remain scattered around the wilderness until the party kills them, but will no longer restock.

Both the Lion and the Lunatics are very insistent that the party turn Brander over to them, although the Lunatics will not mind if the players kill Brander on the spot. They might pout a bit about stealing their fun, but so long as the bastard ate it in the end, that's what counts. If Brander is killed (even if the Lunatics weren't present), the party gains their first point of favor with the Lunatic Court. If the Order of the Bear makes an alliance with the Order of the Lion, the party gains their first point of favor with the Order of the Lion.

VLATLA CATACOMB

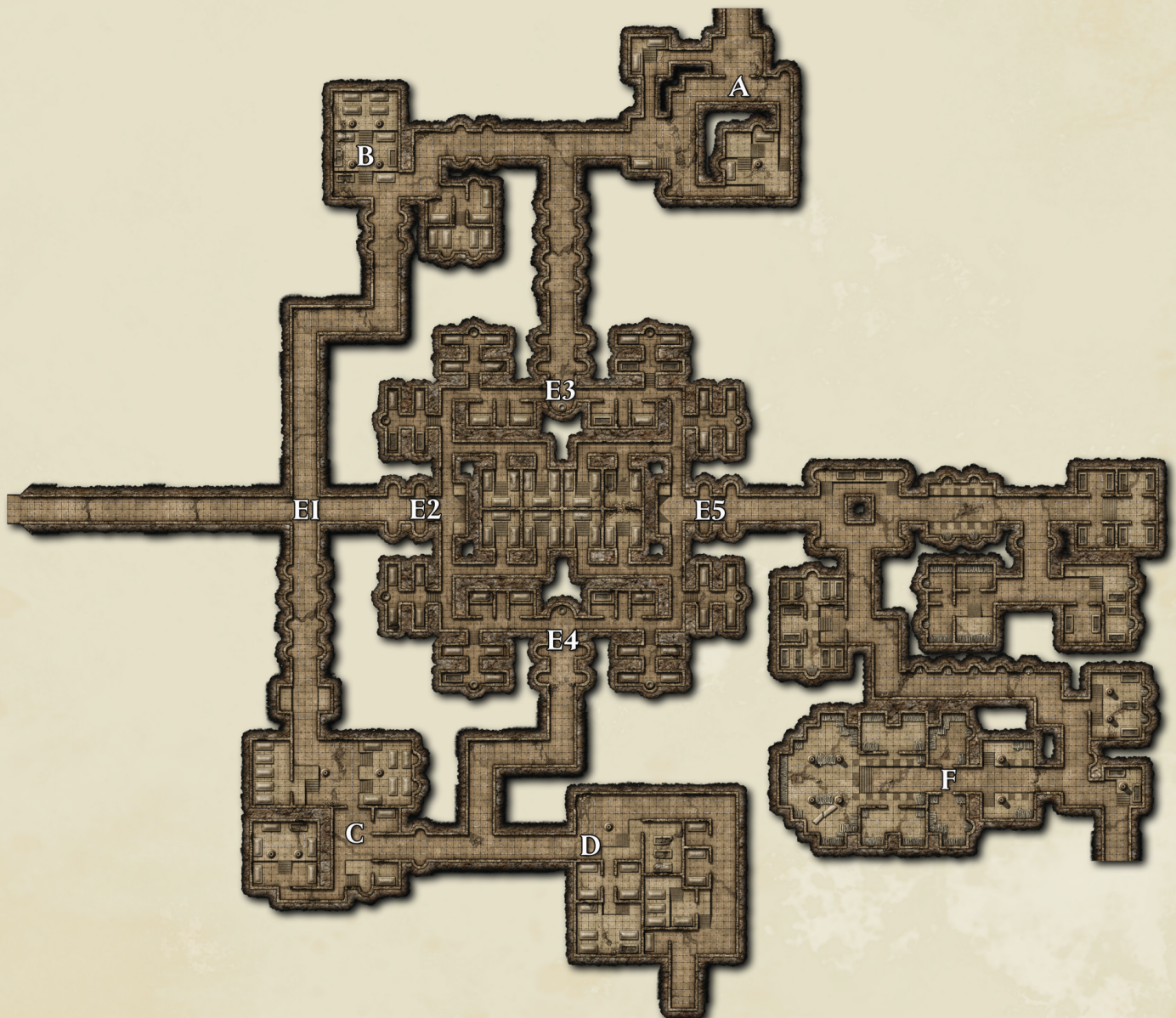
FERAL BONES

The Vlatla Clan have been conducting experiments on how to expand the pool of undead they can command for some time. They've long known how to keep large amounts of undead animated in an area of concentrated necromantic power like the catacomb, but these undead go feral almost immediately after leaving these locuses of power behind, limiting the Vlatla Clan's ability to project force. Their experiments have recently born fruit, as they're able to use the power of the catacomb to drastically enhance their control limit by passing it through undead lieutenants. Early experiments even suggest that they can stack this trick at least twice, maybe even three times, with lieutenants answers to captains answering to commanders answering to an actual Vlatla. Unfortunately, if one of the lieutenants is destroyed, all the undead under their command immediately go feral, but nothing's perfect.

Worse than that manageable drawback, however, is that as of the second week of the game, the Vlatlas have lost control of their lieutenants and they don't know why. The problem originated in the southeast chamber of the catacomb, and they suspect it's due to spider infiltration. They posted a thrall with a few skeleton minions to keep the spiders out of the catacomb, but apparently one of them has slipped through and disturbed the resting place of Dame Callai, and her undead rage has spread throughout the catacomb.

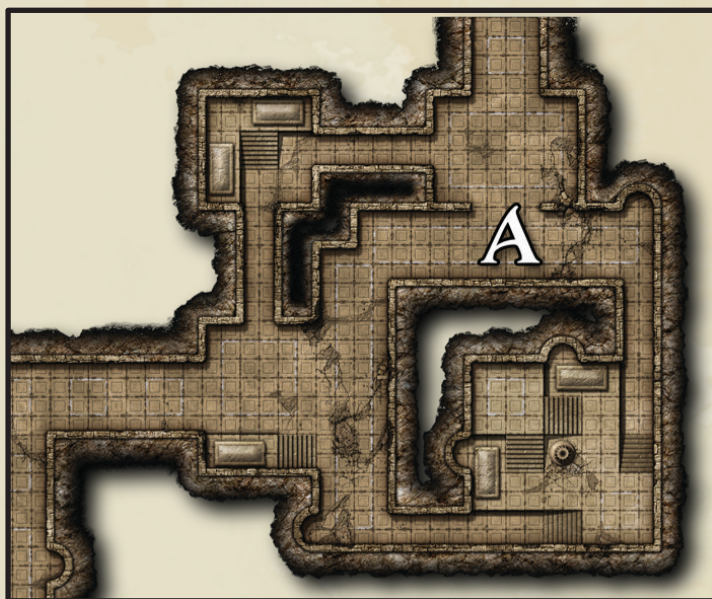
The Vlatla Clan have deanimated most of their minions and placed thralls under the command of various Vlatlas to prevent the restless dead from spreading any further, but if they make a push, they fear the skeletons might slip past and spread their post-mortem fury to the densely packed dead of the central chamber or the ossuary. The Vlatlas would risk losing control of the entire catacomb. Plus, they don't want to jeopardize any of their actually important childer when there's mortal mercenary schmucks who can be paid off to do the job instead.

When the party arrives at the Vlatla catacomb, however, a knight of the Lion arrives just behind and asks them to allow him to help them storm the catacomb—and then consecrate the crypts so that the Vlatlas will be unable to desecrate any more remains in their mad pursuit of power.

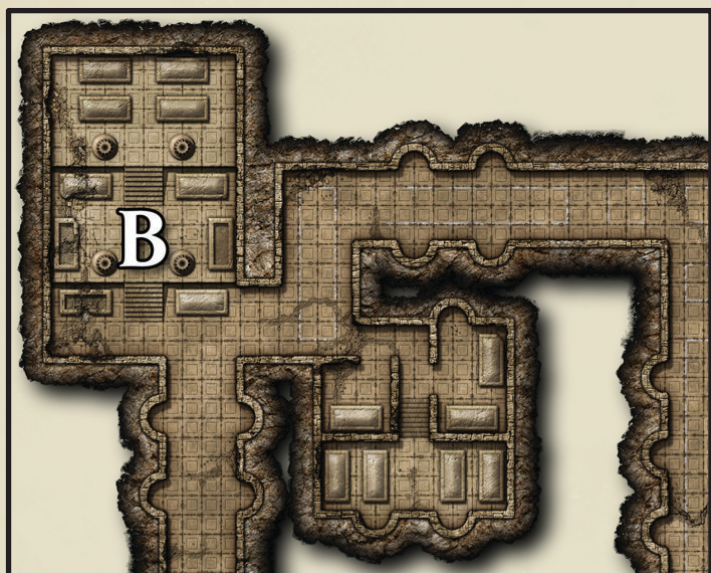


THE CATACOMB

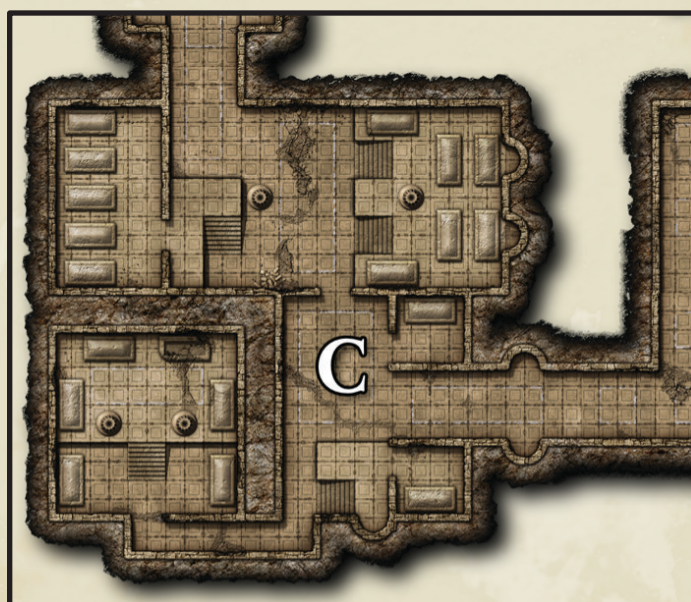
A) The undead minions of Sir Bolivar in the northeast lack any ranged attacks, so they swarm any living creature that approaches the northeast chamber. Two **skeletons** wait in the northwest corner and two more wait in the southeast. Bolivar himself, near the southwest entrance, is usually the first one into combat, but once Bolivar engages, the other skeletons will move to support him (even if they have no line of sight). Once fighting has begun in the northeast chamber, the four **skeletons** on the GM layer interred in niches in the nearby hallway will rise and join the battle from behind. It's worth noting that each niche along the hallway contains a skeleton on the way up, including the other four apparently empty ones (the skeletons from these four niches will not animate under any circumstances—the necromantic power happens to ebb a bit in this stretch of corridor). If the players attempt to smash them all, nothing happens when they attack the southern four niches, but when they attack the northern four (i.e. the ones that actually contain skeleton tokens on the GM layer) the four skeletons will animate and attack.



B) The undead of Sir Sylvas in the northwest will hold their position until the players have engaged the three ordinary **skeletons** on the lower platforms. At this point, the two **skeleton archers** hiding in the tombs to the southeast will emerge to fire on the players from behind while the two **skeletons** in the niche to the south will animate to attack as well. **Sir Sylvas** himself and the two **skeleton archers** on the platform with him will pepper the players with arrowfire for as long as they have line of sight, but neither they nor the three **skeletons** on the lower platforms will abandon their positions to pursue the players if they flee or retreat. The bottommost skeleton will even sit and do nothing while players make ranged attacks from around the corner to the east rather than leaving the line of sight of Sir Sylvas and his two archers.

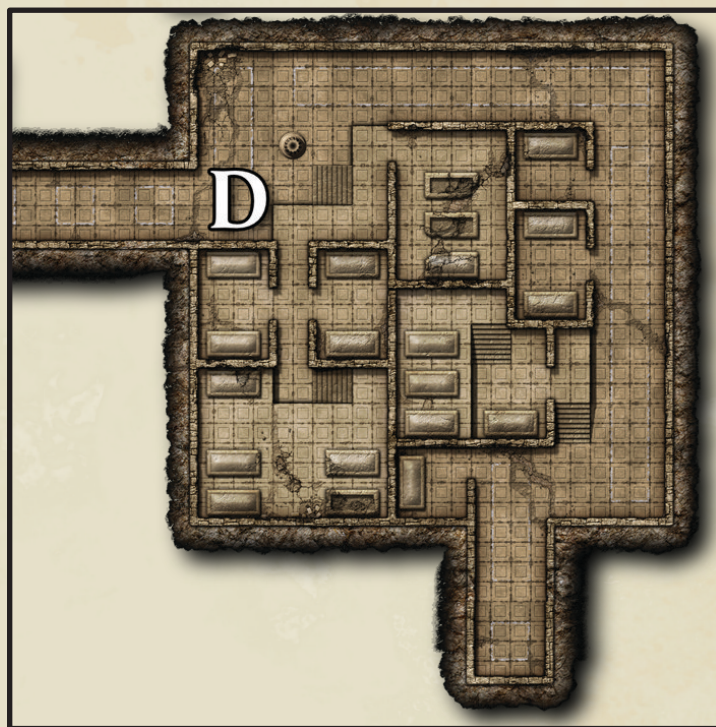


C) The two **skeleton infantry** guarding the northern and eastern entrances to this section are not hidden. They stand in the niches, clearly animate. If the players ignore the infantry from whatever approach they don't take (i.e. if they approach from the east and ignore the infantry in the north or vice-versa), then those infantry will move in behind them when they begin fighting with Sir Tobias. If the players have ignored the four **skeleton archers** in the tombs to the north, they, too, will take up positions to hit the players from behind as best they can, although getting clear lanes of fire isn't exactly easy in Tobias' section of the catacomb and the archers might not be able to get a clear shot on the players until after they emerge from Tobias' tomb, presumably having already re-killed its inhabitants. The corridor leading to the tomb is guarded by another **skeleton archer** standing on a raised platform, while the tomb itself is guarded by an additional two **skeleton infantry** and contains Sir Tobias himself.



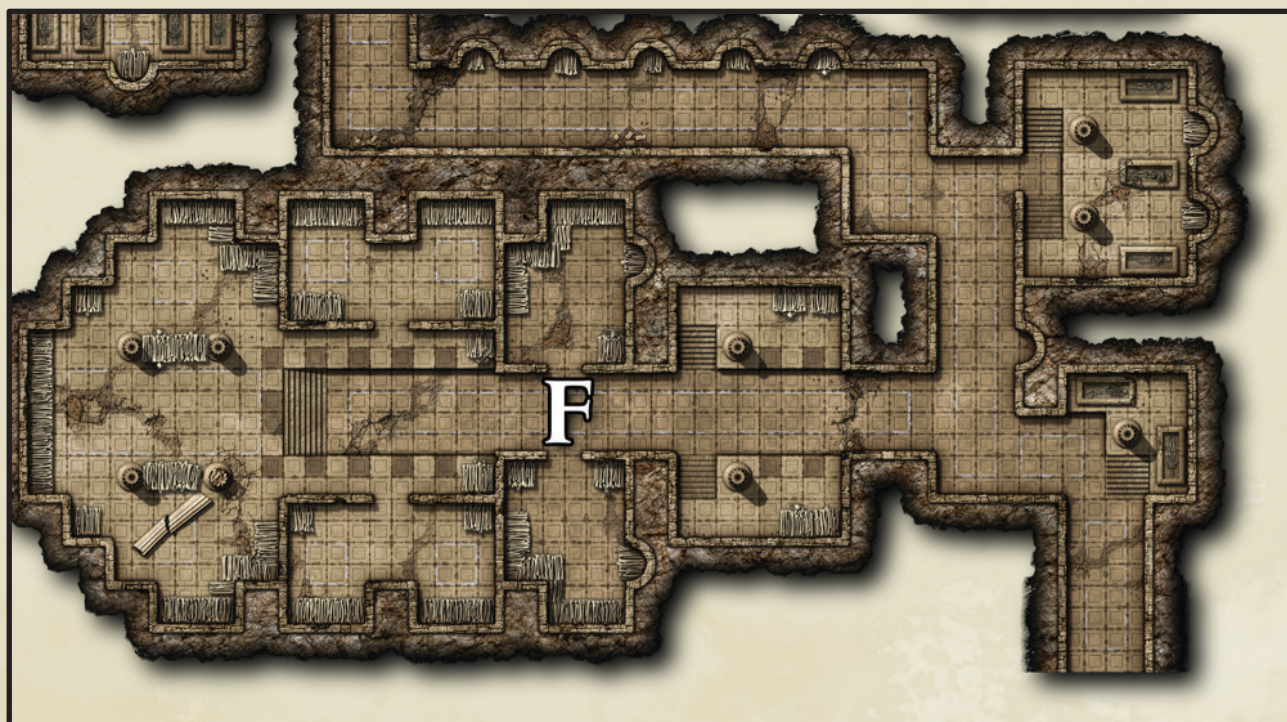
D) Dame Callai, in the southeast, is perfectly happy to sacrifice her skeleton minions to a casting of *burning hands* from herself or one of her skeleton mages if it'll catch the party in the crossfire. Her two **skeletons** and two **skeleton archers** will move to engage the players as they approach from the west and try to catch them while they're still in the hallway so that her two **skeleton mages** can move in behind and cast *burning hands*, hopefully getting most or all of the party in the cone. When the first pair of skeletons have fallen (due to friendly fire as like as not), Dame Callai will call upon her two remaining **skeletons** guarding the southern entrance and will begin moving towards the party to join the fight. The Dame herself will cast *burning hands* on her way in, while the mages (if they're still alive) will switch to *scorching ray* to avoid damaging their mistress. Once she's joined the melee, Dame Callai will switch from spells to attacking with her greatsword. The three archers on the east will not leave their position, as they're prepared for a spider attack at any moment. Dame Callai was buried with a *scroll of scorching ray*, and she'll use it if the fight is still at range by the time she's run out of first level spell slots. Because it is higher level than she can cast in her decrepit state, she will need to make a DC 12 Intelligence check to use it. The three **skeleton archers** guarding the southern entrance will not leave their posts to help Dame Callai, but they will attack any party member who rounds the corner.

None of the undead will lose morale or flee under any circumstances, and they do not deanimate when their leader is slain—the berserk magic of the catacomb will sustain them for as long as they're in its halls.



E) These are various chokepoints that the Vlatlas hold against the skeleton hordes at various points in the game, and are mainly relevant to the progression of the undead crisis as laid out in the **Adventure Overview and Timeline**. E1 is held by Natalia Vlatla, E3 by Nicolae, and E4 by Lidia. Each is accompanied by two Vlatla thralls.

F) Tereza and Petre Vlatla wait here with a pair of thralls, ready to hold court. The main entrance to the catacomb is just to the east.



INSCRIPTIONS

Each of the four undead knights has an inscription upon their tomb briefly recounting the circumstances of their heroic lives and, when appropriate, deaths. Copy/paste each inscription into chat upon encountering the appropriate knight—they're brief enough as to not disrupt the flow much. Players can attempt a DC 15 History check for more information afterwards if they like, in which case copy/paste or read the paragraph of additional information below the inscription. Such an attempt requires no action should players attempt it during a combat, but do not slow things down for players to read—let them read it when it's not their turn and otherwise keep the fight moving.

Attempts to use the knights' past lives to reason with them are made with disadvantage against the unholy hatred for the living that now fills them, but while their personalities have been warped by their unliving state, it is not beyond recognition—they can possibly be talked down.

Sir Bolivar

358–435

*"When starving folk left at death's door,
Came to his hearth, his food implored,
Good health, his charity ensured,
Though poverty he did endure,
His noble place is—be assured—
Through all of time safely secured."*

Sir Bolivar was a mercenary and tradesman who plied the river before the conquest of the goblins to the east. Having a reputation for shady dealings in his youth, he was considered a disgrace to his family, amassing wealth at the cost of his honor. When famine struck, however, Vintaria was unable to keep Ramshorn supplied through the treacherous hills infested with goblin raiders, and the trade route preferred today, which cuts across the river at Karis and then back across from the Great Forest, was deep in goblin hands. Sir Bolivar used his amassed wealth to buy enough food to feed Ramshorn, often from his contacts in goblin territory, and used his smuggling skills to get the food into Ramshorn past goblin pirates and raiders. Between burning his bridges with the goblins and spending much of his wealth feeding an entire town for a full year, Sir Bolivar's wealth was shattered, and he was by now too old to rebuild with mercenary work as he had in his reckless youth. He lived the rest of his days mostly on the gratitude of Ramshorn. Though Sir Bolivar is not thought particularly well of in the west, when he is remembered at all, in Ramshorn he became a local hero.

Sir Sylvas

433–491

*"When lightning flashed and thunder boomed,
Not from storm but wing'd beast instead,
The hero now herein entombed,
Took up his bow and shot it dead."*

Sir Sylvas was a founding member of the Knights of the Wyrd in the immediate aftermath of the goblin conquest. Though his service against the goblins was largely unexceptional, he made his name when the Clans of Tiamat, who had declared war on Vintaria in support of their goblin allies, made one final push to try and liberate the conquered territory. The effort was spearheaded by the Cobalt Clan and led by an adult blue dragon, one of the most powerful

leaders of the Clans. Sylvas' patrol was caught alone by the monster and all but Sylvas killed. Sylvas tracked the monster on its approach to the Eastern Frontier, living off the land behind enemy lines until the dragon was detached from its cohort long enough for him to bring the beast down to the earth with a pair of well-placed shots to its wing joints, and there, making use of camouflage and disorientation to avoid its deadly lightning breath, killed it before it could ever wreak havoc on the Vintarian knights. With their leader and juggernaut slain, the Tiamat attack was repulsed.

Sir Tobias

512–545

*"When an ancient evil provoked to rouse,
To kill all life before its splintered eyes,
The Bear rallied distant from home and spouse,
Stemmed the chitinous horde, and there he died."*

Sir Tobias was grandmaster of the Order of the Bear, dispatched to safeguard the Eastern Frontier after the conclusion of the war with the elves. Already stretched thin across a wide and restless territory and undersupplied, the Bear were in no condition to fight the vermin hive awakened by rebellious elves seeking to seize control of the giant spiders within. With no one else to fight the swarm, the Order of the Bear took up arms and successfully killed every last bug that issued forth from the hive, but only at drastic losses to their own side, including Sir Tobias.

Dame Callai

392–466

*"With sharpened blade and silvered speech,
She turned legions to wagon trains,
Through sorce'rous might she held the breach,
'Till foes would much rather restrain,
Their bloodied claws from all the east,
Commands Callai—let there be peace."*

Grandmaster of the Knights of the Storm, a small order of a dozen or so knights assigned to help guard the Eastern Frontier after the conquest of the goblins in 449. Following their defeat, the Clans of Tiamat constantly harassed and raided the Eastern Frontier, and Callai and her Knights of the Storm worked tirelessly to secure the northern border against their predations. Dame Callai was a warrior polymath who had mastered both steel and magic, as well as a competent stateswoman and diplomat. After establishing herself as a force to be reckoned with in early skirmishes between with the Clans, she was able to negotiate a long term peace in 457, establishing the limits of both Vintarian and Tiamat territory at their current positions and leaving a large stretch of no man's land—largely infertile but valuable to trade—as belonging to the merchants of both nations and administered by the crown of neither. This compromise left the borders far from one another and helped diffuse tensions along the northern border for generations—though in the past fifteen years the Clans have been giving less and less heed to Callai's treaty.

TREASURE

Each of the four tombs has some burial gifts for looting. Sir Bolivar was buried in cloth of gold vestments, a final gift of gratitude from the people of Ramshorn to honor his passing. Sir Sylvas is buried in a black velvet mask stitched with silver thread, an ornate recreation of the simple mask he wore while ranging through the wilderness north of the Frontier, and a potion of animal friendship that he's not going to be using unless the spiders make some real in-roads into the catacombs. Sir Tobias still wears his wedding ring, a simple gold band. These three are worth a default of 25 gold by default, though the price players get out of Goldblum will vary. Dame Callai was buried in a silk robe with gold embroidery, the ceremonial robe she wore (along with her armor) in most public appearances during and after her peace negotiations with the Clans of Tiamat. This is worth 250 gold by default. She also carries a *scroll of scorching ray*. She will most likely end up in melee before she has a chance to use it.

Aftermath

The Vlatla Clan is perfectly happy to let the players keep whatever loot they've stumbled across in the catacombs for themselves in addition to the 1,000 gold pieces they offer as reward if the party came here after being offered a job by Lidia (most likely). The Vlatlas do not begrudge the loss of treasure, as they mainly see it as a means of getting mortals to do what they want. So long as the party is doing what the Vlatlas want, they can have as much treasure as they can find. The Vlatlas will be significantly more displeased by the party helping the Lions consecrate the tomb to prevent them from raising any minions. In fact, if the party has helped the Vlatla Clan secure the egg chamber in the spider nest, the Vlatlas will instruct their spiders to consider the party hostile if they helped consecrate the catacombs (though they will not admit to it). Consecrating the catacomb will give the players their first point of favor with the Order of the Lion, while destroying the four undead knights without consecrating their crypts will give the players their first point of favor with the Vlatla Clan.

SAHUAGIN

WHAT ARE THEY DOING HERE?

The sahuagin have come to the river splitting Ramshorn from the Great Forest in order to keep an eye on both the primary vermin hive in the Forest and the spider offshoots that have taken root in the Ramshorn wilderness, taking up residence in a temple flooded along with its outbuildings when the river changed course. Vermin (giant ants and spiders and the like) were created in the primordial age of the world, before the time of the elves, used to prosecute ancient wars that now only the most ancient creatures can remember. The sahuagin are one of the few civilizations to remember their original purpose and that they can rapidly adapt themselves to new environments—like underwater, for example—if they run out of food in a biome.

BEHAVIOR

The sahuagin have a hatred for those who do not live in the deeps of the ocean (including even aquatic creatures who live closer to the surface). Sahuagin attack any surface dwellers on sight and will not back down until dead unless they lose at least half their number and have not been driven to frenzy by the smell of non-sahuagin blood. As any nick or wound on any of the players would be enough to incite such a frenzy, this is unlikely, but not altogether impossible, particularly if the players strike hard before the sahuagin's first turn. Other foes rely on unit synergies to threaten the party, but the sahuagin are more straightforward: They have high HP, many attacks, and do lots of damage.

A) Three **sahuagin guard** the entrance to the sunken temple here.

B) In a cell with less than a foot of water stagnating at the bottom, the sahuagin have strung up a mermaid. The cell is guarded by two **sahuagin**. When the merfolk noticed the sahuagin passing through their waters towards the river, they pursued to investigate what they were up to, but were captured. Most were killed, but for this captive in particular the sahuagin reserved a crueler fate, dragging her back to their lair and chaining her up just above the water. Though she can breathe air, she needs water to survive, and without it she slowly dehydrates over the course of twelve hours. The sahuagin dunk her back in for just a few moments every few hours to keep her alive, prolonging her torment. She is in a near-constant state of delirium, but if freed from her chains and lowered (or even allowed to collapse) into the water below, she will recover her senses after ten or fifteen minutes, and from there be able to drag herself back to the pool near the entrance, and subsequently up the stairs and out into the stream. She does not know the sahuagin's purpose here, but does know that this small group was the only one to pass through merfolk territory on the coasts when last she heard from them (which may be several weeks ago if the party has delayed coming here).

C) The **giant octopus** the sahuagin keep in the southeast is a pet and trained attack cephalopod. It will attack any non-sahuagin it sees. After losing half its health it will retreat...provided it has been moved to a location it can retreat from. Without the assistance of its more intelligent owners, the octopus can't leave the water without leaving itself a sitting duck for any pursuers, and it knows it, and will thus fight to the death rather than make a doomed effort to flee across land. For the same reason, it will make no effort to pursue anyone who leaves. The octopus is a mascot for the whole patrol, but the one **sahuagin** in the chamber containing it has a particular affection for it. A party making a stealthy approach will see the sahuagin feeding clams to the octopus, and when the sahuagin is engaged, the octopus will leap to his defense with a fury born of affection.

D) This shrine is guarded by three **sahuagin**. The sahuagin (particularly those guarding this chamber, but also in general) have a fanatical devotion to the priestess caste of their society and will not retreat from battle under any circumstances while the **sahuagin priestess** in this chamber is in danger. For her part, the priestess is hardly even capable of retreat, boxed in as she is in a corner of the flooded temple, and will not retreat from battle until slain even if she is lured into doing battle in a more open area.

E) Two **sahuagin** lurk in some of the ruined chambers here, resting between patrols.



F) The large ruined chamber here is home to two **sahuagin** and a **merrow** they've recruited to help guard the final chamber.

G) The **shoggoth** in this chamber was brought for religious purposes. It is an avatar of their abyssal god and will consume everything that enters its chamber, even other sahuagin, unless placated by the sahuagin priestess. The sahuagin do not enter its chamber without her. Underneath the shoggoth den is an underwater passage leading to an underground river, which can be found with a DC 15 Investigation check while searching the area. This river goes on through pitch darkness for several hundred feet, but if the party follows it long enough, they'll come up in LOCATION 9 in the goblinoid cave. See the **Hobgoblins** section for details.

TREASURE

The sahuagin have no intention of conducting any kind of trade with the surface dwellers nor with one another during their journey. Each sahuagin carries 2d6 gold pieces as wages to spend once they get back to civilization, but there is no treasure hoard waiting at the end as in many of the other dungeons. The sahuagin priestess does wear a *ring of x-ray vision* (of little use to her during the storming of the dungeon, as while she could use it to see through walls, the only reason she'll know to do so is if she has already heard a commotion and been alerted to intruders) and carries 4d6 gold instead. The merrow is likewise overpaid with 3d6 gold.

AFTERMATH

The main body of the shoggoth's corpse dissolves into a bubbling pile of black ooze in its final spasms, but various sliced off appendages remain. These might be valuable to Goldblum, however if the party attempts to sell them to him, he'll tell them that the Orders of the Wyrld and Third Eye tend to take an interest in these, an interest as keen as any dagger, and Goldblum would prefer not to try and start a bidding war between them that might turn into an actual, real war. He suggests the party turn it over to one of them.

The shoggoth tentacles can be used in powerful magic rituals, and the Third Eye is keenly interested in recovering them. The Order of the Wyrld is equally keenly interested in making sure the Third Eye don't get the materials they need to make another chimeric abomination to unleash on the wilds. They're still not sure the owlbeats won't wreck everything, and while the Third Eye has promised to exterminate rather than release their failed experiments in the future, their successful experiments are still going to be bred in large numbers and sent to war, and some of those are inevitably going to escape. More than that, the Wyrld want the shoggoth totally obliterated on principle—if this thing has any place in the natural order, it is deep, deep below the sea, not up here on the surface, and crossing it with surface creatures would create a creature that cannot help but upset the balance of nature wherever it goes, belonging in neither the woods of the Eastern Frontier nor the abyssal depths of the sahuagin.

The Third Eye counterargue that the beasts created from the shoggoth's dismembered bits could be effective beasts of war and vital to holding the kingdom together in a tumultuous time, and whatever strays do escape the Wyrd can hunt down, since that is their job. Without wizards and sorcerers to clean up after, what do the Wyrd even do, hang out in the woods and make an exhaustive catalog of which plants can be fermented? The party will gain their first point of favor with whichever faction they turn the tentacles over to. The Order of the Wyrd will also grant the party their first favor point if they destroy the tentacles on their own initiative.

Once the sahuagin priestess and the shoggoth have been slain, surviving sahuagin will retreat to report back to the deeps. This won't happen immediately, but once the players have taken a long rest, all remaining sahuagin tokens in the wilderness as well as any hiding out in parts of their lair map the players didn't visit should be removed.



HOBGOBLINS

MOTIVATION

The goblins at Ramshorn are refugees from the Great Forest who fled here with Sir Dagai. Sir Dagai, a rogue wizard of the Third Eye, has promised to grant the goblins strength enough to stand up to the knights of Vintaria and reclaim their homeland east of the river. Sir Dagai has used his enchanting powers to retain the goblins' loyalty despite the...unfortunate results of some of his earlier experiments. Sir Dagai is a clever manipulator and has used the goblins' own desire to believe in their independence and self-determination against them. When his charm effects wear off, he convinces them that they were never charmed at all, but followed him because they believe in his vision of a better, stronger goblin-kind. When the goblins decide not to immediately flee or rebel, as much because it is easier not to as because they are convinced, it is easier for them to convince themselves that they remain because they really do believe in Sir Dagai's vision, and not because they were too scared to fight or flee in the moment.

The second phase of Sir Dagai's indoctrination was more sinister still, asking his goblins to participate directly in his brutal experiments as he sought the perfect formula. They've come this far, haven't they, having fled their homes and taken up arms against Vintaria, are they really going to throw it all away just because Sir Dagai has begun to take desperate measures for these desperate times? Once the goblins have participated in his more horrific experiments, Sir Dagai can hold this over their head as well. All the terrible things they've done to one another, it has to be worth something in the end, doesn't it? Those who did try to flee or resist were accused of collaborating with the Vintarians and hunted down. With the most rebellious dead and those left behind complicit in their deaths, Sir Dagai's control was cemented.

The control Sir Dagai now exercises over his goblinoid minions is no longer founded on charm magic nor even on the promise of a better future for goblin-kind, though the success of his experiments have certainly made the latter far more compelling than when he was just a transmuter with a silver tongue. The goblins are loyal to Sir Dagai because they have already done horrible things for him, and because he supplies to them the lies they tell themselves about why they did so. It was for the future of goblin-kind, or out of spite for the traitors who tried to sell them out to Vintaria. Ultimately, the goblinoids know that whether or not this is true isn't really what matters. What matters is justifying what they've done.

Sir Dagai has successfully recreated the ritual that can transform goblins into hobgoblins and bugbears, lost since the Empire of Culora fell centuries ago, but he is only making some headway on improving the formula. The hobgoblins are disciplined and focused soldiers, and the bugbears cunning and powerful ambush predators. Each was once a goblin, and have been selected from amongst the most loyal of Sir Dagai's followers for promotion. Sir Dagai has additionally been able to transform Galdul, the leader of an attempted desertion, into a fire hobgoblin. He does not intend to let Galdul live for long, but for now Sir Dagai holds him prisoner to make sure the transformation is stable. If nothing terrible happens after a few months, Dagai plans to kill him and begin using the procedure on his most loyal hobgoblin minions.

IN THE CAVERN

Throughout the cavern, hobgoblins stand guard, but goblins and bugbears tend to lay about chatting, gambling, or telling stories unless they hear trouble coming. The caverns echo, so they will hear trouble coming a mile away unless the players are specifically attempting to be stealthy, which means they will most likely encounter these goblinoids in their ambush positions. If they are being stealthy, however, then while the goblinoids' position in the rooms is the same (i.e. 7B still contains one bugbear and two goblins), their behavior will be radically different. Most notably, none of the goblinoids waiting in ambush will be hiding if they don't know the cavern is under attack, and no check will be required to spot them.

Any goblinoids laying in ambush must roll their Stealth against the party's passive Perception just like normal. This is not mentioned in each individual entry, but that should not be taken to mean that any of these ambushes are automatically successful.



1) This is the cavern entrance. Three **goblins** and one **bugbear** are in ambush positions outside and will attempt to remain hidden, rolling their *Stealth* against the party's passive *Perception*. If they remain hidden (or if the party ignores them anyway), they'll wait until the party has engaged the hobgoblins in melee and then attack from hiding.

The yawning mouth of the caverns is guarded by three **hobgoblin rebels** commanded by a **hobgoblin lieutenant**. The hobgoblins will demand anyone who approaches halt, and then tell them that these caverns belong to the goblins now, and non-goblinoids aren't welcome. If any party member moves to an adjacent position, the hobgoblins will ready their weapons, demand they leave immediately, and attack if the party does not immediately retreat. They will also attack if the party keeps their distance but repeatedly refuses to leave the entrance area of the caverns.

If a fight breaks out, the bugbears and hobgoblins will fight to the death, but the goblins will flee as soon as their bigger allies are killed or they are cut off from them.

2) This main hub is a common area where the goblinoids gather for rallies and religious services. Between such services (which probably includes during the players' attack) six **goblins** and two **bugbears** hang about, and will take up ambush positions surrounding the entire cavern if they hear trouble coming from location 1. The goblinoids will try to wait until the party is near the center (just about under the giant 2 on the map, in fact) to spring their ambush. Bugbears will engage in melee will goblins fire from a distance and then use *Nimble Escape* to hide again. An additional three **goblins** in the southwest corner will run onto the bridge at the south side and open fire, but once at least one of them has died to return fire, they will flee towards 3 to alert the hobgoblins sleeping there. Once the bugbears are all dead, any remaining goblins will flee down the nearest corridor for help, which probably means heading towards 6. The cliff walls here can be climbed in combat for fifteen feet of movement with a DC 15 *Athletics* check. If a character fails, they lose all remaining movement, though they may use their action to try again. Outside of combat, one character can boost another up the wall, and then the character up top can give the one below a hand getting up. This requires no checks, although it does require ten or fifteen seconds—more than enough time for hobgoblin reinforcements incoming from location 3 to arrive.



3) These are the sleeping chambers, with a sparring niche just to the south marked with a circle of black soot from a half-burnt log taken from a campfire. The twelve **hobgoblin rebels** and one **hobgoblin lieutenant** in the sleeping niches and main sleeping cavern are all asleep, and will require an action to arm themselves and half their movement to rise from prone if a fight breaks out. The two **hobgoblin rebels** and **hobgoblin lieutenant** in the sparring niche are awake and will respond normally. The hobgoblins will not retreat until they've lost half their number, including both their lieutenants. If they do retreat, they will attempt to retreat through 2 towards 8 if possible, but as the party is likely threatening (if not completely blocking) that exit, they may instead retreat towards



4) This is the main wolf pen of the camp. The two **goblins** here are trainers, and will sic their five wolves on the party when they see them approach.



5) Sir Dagai's quarters are here, guarded by a single **hobgoblin rebel**. Backed into a corner, the hobgoblin has little choice but to fight to the death. If the party demands surrender, they may roll Intimidate against the guard's Wisdom save, and they get advantage on the check for the guard being backed into a corner by a significantly larger enemy force.

Sir Dagai's living space in the sleeping cavern contains unfinished correspondence with an unknown ally written in Gultari. This ally has been supplying Sir Dagai with vital ingredients for his ongoing experiments as well as intelligence on the movement of forces throughout the kingdom. Recent letters inform Sir Dagai of the approach of the Order of the Lion, older ones broach the possibility of an alliance between Dagai's goblin rebels and the elven rebels who have moved into the nearby caverns with their spider minions, unceremoniously brought to an end when the elven rebels were devoured. The letter is not signed, but whatever individual or organization has been sending them has thorough enough knowledge of the military and political situation throughout Vintaria as to suggest they are well-traveled on both sides of the river.

Any player who speaks Gultari and reads the letters should be asked to make an Investigation check. If they hit a DC of 10, they can identify that the writer of the letters isn't a native speaker, and if they also speak Draconic, they can tell that the writer of the letters speaks Draconic as their native language. If they hit a DC of 20, they can tell that the writer of the letter speaks Draconic even if they don't speak Draconic themselves.



6) Two **hobgoblins** here guard a pit where two **wolves** are kept half-starved for feeding uppity goblins to. The two **goblins** nearby are the trainers. If a fight breaks out and the goblins are at all threatened, they will retreat to the nearby crevice and there fight to the death, having nowhere else to run. The hobgoblins will also fight to the death. The niche containing the wolves is blocked with wooden bars, but it's not hard to cut through them with steel weapons, nor to shoot the wolves to death from the safety of the bars. They won't really do anything if left alive, however.



7) Each of these locations holds a bugbear ambush. 7A and 7C contain three **bugbears** and 7B contains one **bugbear** and two **goblins**. The bugbears positioned here will fight to the death, however any goblin allies nearby will flee as soon as the bugbear(s) is dead. The goblins flee towards the next bugbear ambush, hoping to chain them together, and if all the ambushes are thwarted, will finally flee to 9 and join the goblins there.





8) The four **hobgoblin rebels** at the northern entrance to this stepped quarry (two each guarding the northern and northwestern entrance, though they are so close to each other that they behave like one group of four rather than two groups of two) will retreat down the switchbacks if they take even a single casualty, retreating to the lieutenant's group of four **hobgoblins** plus the one **hobgoblin lieutenant** himself to rally there. Once they have the party engaged at that position, the four goblins and one **bugbear** will emerge from hiding in one of the niches behind the party to attack the flank. The goblins will flee—given their position, possibly towards LOCATION 2—if the bugbear is killed, and the hobgoblins will flee towards 10 if their lieutenant and at least half their number have been slain—not counting the additional two **hobgoblin rebels** who guard the southern entrance, who will flee with the rest of them if the rest of the hobgoblins begin to flee.



9) Characters following the underground river from the **sahuagin** lair emerge here (see the **Sahuagin** section for details). The two **hobgoblin rebels** guarding the northwest entrance to this chamber will fall back quickly to rally with the one **hobgoblin lieutenant** and additional two **hobgoblin rebels** on the other side of the northern bridge, attempting to use the bridge as a chokepoint

against any intruders while the four goblins in the center fire on them. This first pack of hobgoblins will fight to the death, but the goblins will flee as soon as the hobgoblins are cleared out or party members have broken through to attack any of the goblins in melee. The goblins will flee across the central bridge and then further across the southern bridge to join the two **goblins** at the southern end of the chamber, and fire arrows at anyone who engages the two **hobgoblin rebels** in the southwest corner, between the central and southern bridges. If the southwest hobgoblins are slain, the goblins will retreat still further towards 10. If all the other hobgoblins in the chamber have been slain, the two **hobgoblin rebels** at the southeast exit will flee towards 10 with the goblins.

If this chamber is approached from the other side, it runs in reverse. The hobgoblins still attempt to bottle up characters by using the bridges as chokepoints and goblins still shoot arrows at them from across the river and flee as soon as they're at risk of being attacked in melee, but it's the hobgoblins at the northwest corner who finally give up and flee, rallying at the ambush at 7C to fight with the bugbears.



10) Here in the southernmost cavern are the geysers where Dagai performs his transmutation experiments. Geysers are prepared with various alchemical ingredients and ritual spells, and then goblins are dipped inside and pulled out. Over the next several days, they usually develop unsustainable, cancerous mutations and die, although some of them are just turned into hobgoblins or bugbears to help maintain Dagai's stock of these more powerful minions (this is the ultimate origin of the hobgoblins and bugbears, although these transformed goblinoids are perfectly capable of normal reproduction and this is where most hobgoblins and bugbears come from). Dagai has what seems to be a working formula for fire hobgoblins, however—a second stage transformation built atop the already transformed hobgoblin. So far, his only success has been with Galdul, the deserter he captured and used as a guinea pig. The transformation is initially successful, although Sir Dagai is keeping Galdul prisoner a few months to make sure there aren't delayed side effects before he dunks any of his loyal hobgoblin minions into the fire geyser.

There are no less than fourteen goblins in this chamber, overseeing the experiments and either hoping they won't be dunked in next, or hoping they will be, and they'll be one of the successful experiments. There are also two **hobgoblin rebels** guarding the northern entrance, another two **hobgoblin rebels** guarding the southern entrance, and a reserve force of three **hobgoblin rebels** led by one hobgoblin lieutenant who will reinforce either entrance should it fall under attack. The one **bugbear** hiding at the southern entrance will wait until the party has engaged the hobgoblin rebels to attack, preferably from behind, prioritizing lightly armored backline characters (these are probably sorcerers, wizards, or warlocks, whom the bugbears will want to kill before they can cast any deadly spells). **Sir Dagai** himself is the major difference between this fight and earlier battles. On the first round he will cast *haste* on the nearby hobgoblin lieutenant, and on the second he will cast *blink* on himself. From his third turn on, he will cast *sleep* so long as his concentration is still held by the *haste* on the hobgoblin lieutenant.

Sir Dagai carries a *scroll of sleep* which he will use if he manages to live long enough to burn through all his first level spell slots, and if he's still alive after using the scroll he'll begin casting *sleep* from higher level spell slots if he has any left. If his concentration is broken or the hobgoblin lieutenant dies, he will cast *enlarge* on a bugbear, or if none are in range on the hobgoblin lieutenant, or if the lieutenant isn't in range on a hobgoblin. If there are no bugbears or hobgoblins in range, Sir Dagai won't waste any second level spells on mere goblins and will cast *hold person* instead, directing any surviving goblins to serve as his meatshields, something which most of them will comply with, as they're all well entrenched in his cult of personality by now. Sir Dagai carries two *potions of healing*. If he is reduced to under half health (11 HP or less) while not threatened by any foes, he will move to cover from any ranged enemies he can see and drink one of the potions. If he is in melee range of an enemy when reduced under half health, he will continue casting spells as normal in an effort to either directly put the melee enemy to sleep or buff up a minion to take out the enemy for him.

The **red jester** in the geyser cavern has been sent by the Lunatic Court to retrieve Galdul, the hobgoblin who attempted to desert with several other goblinoids back to the main goblin force in the Great Forest, abandoning Sir Dagai's position in the experimental geyser cavern. Galdul was caught and most of his conspirators used in experiments which failed. Galdul has the fortune of having survived, and is kept half-starved to see if there are any lingering side effects of the transformation before Sir Dagai starts popping more hobgoblins into the geysers to turn them fiery. Some of Galdul's allies escaped and informed the Lunatic Court, who've come to kill Sir Dagai and spring Galdul from prison. The red jester claims to be here to coordinate an assault on the Order of the Lion with the goblin rebels in the Great Forest, but he's actually here for an assassination and a rescue. When the party attacks, the red jester will wait until any nearby hobgoblins have engaged them and then seize the moment to try and kill Sir Dagai. Once Dagai is dead, the jester will flee to the prison niche where Galdul is held and hole up there, killing anyone who attempts to attack him but otherwise staying out of the fight.

TREASURE

Though the goblin ambushes are intended to weaken Ramshorn and Order of the Bear forces until the goblins can overrun them, they nevertheless result in a lot of looting and the goblins have amassed a fairly large cache of treasure. They have a total of 2700 copper, 1300 silver, 10 gold, and 6 platinum, a silver ewer, a small gold bracelet, a small mirror set in a painted wooden frame, an embroidered silk handkerchief, and a matched set of gold locket with painted portraits inside that presumably belonged to a pair of lovers before the hobs stuck 'em. Presuming players have done the sensible thing and taken care of Sir Brander before wandering off into goblin territory, they presumably already have an exchange rate for these kinds of non-coin goods set up with Goldblum already, although if they don't they'll need to haggle over exactly how much of the standard 25 gp per item they're going to get out of this—players may also wish to renegotiate.

Sir Dagai carries two *scrolls of friends*, but as he already knows that cantrip, he will not have any reason to use them. In theory, he plans on teaching one of his lieutenants magic so they can use the scrolls, but he doesn't get around to it within the time frame of the campaign. If Sir Dagai was killed before he could use his *sleep* scroll or one or both of his healing potions, the players can take them for themselves.

AFTERMATH

Galdul is held captive in a small alcove used as a prison. He is half-starved and suffering from four levels of exhaustion. If the red jester survives—including if he fell in combat but made his death saves or was stabilized/revived by the party—he will go to Galdul, help him to his feet, and begin escorting him out of the cavern. The red jester won't immediately explain himself, but being outnumbered at least three to one by the party (unless they took serious casualties in the fight), he'll explain why he was sent here if they try to stop him. If the party allows the red jester to escape with Galdul, they gain their first point of favor with the Lunatic Court. The red jester will fight to the death to defend Galdul, but stands little chance of surviving a confrontation with any party strong enough to defeat Sir Dagai and his minions. His death can easily be passed off as being at the hands of the goblins if the players don't want to give the Lunatics *cassus belli*.

The Order of the Third Eye may have contacted the party about bringing Galdul to them. If the party promised to do so, then Melchior will be waiting in Ramshorn to collect Galdul. Once the party turns Galdul over to them, they will gain their first point of favor with the Third Eye.

If Galdul is killed, no one is happy, although neither the Lunatic Court nor the Order of the Third Eye will treat it as an act of war.

SPIDERS

ECOLOGY

The Ramshorn spiders are parasocial creatures, meaning they recognize one another as friendly and will stick together for strength in numbers but do not directly communicate or coordinate with one another (apparently the main definition of “parasocial interaction” involves people responding to television celebrities as though there were real interaction between them—we’re not talking about that).

The bulk of the nest is taken up by various hunting spiders. These are wolf spiders, tiger spiders, jumping spiders, tarantulas, and spitter spiders, who leave the nest and find food. Tarantulas and tiger spiders are the most critical to the nest ecology, because they tend to kill large animals which they can only consume part of in one sitting. When the tarantula or tiger spider leaves, the nest spiders will descend upon the remains.

Most nest spiders are funnel weavers, well attuned to the vibrations of the webs that they coat the walls of the nest in so that they can feel whenever one of the hunters brings back prey. Funnel weavers are the nest’s defense force, following the same vibrations to intercept any intruders who’ve stumbled into the nest. A likewise critical component to nest defense are the recluse spiders. Hiding deeper in the nest and feeding almost exclusively on tarantula leftovers, recluse spiders would prefer to run when confronted until chased deep in the nest. Here, in the nest’s heart, with nowhere else to run, recluse spiders rally and make a frenzied attack on any intruders, providing a lethal last line of defense near the egg chamber.

Critical to nest construction are the trapdoor spiders, some of the smallest and weakest spiders. They burrow new tunnels for themselves, and when the old ones fill out, other spiders move in to take the trapdoor burrows, pushing them out to make new burrows and so expand the nest. Eventually, tarantulas will lumber along, widening the burrows to make a larger nest, making them both nest spiders (important to nest construction) and hunting spiders (important to feeding nest occupants).

The largest of all the spiders is the huntsman, technically also a hunting spider but deserving a category of its own for how massive it is. The huntsman spider is highly mobile and aggressive, giving it a punishing metabolism that makes it difficult for it to sustain itself. It does not tend to bring much food in, because most of its prey is much smaller than the huntsman, even full grown bucks, which means the huntsman usually eats them entirely in one sitting. The primary contribution of the huntsman is egg defense. A huntsman female will claim the largest tarantula nest for itself and its eggs. The other spiders will lay their eggs in the same chamber to benefit from the huntsman female’s protection. When giant spider nests self-destruct, it is often because a huntsman has run out of food and begun devouring the smaller spiders instead.

AT THE ENTRANCE

Just inside the nest, a knight of the Order of the Wyrd and a Vlatla thrall are in a stand-off. Upon seeing the players approach, the Vlatla thrall immediately approaches and asks them help her secure the egg chamber for her masters. The spiders are vermin, a type of ancient, organic war machine from a primordial age. Being designed creatures, the Vlatlas believe that surely they must have been designed to occupy territory, not destroy it, and that they could seize control of the spider swarm with access to the nest chamber. The elves managed to control the spiders at least for a while, and the Vlatlas are far more capable arcanists than a bunch of ragtag rebels fleeing destruction. The thrall asks the party to clear the nest chamber out but leave the eggs intact for the Vlatlas to experiment upon. This would indebt the Vlatla Clan to the players while at the same time making them powerful allies.

The knight of the Wyrd demands the spiders be destroyed. As the Vlatla thrall says, they are designed creatures, a perversion of the natural order, who devour ecosystems and drive out all other life. Nature exists in a harmony that sustains all who are a part of it, including the humanoids of Vintaria. If the spiders destroy that harmony, everyone who isn’t devoured will starve. The Vlatlas might think they can control the spiders, but they have no guarantee they won’t end up exactly the same as the elf rebels did, and then the spiders will run rampant and unrestrained once again. The eggs in the heart of the nest must be destroyed.

The players can choose to side with the Vlatla thrall or the Wyrd knight immediately, in which case the snubbed quest giver will withdraw without a fight (though promising the party will regret throwing their lot in with the other). If the party insists on having a fight anyway, the one they’ve allied with will help them, but insist they keep quiet about it afterwards, for fear of starting an all-out war. The party’s new ally will not accompany them outside of the nest, but will help them clear the nest, and after the egg chamber is secured or destroyed, will report back to their leaders, giving the party their first point of favor with the respective faction. If the party does not accept the aid of either the thrall or the Wyrd knight, then they can still gain a point of favor with the Wyrd if they destroy the nest and then take a long rest. They do not get a point of favor, nor is the spider threat ended, if they clean out the nest chamber without ever informing the Vlatla Clan that it’s empty and ready to be claimed.



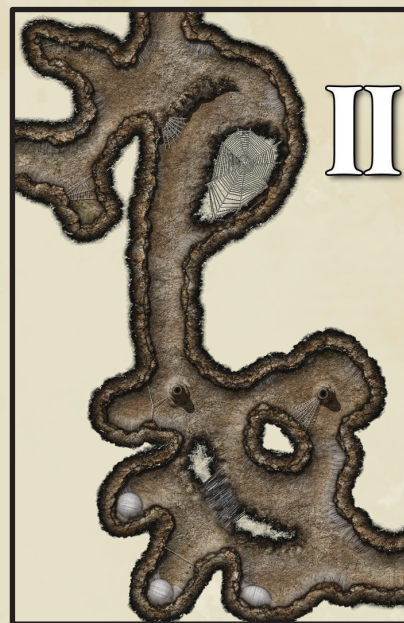


IN THE NEST

I) The entrance cavern here contains three **trapdoor spiders** and two webbed corpses. The trapdoor spiders don't swarm, just pop out to grab whatever's stepping near their burrow, which means one will pop out, and while fighting it, the party will likely find the others. In addition to these three, the tokens for a half-dozen more are barely visible in the same area. It is not recommended that you run these when playing out of the PDF. In the virtual tabletop version, each bit of the map revealed feels like progress, which prevents the large number of trivial encounters in this region from becoming grating. Without the map, the players have no idea how close they are to the end of the nest, which means repeated battles with easy foes quickly become dull.

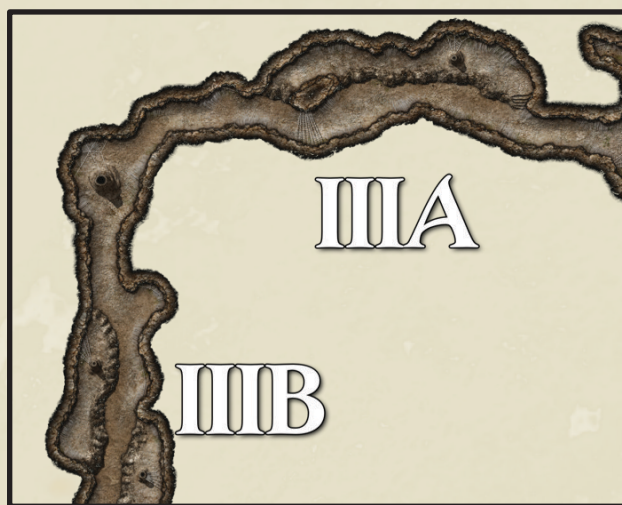
Past the trapdoor spiders' outer burrows, the path splits to the north and south. Down the south corridor, players will encounter two **jumping spiders** and a **funnel weaver**. The jumping spiders will leap out of the darkness, aiming to jump straight over the front line to land on unarmored back line party members, while the funnel weaver will immediately attack whatever disturbs its web head-on. Like the trapdoors, a few more jumping spider ambush spots can be seen in the area, but it is better to skip them when playing out of the PDF. Following the southern path will take the party underground to **LOCATION X**.

Down the north corridor, a small nest of nine **wolf spiders** and a single **funnel weaver** lurk, and will swarm on any party that approaches. The corridors here are tall enough for the spiders to crawl overhead and drop down at the back of the party if the front lines run out of room, but not tall enough to avoid taking reaction attacks as they do so. This chamber also contains a webbed corpse.



II) Two **funnel weavers** lurk in a web near the southern entrance (towards I). One more **funnel weaver** lurks to the west. If one is attacked, the other will come running. This area also contains a total of seven **trapdoor spiders**, with one or two popping up each round of combat. If the combat ends with some of the trapdoor spiders still hiding, let them stay hidden. Without other, moderately threatening spiders, the trapdoors are no longer interesting to fight. If it is week 2 or later, in addition to the obvious routes south to I and west to IIIA, there is a northern route that leads to Dame Callai's tomb at location at **LOCATION D** of the Catacomb (see the section on the **Vlatla Catacomb**). This chamber also contains a webbed corpse.

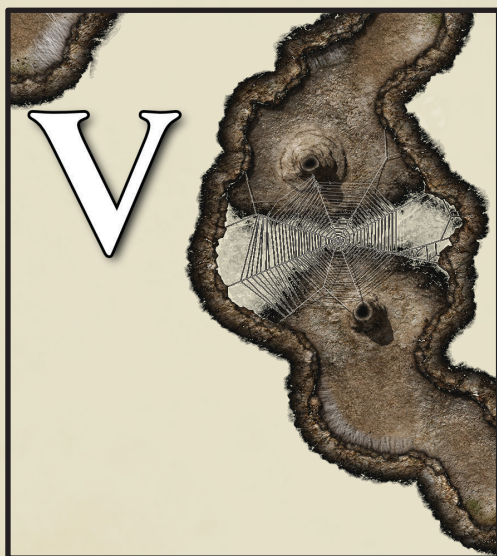
III) Both of these locations are home to two **funnel weavers** who will attack the party as they come down the corridor. They both additionally contain a webbed corpse. IIIB splits into two corridors, the north route looping around through IV and the southern through the much more direct route in V.



IV) This section is a long, winding corridor. It contains three recluses, encountered one after another, but each one flees immediately upon being spotted. After the third recluse flees, the corridor splits—the northern route contains one **spitting spider** and a webbed corpse while the southern route comes direct to a nest of two more recluses and three **spitting spiders**. Finally, past the spitting spider nest is a tiger spider nest containing six **tiger spiders** and one stray **spitting spider**. At this point, the corridor splits again, the northwest route heading up to the far more direct route of V while the southern corridor heads towards VI.



V) Two recluses lair here near the web of a single funnel weaver. The funnel weaver's web crosses a chasm which can be jumped with a DC 10 Athletics check. If the check is failed, the party member who failed falls into the web at LOCATION IX. If they fail a DC 15 DEX save, another ten feet down through the second web and into the pit. See LOCATION IX for details. Characters who fell 10 feet to LOCATION IX take 1d6 falling damage, and characters who fell twenty feet into the pit take 2d6 falling damage.



VI) Nine funnel weavers have spun a massive web across the large chasm in this room, the edges of which serve as the nest for three **tarantulas**. All the spiders will swarm on anyone who enters the room. The tarantula lair contains a regular webbed corpse and the two Third Eye apprentices' webbed corpses. In addition to the usual loot from webbed corpses, these two hold a *war wand +1*, a *staff of the adder*, and a *silver raven of wondrous power*. Crossing the vast pit without descending downwards is nigh impossible. Characters can climb down, which will take them to the corridor between locations VIII and IX, with a DC 15 Athletics check or else just take the 1d6 falling damage on the way down. Characters can also attempt to climb back up with the same DC 15 Athletics check, taking 1d6 falling damage if they fail by 5 or more, and successfully climbing up to whichever side of the pit they wish if they succeed.



VII) This is the egg chamber for the nest. It contains three **funnel weavers**, four **wolf spiders**, and three **tiger spiders** who will swarm to form the front line against the party when they enter. The four jumping spiders will leap over the party's heads to attack the back line, while the three spitting spiders will web the front line in place to prevent them from reorganizing themselves. The single tarantula will also lumber towards the front line, but will probably arrive a round after the wolf and tiger spiders have created

a front line for themselves, and will plug itself into the first gap that appears. Finally, the huntsman will wait from a safe distance until a gap opens up in the front lines. When this happens, it will move forward, grapple a party member from the front lines, and then move back to its position in the center of the nest to finish the party member off alone. If, after incapacitating a lone party member in this manner, there remains a gap in the front lines, the huntsman will repeat, until the party is dead or the spider front lines are broken open and the entire party comes through to fight. The southern corridor here goes down towards LOCATION VIII on the second floor map.

The spiders have placed their eggs directly atop the hoard of the brass dragon they killed in the egg chamber. That hoard consists of 640 copper, 6400 silver, 1680 gold, 88 platinum, two chrysoprases, a citrine, a moonstone, an onyx, a quartz, and a zircon, all of which are worth 50 gold by default but which Goldblum might pay more or less for back in Ramshorn.



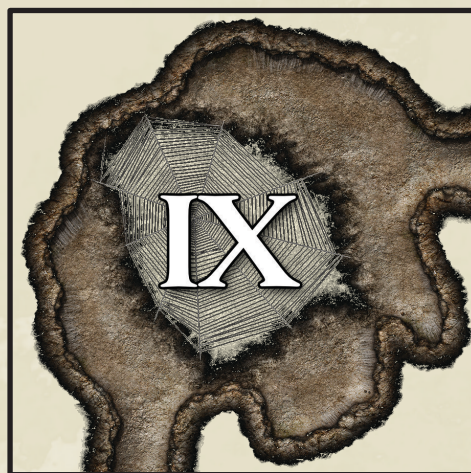
VIII) A massive swarm of nineteen funnel weavers lurks in this chamber, swarming any party member who disturbs their web. A single webbed corpse can also be found in the nest proper, as well as a second webbed corpse, containing not only the usual loot but the note in elvish (see the **Treasure** section for details) in the corridor leading towards LOCATION VII. Like LOCATION VI, it's practically impossible to cross the chasm without descending into the pit, where an impromptu cemetery of discarded bones awaits. Any character who wishes to search for treasure may roll Investigation. If they get at least a 10, they roll once on the treasure table in the **Treasure** section below and additionally find a cloak of resistance. For every five points higher, they get another roll on the treasure table, to a maximum of 30 for five rolls, if for some reason they're coming here while they have a +10 to Investigation (realistically, they probably won't get more than four rolls at maximum).

Up top, there are two webbed corpses, both elven. One carries a message. The message is written in Mithrallar, the language of the elves, and it is apparent that it is the second page of a longer message, because it gives only the final disembodied few lines of instructions on how to get inside the vermin hive in the Great Forest before discussing how to control the spiders using

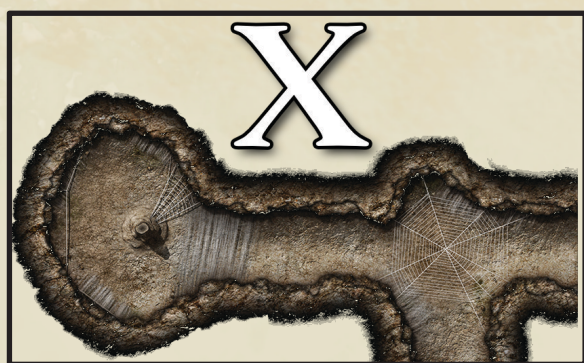
pheromone glands harvested from them. The instructions in the note can attempt to be replicated by anyone with access to a dead spider, so long as they can make a DC 15 Medicine check to harvest the glands without damaging them and then a DC 15 Nature check to use them properly. The person harvesting the glands and the person doing the controlling doesn't necessarily have to be the same person. When properly used, the pheromones can be used to give any of the following commands to a spider for 1d4 days, at which point the pheromones wear off and must be reapplied:

- **Follow.** The spider will follow the user, attacking only if it is attacked.
- **Attack.** The spider will attack a specific target marked by pheromones. To mark the target, the user must throw the pheromone sac as a weapon with a range of 30/60 feet. If it misses, the spider will move to the marked area but will not attack unless it is attacked.
- **Occupy.** The spider will nest in the nearest suitable location (digging out new burrows if they are a trapdoor spider or a tarantula) and begin hunting in the area.
- **Destroy.** The spider will begin moving in a spiral search pattern and kill everything it finds that is not another spider, stopping only to feed or sleep when necessary, and not finding a proper nest when sleeping, instead just settling in to sleep wherever it happens to be in the pattern.
- **Self-Destruct.** The spider will begin moving in a spiral search pattern and kill every spider it can find, without food or sleep, until it dies.

Any player who speaks Mithrallar and reads the letter should be asked to make an Investigation check. If they hit a DC of 10, they can identify that the writer of the letter isn't a native speaker, and if they also speak Draconic, they can also tell that the writer of the letter speaks Draconic as their native language. If they hit a DC of 20, they can tell that the writer of the letter speaks Draconic even if they don't speak Draconic themselves.



IX) The web over this pit is home to three funnel weavers. The pit below does not lead anywhere, it's just a hole. The pit contains lots of bones dropped from the webs above, some coins from a single roll on the treasure table in the **Treasure** section below, as well as a *potion of poison resistance* and a *pearl of power*. Characters can climb back up from the pit to LOCATION IX or from LOCATION IX to LOCATION V with a DC 15 Athletics check. Climbing gear gives advantage on the roll. Failing by 5 or more results in a character falling down the hole for another d6 of falling damage.



X) A single **trapdoor spider** nests here. The corridor to the east leads up towards the southern route of **LOCATION I**.

BEHAVIOR

Giant spiders aren't heroes. When dropped below half health, they immediately retreat back to the nest, or deeper inside it if they're already there. When confronted again after having already fled, spiders will make a desperate last stand, but would prefer to wedge themselves in a crevice and hope the predator goes away. They also don't directly cooperate with one another. While spiders will often hunt in what appear to be packs, they don't actually care about the wellbeing of other spiders (even of the same species). They will not flee just because other spiders are running away, and they will make no attempt to save a spider in danger.

Most spiders throughout the wilds and the nest are found in largely monotype groups. This gives the party a chance to observe how they act in isolation before having to confront them as a group in the egg chamber.

- Jumping spiders will leap over the front line to attack the back.
- Spitting spiders will web up the front line and then skitter around behind them.
- Tarantulas, wolf spiders, and tiger spiders are straightforward hunters: They will move directly to engage the nearest living non-spider that they can see.
- Funnel weavers wait to feel the vibrations in the web that indicate something other than a spider has just stepped (or been dropped) in the nest. Once the party disturbs one of the many webbed sections of the dungeon, any funnel weavers in the chamber will immediately descend upon them, crawling on the ceiling and walls to surround the party.
- Trapdoor spiders remain burrowed and hidden, but will pop out to grab anything that comes nearby and attempt to bring it back into their trapdoor. This works out great for them when the thing they've grabbed is a stoat or a rabbit. It's not so great when it's an adventurer's boot.
- Recluse spiders would rather flee than fight, usually retreating towards a corner or dead-end crevice nearby, but will turn and fight if cornered or reinforced by a large number of other spiders—recluses running from intruders will often mix themselves in with funnel weaver swarms to turn the tide.
- Huntsman spiders will attack a single enemy, grapple them, and then speed off with them to finish them off in isolation before returning to grab another prey and flee with them. They take all abducted prey to the same spot, and if tracked to that spot, will stand and fight the entire group to defend whatever prey it's already immobilized there.

With the exception of recluse and huntsman spiders, none of these are particularly difficult on their own and are threatening only in their overwhelming numbers, which may threaten to wear the party down if they attempt to storm the nest at low level. The spider's eggs are hatching at a steady pace and will constantly replace lost numbers with each long rest. Whenever the party takes a long rest, half the dead spiders in the nest are replaced, to a maximum of ten. As such, the party can chew through the nest bit by bit if they have the time, but the fewer rests they take, the fewer total spiders they will kill. If spiders in the wilderness have been slain, hunting spiders (that is, wolf spiders, tiger spiders, tarantulas, jumping spiders, and spitting spiders) can be drawn from anywhere in the nest but the egg chamber to replace them. Additionally, jumping spiders might be replaced by spitting spiders instead. The funnel weaver and trapdoor spiders in the wilderness are those pushed out of the nest by overcrowding and limited food, and will not be replaced should they be killed. In fact, if space is made back in the nest for them, they'll move in, abandoning their homes in the Ramshorn wilderness. Spiders from the egg chamber will never leave it to populate another area, which means that if the huntsman outside is killed, it will not be replaced.

TREASURE

The spiders do not hoard treasure in one location, but their victims have plenty of it. Since spiders suck the juices out of their prey, the items carried on their person have been damaged only by, at worst, a year or two of decay—some of them are much fresher. For each of the webbed up corpses that players decide to loot, roll a d6 on the following table to determine what they find:

Roll	Treasure
1	2d6×10 copper
2	2d6×10 copper, 2d6×10 silver
3	1d6×10 silver, 1d6 gold
4	2d6×10 silver, 3d6 gold
5	2d6 gold, 1d6 platinum
6	2d6 platinum

Each corpse also carries some means of defending themselves in life—a sword, an axe, a bow—but these are all mundane weapons.

AFTERMATH

If the players think to investigate the tunnel where the spiders broke into the catacomb (probably because the Vlatla Clan have asserted that this should be impossible), a DC 15 Investigation check reveals that the shape of the hole into the catacombs suggests that someone blew the catacomb wall apart with some kind of explosive. A DC 20 reveals blast marks that suggest it was an alchemical explosive rather than any kind of spell. As the local potioneer, Goldblum might have sold ingredients to the culprit.

If the party follows this lead, Goldblum will confirm that a tiefling named Vain has been buying alchemical ingredients that could be used to make explosives, although there are several key ingredients that she hasn't been getting from Goldblum. Perhaps she has a personal stash of these more rare and dangerous alchemical ingredients, or another, less scrupulous source supplying them. Goldblum has no idea why anyone would want to blast a hole in the catacomb and wake the restless dead, but suggests that maybe waking up the skeletons was an accident while attempting to create a backdoor to the catacomb for other reasons.

In truth, Vain actually is trying to wake the restless dead, because she is Colgru Beryl under a disguise self spell trying to soften up Ramshorn (and the rest of Vintaria) for a coming Tiamat invasion. In fairness to Goldblum, it's pretty hard to get from "a tiefling blew up a wall" to "the Clans of Tiamat are preparing to attack" without any further evidence.

If the party turns the egg chamber over to the Vlatla Clan, after the next long rest the spiders will be under Vlatla control. They will be friendly to the party so long as they retain at least one point of favor. If the party falls out of favor with the Vlatlas, the spiders will become hostile to the party, but the Vlatlas will claim this is just a kink in the control they're still ironing out. If neither the Lunatics nor the Lions have taken residence in Ramshorn, the Vlatla spiders will occupy the town. The townspeople at first treat it as an attack, but after seeing that the spiders aren't hostile, they slowly grow used to their presence. The spiders only patrol the streets and never enter any buildings, making it easy for townspeople to keep their distance long enough to determine they aren't here to eat anyone, and in the meantime nobody wants to be the one to try and fight the damn things. If the party attempts to attack a spider upon seeing one ambling through the town, remind them that 1) the Vlatla Clan was planning on taking control of these things and 2) the spider isn't chasing anyone down or anything, it's just walking through the streets. If the party still wants to attack it, go ahead and let them.

This is a new command the Vlatlas have developed for the spiders, and which they can teach the party if the party wants. They call it "patrol," and it causes the spiders to meander about aimlessly within a few hundred feet of the spot marked by the pheromones, attacking only if attacked. The Vlatlas have not yet figured out how to teach a spider to differentiate friend from foe without either marking targets with the attack command or just telling them to kill everything in a certain area and hope no friendlies are in the target region, but they're working on it.

BERYL CLAN

The Beryl Clan have been acting as agents provocateur throughout the Ramshorn region, conspiring with both Sir Dagai and his goblins and the elves who first unleashed the giant spiders, as well as arranging in week two for the spiders to disrupt the Vlatla skeletons and throw the catacombs into chaos, and then spending time scoping out the players' specific capabilities in weeks three and four before attempting to have them killed in week five. Finally, after every other potential threat to Ramshorn has been defused, the Beryl Clan will take a shot at assassinating the players directly, as at that point they can at least say that they've identified and killed a fairly serious threat to ongoing subversion operations.

The Beryl Clan do have a camp in the woods, but they have no presence on the wilderness map and are not especially likely to be tracked back to it. However, if the players end up suspicious of Vain or find some way to successfully canvas the region for dragonborn after learning that there's some kind Draconic-speaking agent provocateur in the area, they will end up at the Beryl Clan camp and may be able to ambush them before they ambush the players.

The number of the Beryl Clan infiltrators operating in the Ramshorn region is equal to the number of player characters, and Beryl Clan members are added in this order:

- 1) Corgru Beryl
- 2) Saiz Beryl
- 3) Dalnetto Beryl
- 4) Hiski Beryl
- 5) Fainsithe Beryl
- 6) Echokreth Beryl

So, if there are four player characters in the party, then Corgru, Saiz, Dalnetto, and Hiski Beryl are in Ramshorn and the other two are not. Note that this is the number of player characters, so NPCs are not counted. If the players bring a hireling (or twelve) along to a confrontation with the Beryl Clan, that does not affect the number of Beryl Clan infiltrators in the region.

BESTIARY

Hirelings

DIESA BALDERK

Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Armor Class 19 (splint armor w/shield)

Hit Points 27 (3d8+6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR 15 (+2) **INT** 9 (-1)

DEX 9 (-1) **WIS** 16 (+3)

CON 15 (+2) **CHA** 10 (+0)

Saving Throws WIS +5, CHA +2

Skills Insight +5, Medicine +5, Persuasion +2, Religion +1

Damage Resistances Poison

Senses darkvision 60 ft, passive Perception 13

Languages

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Channel Divinity. Diesa Balderk may channel divine energy directly from her deity. When she uses her Channel Divinity, she may choose what effect to create. She must then finish a short or long rest to Channel Divinity again.

Turn Undead. All undead within thirty feet of Diesa Balderk who can see or hear her must make a DC 13 Wisdom save. If they fail it is turned for 1 minute or until it takes damage and must flee from Diesa Balderk as fast as it can. For its action, it can only use the Dash action or try to escape an effect that prevents it from moving. If there's nowhere to run, the creature can use the Dodge action.

Preserve Life. As an action, Diesa Balderk may heal up to 15 HP to any number of creatures within 30 feet of her location. This cannot heal them to above half health.

Disciple of Life. Whenever Diesa Balderk uses a spell of 1st level or higher to restore hit points to a creature, the creature regains additional hit points equal to 2 + the spell's level.

Dwarven Resilience. Diesa Balderk has advantage on saving throws against poison and she has resistance against poison damage.

Dwarven Combat Training. Diesa Balderk has proficiency with the battleaxe, handaxe, light hammer, and warhammer.

Stonecutting. Whenever Diesa Balderk makes an Intelligence (History) check related to the origin of stonework, she is considered proficient in the History skill and adds double her proficiency bonus to the check, instead of her normal proficiency bonus.

Spellcasting. Diesa Balderk is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks).

Diesa Balderk has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light*, *sacred flame*, *spare the dying*

1st level (4 slots): *bane*, *bless*, *cure wounds*, *guiding bolt*, *healing word*

2nd level (2 slots): *enhance ability*, *lesser restoration*, *prayer of healing*, *spiritual weapon*, *warding bond*

ACTIONS

Warhammer. Melee Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8+2) bludgeoning damage.

Light Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack. +1 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d8-1) piercing damage.

EUPHEMIA GREENBOTTLE

Small humanoid (halfling)

Armor Class 19 (half plate w/shield)

Hit Points 28 (3d10+6)

Speed 25 ft.

STR 13 (+1) **INT** 8 (-1)

DEX 17 (+3) **WIS** 12 (+1)

CON 15 (+2) **CHA** 10 (+0)

Saving Throws STR +3, CON +4

Skills Acrobatics +5, Intimidation +2, Sleight of Hand +5, Stealth +5

Damage Resistances Poison

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Action Surge. Euphemia Greenbottle may make an additional action on top of her usual action and bonus action. After using this ability, Euphemia Greenbottle cannot use it again until she's had a long or short rest.

Commander's Strike. When making an attack action, Euphemia Greenbottle may forego one of her attacks and instead use a bonus action to direct one ally who can see or hear her to make a single attack as a reaction. This ally gets +1d8 to the attack roll. After using this ability, Euphemia Greenbottle must finish a long or short rest before using it again.

Brave. Euphemia Greenbottle has advantage on saving throws against being Frightened.

Halfling Nimbleness. Euphemia Greenbottle can move through any space of any creature that is a size larger than hers.

Lucky. When Euphemia Greenbottle rolls a 1 on a d20 for an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, she can reroll the dice and must use the new roll.

Parry. When another creature damages Euphemia Greenbottle with a melee attack, she can her reaction and expend one superiority dice to reduce the damage by the number she rolls on her superiority dice + her dexterity modifier.

Stout Resilience. Euphemia Greenbottle has advantage on saving throws against poison and she has resistance against poison damage.

ACTIONS

Precision Attack. When Euphemia Greenbottle makes a weapon attack roll against a creature, she can expend on superiority dice to add it to the roll. She can use this maneuver before or after making the attack roll, but before any effects of the attack are applied.

Second Wind. As a bonus action, Euphemia Greenbottle may catch a second wind and heal 1d10+3 damage. Once Euphemia Greenbottle uses this ability she cannot use it again until she's taken a short or long rest.

Rapier. Melee Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d8+5) piercing damage.

Light Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8+3) piercing damage.

FODEL DUEIN*Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 18 (chainmail w/shield)**Hit Points** 28 (3d10+2)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 16 (+3) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 13 (+1) **WIS** 12 (+1)**CON** 15 (+2) **CHA** 12 (+1)**Saving Throws** STR +5, CON +4**Skills** Athletics +5, Insight +3, Intimidation +3, Survival +3**Damage Resistances****Senses** passive Perception 11**Languages****Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

Action Surge. Fodel Duein may make an additional action on top of his usual action and bonus action. After using this ability, Fodel Duein cannot use it again until he's had a long or short rest.

Champion. Fodel Duein's weapon attacks score a critical hit on a 19 or a 20.

ACTIONS

Second Wind. As a bonus action, Fodel Duein may catch a second wind and heal 1d10+3 damage. Once Fodel Duein uses this ability he cannot use it again until he's taken a short or long rest.

Warhammer. Melee Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d8+5) bludgeoning damage.

Heavy Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack. +3 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d10+1) piercing damage.

GRUNT

For Grunt, use the stats for the Ogrillon soldier.

IMSH STARAG*Medium humanoid (half-orc)***Armor Class** 15 (breast plate)**Hit Points** 32 (3d12+6)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 17 (+3) **INT** 9 (-1)**DEX** 12 (+1) **WIS** 11 (+0)**CON** 15 (+2) **CHA** 11 (+0)**Saving Throws** STR +5, CON +4**Skills** Animal Handling +2, Athletics +5, Intimidation +2, Nature +1**Damage Resistances****Senses** darkvision 60 ft, passive Perception 10**Languages****Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

Relentless Endurance. When Imsh Starag is reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, he can drop to 1 hit point instead. He can't use this feature again until he has finished a long rest.

Savage Attack. When Imsh Starag scores a critical hit with a melee weapon attack, he can roll one of the weapon's damage dice one additional time and add it to the extra damage of the critical hit.

Rage. Imsh Starag can enter a rage as a bonus action. While raging, he has resistance to piercing, bludgeoning, and slashing damage, +2 damage to his great sword attack, and advantage to all Strength checks and saving throws. His rage ends after one minute or after a full round passes in which he has not attacked an enemy or suffered any damage. Once he has raged the maximum number of times he may not rage again until he has finished a long rest.

Unarmored Defense. While Imsh Starag is not wearing any armor, his armor class equal 10 + his dexterity modifier + his constitution modifier. He can use a shield and still gain this benefit.

Danger Sense. Imsh Starag has advantage on DEX saves against any effect he can see so long as he is not blinded, deafened, or incapacitated.

Reckless. At the start of his turn, Imsh Starag can gain advantage on all melee attacks, but all attacks made against him have advantage until the start of his next turn.

Frenzy. Imsh Starag can go into a frenzy when he rages. If he does so, for the duration of his rage he can make a single melee weapon attack on each of his turns after the first. When his rage ends, he suffers one level of exhaustion.

ACTIONS

Great axe. Melee Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d12+3) slashing damage.

Longbow. Ranged Weapon Attack. +3 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage.

KARA STORMWIND*Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 16 (chain mail)**Hit Points** 24 (3d8+6)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 14 (+2) **INT** 13 (+1)**DEX** 12 (+1) **WIS** 14 (+2)**CON** 14 (+2) **CHA** 14 (+2)**Saving Throws** WIS +4, CHA +4**Skills** Animal Handling +4, History +3, Religion +3, Survival +4**Damage Resistances****Senses** passive Perception 12**Languages****Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

War Priest. Kara Stormwind's god delivers bolts of inspiration to her while she is in battle. When she uses the Attack action, she may make one weapon attack as a bonus action.

Channel Divinity. Diesa Balderk may channel divine energy directly from her deity. When she uses her Channel Divinity, she may choose what effect to create. She must then finish a short rest or long rest to Channel Divinity again.

Turn Undead. All undead within thirty feet of Kara Stormwind who can see or hear her must make a DC 13 Wisdom save. If they fail it is turned for 1 minute or until it takes damage and must flee from Kara Stormwind as fast as it can. For its action, it can only use the Dash action or try to escape an effect that prevents it from moving. If there's nowhere to run, the creature can use the Dodge action.

Guided Strike. When Kara Stormwind makes an attack roll, she can use channel divinity to gain a +10 bonus to the roll. She may make the choice after the roll, but before the DM says whether the attack hits or misses.

Spellcasting. Kara Stormwind is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). Kara Stormwind has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *resistance, sacred flame, spare the dying*
 1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds, divine favor, guiding bolt, shield of faith*
 2nd level (2 slots): *enhance ability, hold person, magic weapon, spiritual weapon, warding bond*

ACTIONS

Battleaxe. Melee Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d10+2) slashing damage.

Longbow. Ranged Weapon Attack. +3 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage.

LINDAL THORNGAGE*Small humanoid (halfling)***Armor Class** 15 (leather armor)**Hit Points** 18 (3d8)**Speed** 25 ft.**STR** 9 (-1) **INT** 14 (+2)**DEX** 19 (+4) **WIS** 10 (+0)**CON** 10 (+0) **CHA** 12 (+1)**Saving Throws** DEX +6, INT +4**Skills** Acrobatic +6, Performance +3, Persuasion +3, Sleight of Hand +6, Stealth +8**Damage Resistances****Senses** passive Perception 10**Languages****Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

Brave. Lindal Thorngage has advantage on saving throws against being Frightened.

Halfling Nimbleness. Lindal Thorngage can move through any space of any creature that is a size larger than his.

Lucky. When Lindal Thorngage rolls a 1 on a d20 for an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, he can reroll the dice and must use the new roll.

Naturally Stealthy. Lindal Thorngage may attempt to hide even when he is obscured only by a creature at least one size category larger than him.

Cunning Action. Lindal Thorngage can Hide, Disengage, or Dash as a bonus action.

Fast Hands. Lindal Thorngage can use the bonus action granted by Cunning Action to make a Dexterity (sleight of hand) check, use thieves' tools to disarm a trap or open a lock, or take the use an object action.

Second Story Work. Climbing does not cost Lindal Thorngage extra movement. In addition, when making a running jump, the distance he covers increases by a number of feet equal to his dexterity modifier.

ACTIONS

Sneak Attack. Once per turn, Lindal Thorngage may make an attack with his rapier or short bow on an enemy adjacent to one of his allies or against whom he has advantage. The attack deals an extra 2d6 (7) damage.

Rapier. Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8+4) piercing damage.

Short bow. Ranged Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage.

LUTHER HELDER*Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 14 (studded leather)**Hit Points** 24 (3d8+6)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 13 (+1) **INT** 9 (−1)**DEX** 15 (+2) **WIS** 13 (+1)**CON** 14 (+2) **CHA** 15 (+2)**Saving Throws** DEX +4, INT +1**Skills** Acrobatic +4, Deception +6, Perception +3, Persuasion +4, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +6**Damage Resistances****Senses** passive Perception 13**Languages****Challenge** 2 (450 XP)**Cunning Action.** Luther Helder can Hide, Disengage, or Dash as a bonus action.**Assassinate.** Luther Helder has advantage on attack rolls on any creature that hasn't taken an action in the combat yet. In addition, any hit he scores against a creature that is surprised is a critical hit.**ACTIONS****Sneak Attack.** Once per turn, Luther Helder may make an attack with his short sword or longbow on an enemy adjacent to one of his allies or against whom he has advantage. The attack deals an extra 2d6 (7) damage.**Short sword.** Melee Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.**Longbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.**MILO HILLTOPPLE***Medium humanoid (halfling)***Armor Class** 14 (leather armor)**Hit Points** (3d8+6)**Speed** 25 ft.**STR** 11 (+0) **INT** 15 (+2)**DEX** 17 (+3) **WIS** 9 (−1)**CON** 14 (+2) **CHA** 8 (−1)**Saving Throws** DEX +5, INT +4**Skills** Acrobatic +5, Arcana +6, History +4, Investigation +4, Sleight of Hand +5, Stealth +5**Damage Resistances** Poison**Senses** passive Perception 9**Languages****Challenge** 2 (450 XP)**Brave.** Milo Hilltopple has advantage on saving throws against being Frightened.**Halfling Nimbleness.** Milo Hilltopple can move through any space of any creature that is a size larger than his.**Lucky.** When Milo Hilltopple rolls a 1 on a d20 for an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, he can reroll the dice and must use the new roll.**Stout Resilience.** Milo Hilltopple has advantage on saving throws against poison and he has resistance against poison damage.**Cunning Action.** Milo Hilltopple can Hide, Disengage, or Dash as a bonus action.**Magical Hand Legerdemain.** When Milo Hilltopple casts *Magical Hand*, he can make the spectral hand invisible. He can stow one object the hand is carrying in a container worn or carried by another creature, he can retrieve an object in a container worn or carried by another creature and he can use thieves' tools to pick and disarm traps at range. He can perform these tasks without being noticed by another creature if he succeeds on a Sleight of Hand check contested by the creature's Perception check. He may use the bonus action granted by *Cunning Action* to control the hand.
Spellcasting. Milo Hilltopple is a 1st-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). Milo Hilltopple has the following wizard spells prepared:Cantrips (at will): *magical hand*, *minor illusion*, *prestidigitation*
1st level (2 slots): *silent image*, *sleep***ACTIONS****Sneak Attack.** Once per turn, Milo Hilltopple may make an attack with his short sword or short bow on an enemy adjacent to one of his allies or against whom he has advantage. The attack deals an extra 2d6 (7) damage.**Short sword.** Melee Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.**Short bow.** Ranged Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

TRYM TOSSCOBBLE*Medium humanoid (halfling)***Armor Class** 18 (breastplate w/shield)**Hit Points** (3d8+3)**Speed** 25 ft.**STR** 8 (-1) **INT** 13 (+1)**DEX** 16 (+3) **WIS** 9 (-1)**CON** 13 (+1) **CHA** 16 (+3)**Saving Throws** DEX +5, CHA +5**Skills** Acrobatics +5, Performance +7, Persuasion +5, Sleight of Hand +7, Survival +1**Damage Resistances****Senses** passive Perception 10**Languages****Challenge** 2 (450 XP)**Brave.** Ttrym Tosskobble has advantage on saving throws against being Frightened.**Halfling Nimbleness.** Ttrym Tosskobble can move through any space of any creature that is a size larger than hers.**Lucky.** When Ttrym Tosskobble rolls a 1 on a d20 for an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, she can reroll the dice and must use the new roll.**Naturally Stealthy.** Ttrym Tosskobble may attempt to hide even when he is obscured only by a creature at least one size category larger than her.**Bardic Inspiration.** Ttrym Tosskobble can inspire others through stirring words or music. As a bonus action on her turn, she chooses one creature other than herself within 60 feet who can hear her. That creature gains one bardic inspiration die, a d6. Once within the next ten minutes, the creature can roll the die and add the number rolled to one ability check, attack roll or saving throw it makes. The creature can wait until after it rolls the d20 before deciding to use the inspiration die but must decide before the DM says whether the roll succeeds or fails. Once the bardic inspiration die is rolled, it is lost. A creature can have only one bardic inspiration die at a time. Ttrym Tosskobble can use this feature three times; she regains uses after a long rest.**Song of Rest.** Ttrym Tosskobble can use soothing music to revitalize allies during a short rest. If she or any of her allies who can hear her performance regain hit points by spending hit dice at the end of a short rest, they regain an extra 1d6 hit points.**Combat Inspiration.** Ttrym Tosskobble can inspire others in battle. A creature that has a bardic inspiration die from her can roll that die and add the number rolled to a weapon damage roll. Alternatively, when an attack roll is made against the creature they can use their reaction to roll their bardic inspiration die and add the number rolled to their AC against the attack.**Spellcasting.** Ttrym Tosskobble is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). Ttrym Tosskobble has the following bard spells prepared:Cantrips (at will): *dancing lights, true strike*1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds, heroism, sleep, silent image*2nd level (2 slots): *enhance ability, enthrall***ACTIONS****Rapier.** Melee Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8+3) piercing damage.**Short bow.** Ranged Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.**NAIVARA HOMILION***Medium humanoid (elf)***Armor Class** 13 (breastplate)**Hit Points** 25 (3d10+3)**Speed** 35 ft.**STR** 8 (-1) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 17 (+3) **WIS** 16 (+3)**CON** 13 (+1) **CHA** 10 (+0)**Saving Throws** STR +1, DEX +5**Skills** Acrobatics +5, Animal Handling +5, Insight +5, Perception +5, Stealth +5, Survival +5**Damage Resistances****Senses** darkvision 60 ft, passive Perception 15**Languages****Challenge** 2 (450 XP)**Fey Ancestry.** Naivara Homilion has advantage on saving throws made against being charmed, and magic can't put her to sleep.**Trance.** Naivara Homilion doesn't need to sleep; instead she meditates for 4 hours. After resting this way, she gains the same benefits as a human does from 8 hours of sleep.**Elf Weapon Training.** Naivara Homilion has proficiency with the long sword, short sword, short bow and longbow.**Mask of the Wild.** Naivara Homilion may attempt to hide even when she is only surrounded by foliage, heavy rain, falling snow, mist and other natural phenomenon.**Favored Enemy.** Naivara Homilion has advantage on Wisdom (Survival) checks to track goblins and dragonborn, as well as on Intelligence checks to recall information about them.**Natural Explorer.** While traveling for an hour or more in forests, Naivara Homilion gains the following benefits. Her group's traveling is not slowed down by difficult terrain and they cannot become lost except by magical means. Even when engaged in another activity (such as foraging, navigating or tracking) she remains alert to danger. If traveling alone, she can move stealthily at her normal pace and finds twice as much food when foraging. When tracking other creatures, she can learn their exact number, their sizes and how recently they passed through the area.**Primeval Awareness.** Naivara Homilion can use her action and expend one ranger spell to focus her awareness on the region around her. For 1 minute per level fo the spell slot she expends, she can sense whether the following types of creatures are present within 1 mile of her (6 miles in a forest): aberrations, celestials, dragons, elementals, fey, fiends and the undead. This feature doesn't reveal the creatures' location or number.**Colossus Slayer.** When Naivara Homilion hits a creature with a weapon attack, the creature takes an extra 1d8 damage if it's below its hit point maximum. She can deal this damage only once per turn.**Spellcasting.** Naivara Homilion is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). Naivara Homilion has the following ranger spells prepared:
1st level (3 slots): *cure wounds, hail of thorns, hunter's mark***ACTIONS****Short sword (main).** Melee Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.**Short sword (off).** Melee Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6) piercing damage.**Longbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8+3) piercing damage.

SEIPORA BURSK*Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 12**Hit Points** 20 (3d6+6)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 9 (−1) **INT** 16 (+3)**DEX** 15 (+2) **WIS** 11 (+0)**CON** 15 (+2) **CHA** 11 (+0)**Saving Throws** INT +5, WIS +2**Skills** Arcana +5, History +5, Medicine +2, Nature +5**Damage Resistances****Senses** passive Perception 10**Languages****Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

Arcane Recovery. Once per day when finishing a short rest, Seipora Bursk can choose expended spell slots to recover. The spell slots can have a combined level that is equal to or less than 1, and none can be more than 6.

Evocation Savant. The gold and time spent to copy an evocation spell into Seipora Bursk's spellbook is halved.

Sculpt Spells. When Seipora Bursk casts an evocation spell that effects other creatures that you can see, she can choose a number of them equal 1+the spell's level. The chosen creatures automatically succeed on their saving throws against the spell and they take no damage if they would normally take half damage on a save.

Spellcasting. Seipora Bursk is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). Seipora Bursk has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *ray of frost*, *shocking grasp*
 1st level (4 slots): *burning hands*, *magic missile*, *thunderwave*, *chromatic orb*
 2nd level (2 slots): *scorching ray*, *shatter*

ACTIONS

Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

*Ramshorn Inhabitants***RAMSHORN ACOLYTE***Medium humanoid (any), any alignment***Armor Class** 10 (padded)**Hit Points** 5 (1d8+1)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 10 (+0) **INT** 12 (+1)**DEX** 8 (−1) **WIS** 15 (+2)**CON** 13 (+1) **CHA** 14 (+2)**Saving Throws** WIS +4, CHA +4**Skills** Insight +4, Persuasion +4, Religion +3**Senses** passive Perception 12**Languages** Vintari, one other language (usually untari)**Challenge** ½ (100 XP)

Spellcasting. The Ramshorn Acolyte is a 1st-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). The Acolyte has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *sacred flame*, *light*, *guidance*, *mending*
 1st-level (2 slots): *cure wounds*, *bless*, *guiding bolt*

ACTIONS

Mace. Melee Weapon Attack. +2, Reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.

RAMSHORN BRUISER*Medium humanoid (any), any alignment***Armor Class** 13**Hit Points** 8 (1d12+2)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 14 (+2) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 13 (+1) **WIS** 12 (+1)**CON** 15 (+2) **CHA** 8 (−1)**Saving Throws** STR +4, CON +4**Skills** Athletics +4, Perception +4, Survival +3**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from non-magical weapons**Senses** passive Perception 13**Languages** Vintari, one other language (usually untari)**Challenge** ½ (100 XP)

Unarmored Defense. When not wearing armor, the Ramshorn Bruiser adds both their DEX and CON bonus to their AC.

ACTIONS

Hatchet. Melee Weapon Attack. +4, Reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6+4) slashing damage.

RAMSHORN CITIZEN*Medium humanoid (any), any alignment***Armor Class** 10**Hit Points** 5 (1d8)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 10 (+0) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 10 (+0) **WIS** 10 (+0)**CON** 10 (+0) **CHA** 10 (+0)**Saving Throws****Skills****Senses** passive Perception 10**Languages** Vintari, one other language (usually untari)**Challenge** 0 (10 XP)**ACTIONS****Club.** Melee Weapon Attack. +2, Reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage.**RAMSHORN CON ARTIST***Medium humanoid (any), any alignment***Armor Class** 12**Hit Points** 4 (1d6+1)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (-1) **INT** 13 (+1)**DEX** 14 (+2) **WIS** 10 (+0)**CON** 12 (+1) **CHA** 15 (+2)**Saving Throws** DEX +4, CHA +4**Skills** Acrobatics +4, Deception +4, Insight +2, Perception +2,

Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +4

Senses passive Perception 12**Languages** Vintari, one other language (usually untari)**Challenge** ½ (100 XP)**ACTIONS****Sneak Attack.** The Ramshorn Con Artist makes an attack with their dagger against an enemy against whom they have advantage or who is adjacent to one of the Con Artist's ally. If the attack hits, it deals an additional 1d6 damage.**Dagger.** Melee Weapon Attack: +4, Reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4+2) slashing damage.**RAMSHORN FORESTER***Medium humanoid (any), any alignment***Armor Class** 13 (Padded Armor)**Hit Points** 6 (1d8+2)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (-1) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 15 (+2) **WIS** 13 (+1)**CON** 14 (+2) **CHA** 12 (+1)**Saving Throws** DEX +4, WIS +4**Skills** Nature +2, Perception +3, Survival +3**Senses** passive Perception 13**Languages** Vintari, one other language (usually untari)**Challenge** ½ (100 XP)**ACTIONS****Longbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack. +4, Range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.**Short Sword.** Melee Weapon Attack. +4, Reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.**RAMSHORN GUARD***Medium humanoid (any), any alignment***Armor Class** 17/19 (half-plate or half-plate w/shield)**Hit Points** 15 (2d10+4)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 16 (+3) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 12 (+1) **WIS** 13 (+1)**CON** 15 (+2) **CHA** 8 (-1)**Saving Throws** STR +5, CON +2**Skills** Athletics +5, Investigation +2, Perception +3**Senses** passive Perception 13**Languages** Vintari, one other language (usually untari)**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)**Defense.** While wearing armor, the Ramshorn Guard has +1 AC (included in stat block).**Metal Body (Tin'kan only).** Tin'kan's metal body gives him resistance against non-magical slashing damage.**Second Wind.** As a bonus action, the Ramshorn Guard may heal 1d10+2 HP. After using this ability, the Guard must take a short or long rest to use it again.**Action Surge.** The Ramshorn Guard may take an additional action on their turn. After using this ability, the Guard must finish a short or long rest before using it again.**ACTIONS****Maul (Tin'kan only).** Melee Weapon Attack: +5, Reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6+3) bludgeoning damage.**Longsword.** Melee Weapon Attack. +5, Reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8+3) slashing damage.**Longbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack. +3, Range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage.**RAMSHORN HEAVY***Medium humanoid (any), any alignment***Armor Class** 14**Hit Points** 19 (2d12+6)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 15 (+2) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 13 (+1) **WIS** 12 (+1)**CON** 16 (+3) **CHA** 8 (-1)**Saving Throws** STR +4, CON +5**Skills** Athletics +4, Perception +3, Survival +3**Senses** passive Perception 13**Languages** Vintari, one other language (usually untari)**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)**Unarmored Defense.** When not wearing armor, the Ramshorn Heavy adds both their DEX and CON bonus to their AC.**ACTIONS****Ball peen hammer (Ront only).** Melee Weapon Attack. +4, Reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6+4) bludgeoning damage.**Butcher knife (Seyra only).** Melee Weapon Attack. +4, Reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6+4) slashing damage.**Hatchet.** Melee Weapon Attack. +4, Reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6+4) slashing damage.

RAMSHORN MAGE*Medium humanoid (any), any alignment***Armor Class** 11**Hit Points** 7 (2d8)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (–1) **INT** 17 (+3)**DEX** 12 (+1) **WIS** 14 (+2)**CON** 10 (+0) **CHA** 10 (+0)**Saving Throws** INT +5, WIS +4**Skills** Arcana +5, History +5, Investigation +5, Religion +5**Senses** passive Perception 12**Languages** Vintari, two others language (usually untari and ogtari)**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)**Spellcasting.** The Ramshorn Mage is a 2nd-level spellcaster.

Their spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The Mage has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand, mending, message, prestidigitation*
1st-level (3 slots): *burning hands, mage armor, shield, sleep***RAMSHORN MILITIA***Medium humanoid (any), any alignment***Armor Class** 17 (Chain Mail)**Hit Points** 7 (1d10+2)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 15 (+2) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 12 (+1) **WIS** 13 (+1)**CON** 14 (+2) **CHA** 8 (+0)**Saving Throws** STR +4, CON +4**Skills** Athletics +4, Investigation +2, Perception +3**Senses** passive Perception 13**Languages** Vintari, one other language (usually untari)**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)**Defense.** While wearing armor, the Ramshorn Militia has +1 AC (included in stat block).**Second Wind.** As a bonus action, the Ramshorn Militia may heal 1d10+1 HP. After using this ability, the Militia must take a short or long rest to use it again.**ACTIONS****Longsword.** Melee Weapon Attack. +4, Reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8+2) slashing damage.**Longbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack. +3, Range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage**RAMSHORN MINSTREL***Medium humanoid (any), any alignment***Armor Class** 12**Hit Points** 5 (1d8+1)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (–1) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 14 (+2) **WIS** 12 (+1)**CON** 13 (+1) **CHA** 15 (+2)**Saving Throws** DEX +4, CHA +4**Skills** Acrobatics +4, Perception +3, Performance +4, Persuasion +4**Senses** passive Perception 13**Languages** Vintari, one other language (usually untari)**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)**ACTIONS****Minstrel's Inspiration.** The Ramshorn Minstrel begins playing an inspiring song. All allies within 30 ft. who can hear the Minstrel get +1d4 to all attack rolls, saving throws, and ability checks. The minstrel song lasts for 1 minute, or until the minstrel loses concentration (as though concentrating on a spell).**Rapier.** Melee Weapon Attack: +4, Reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.**RAMSHORN PRIEST***Medium humanoid (any), any alignment***Armor Class** 14 (Ring Mail)**Hit Points** 11 (2d8+2)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 10 (+0) **INT** 12 (+1)**DEX** 8 (–1) **WIS** 16 (+3)**CON** 13 (+1) **CHA** 15 (+2)**Saving Throws** WIS +5, CHA +2**Skills** Insight +5, Persuasion +4, Religion +3**Senses** passive Perception 13**Languages** Vintari, one other language (usually untari)**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)**Spellcasting.** The Ramshorn Priest is a 3rd-level spellcaster.

Their spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The Priest has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *sacred flame, light, guidance, mending*1st-level (4 slots): *cure wounds, bless, guiding bolt*2nd-level (2 slots): *prayer of healing, zone of truth***ACTIONS****Mace.** Melee Weapon Attack. +2, Reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6+2) bludgeoning damage.

RAMSHORN SAGE*Medium humanoid (any), any alignment***Armor Class** 11**Hit Points** 3 (1d6)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (-1) **INT** 16 (+3)**DEX** 12 (+1) **WIS** 13 (+1)**CON** 10 (+0) **CHA** 10 (+0)**Saving Throws** INT +5, WIS +3**Skills** Arcana +5, History +5, Investigation +5, Nature +5, Religion +5**Senses** passive Perception 11**Languages** Vintari, two others language (usually untari and ogtari)**Challenge** 1/2 (100 XP)

Spellcasting. The Ramshorn Sage is a 1st-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). Different sages know different spells.

Finneas Rathbone knows:

Cantrips (at will): *true strike*1st-level (2 slots): *comprehend languages, detect magic, identify*

Lucan knows:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*1st-level (2 slots): *false life, ray of sickness*

Ethan De'Nham does not know spells. Instead he has +2 to Arcana and Investigation (bringing each total to +7)

ACTIONS

Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack. +3, Reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d4+1) piercing damage.

RAMSHORN SCOUT*Medium humanoid (any), any alignment***Armor Class** 14 (leather)**Hit Points** 13 (2d8+4)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (-1) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 16 (+3) **WIS** 15 (+2)**CON** 14 (+2) **CHA** 11 (+0)**Saving Throws** DEX +5, WIS +4**Skills** Nature +2, Perception +4, Stealth +5, Survival +4**Senses** passive Perception 14**Languages** Vintari, one other language (usually untari)**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)**ACTIONS**

Longbow. Ranged Weapon Attack. +7, Range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8+3) piercing damage.

Short Sword. Melee Weapon Attack. +5, Reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

RAMSHORN SNEAK*Medium humanoid (any), any alignment***Armor Class** 12**Hit Points** 9 (2d6+2)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (-1) **INT** 13 (+1)**DEX** 15 (+2) **WIS** 10 (+0)**CON** 12 (+1) **CHA** 16 (+3)**Saving Throws** DEX +4, CHA +5**Skills** Acrobatics +4, Deception +5, Insight +2, Perception +2, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +4**Senses** passive Perception 12**Languages** Vintari, one other language (usually untari)**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

Cunning Action. The Ramshorn Sneak can Hide, Disengage, or Dash as a bonus action.

ACTIONS

Longbow. Ranged Weapon Attack. +7, Range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8+3) piercing damage.

Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack. +4, Reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d4+3) slashing damage.

Sneak Attack. The Ramshorn Sneak makes an attack with their dagger against an enemy against whom they have advantage or who is adjacent to one of the Sneak's ally. If the attack hits, it deals an additional 1d6 damage.

Lunatic Court**LUNATIC ACROBAT***Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 13 (leather armor)**Hit Points** 11 (2d8+2)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 10 (+0) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 15 (+2) **WIS** 8 (-1)**CON** 12 (+1) **CHA** 13 (+1)**Skills** Acrobatics +4, Stealth +4**Senses** passive Perception 10**Languages** Vintari, Gultari**Challenge** ¼ (50 XP)

Nimble Acrobatics. Whenever a creature makes a reaction attack against the Lunatic Acrobat, the Acrobat may make an Acrobatics check against the attack roll. If the Acrobatics check is higher than the attack roll, the attack misses automatically.

Called Shot. When the Lunatic Acrobat is making a weapon attack that is not at disadvantage, they can declare it a called shot. The attack roll is made with disadvantage, but if the attack hits there is an additional effect chosen from the list below.

Ankle shot. Target creature has their movement reduced by half.

Wrist shot. Target creature takes disadvantage on all attacks made using the targeted hand.

ACTIONS

Sickle. Melee Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4+2) slashing damage.

Throwing Knife. Ranged Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

RED JESTER*Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 14 (leather armor)**Hit Points** 19 (3d8+6)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 10 (+0) **INT** 12 (+1)**DEX** 17 (+3) **WIS** 8 (-1)**CON** 14 (+2) **CHA** 15 (+2)**Saving Throws** DEX +5, CHA +4**Skills** Acrobatics +5, Arcana +3, Perform +4, Stealth +7**Senses** passive Perception 9**Languages** Vintari, Gultari**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

Nimble Acrobatics. Whenever a creature makes a reaction attack against the Red Jester, the Jester may make an Acrobatics check against the attack roll. If the Acrobatics check is higher than the attack roll, the attack misses automatically.

Called Shot. When the Red Jester is making a weapon attack that is not at disadvantage, they can declare it a called shot. The attack roll is made with disadvantage, but if the attack hits there is an additional effect chosen from the list below.

Ankle shot. Target creature has their movement reduced by half.

Wrist shot. Target creature takes disadvantage on all attacks made using the targeted hand.

Eye shot. Target creature is blinded until healed by a lesser restoration spell or equivalent.

Flat strike. The red jester strikes the target with the flat of their blade. The target must make a DC 13 CON save or be stunned. The affected creature may make an additional save at the end of each of their turns to end the effect.

Spellcasting. The Red Jester is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). The Red Jester has the following bard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *minor illusion, vicious mockery*

1st level (4 slots): *bane, silent image, hideous laughter*

2nd level (2 slots): *crown of madness, heat metal, invisibility*

ACTIONS

Jester's Twins. The Red Jester attacks twice, either once with their rapier and once with their sickle or twice with their throwing knives.

Rapier. Melee Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 8 (1d8+3) piercing damage.

Sickle. Melee Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 6 (1d4+3) slashing damage.

Throwing Knife. Ranged Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

WHITE JESTER*Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 13 (leather armor)**Hit Points** 19 (3d8+6)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (-1) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 15 (+2) **WIS** 12 (+1)**CON** 14 (+2) **CHA** 17 (+3)**Saving Throws** DEX +4, CHA +5**Skills** Acrobatics +4, Deception +5, Perception +5, Perform +5, Stealth +4**Senses** passive Perception 15**Languages** Vintari, Gultari**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

Nimble Acrobatics. Whenever a creature makes a reaction attack against the White Jester, the Jester may make an Acrobatics check against the attack roll. If the Acrobatics check is higher than the attack roll, the attack misses automatically.

Lunatic Inspiration. As a reaction, the White Jester can add +1d6 to any ability check, attack roll, or saving throw made by a creature within 60 feet of them who can hear them. This ability can be used three times before a long rest must be taken to replenish it.

Spellcasting. The White Jester is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The White Jester has the following bard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *friends, true strike*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person, cure wounds*

2nd level (2 slots): *enhance ability, hold person, knock, suggestion*

ACTIONS

Sickle. Melee Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 6 (1d4+3) slashing damage.

Throwing Knife. Ranged Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

LUNATIC MAGICIAN*Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 10**Hit Points** 22 (4d6+8)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 10 (+0) **INT** 16 (+3)**DEX** 12 (+1) **WIS** 8 (-1)**CON** 14 (+2) **CHA** 18 (+4)**Saving Throws** WIS +1, CHA +6**Skills** Arcana +5, Deception +6, Perform +6**Senses** passive Perception 9**Languages** Vintari, Gultari**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

Tides of Chaos. The Lunatic Magician can manipulate the forces of chance and chaos to gain advantage on one attack roll, ability check, or saving throw. Once they do so, they must finish a long rest before they can use this ability again.

Font of Magic. The Lunatic Magician has five sorcery points. As a bonus action, they may spend 2 points to gain a bonus 1st level spell slot or 3 points to gain a 2nd level spell slot.

Careful Spell. The Lunatic Magician can spend one sorcery point in order to shape any spell that requires a saving throw and exclude up to four creatures of their choice within the spell's area of effect to be excluded from the effects of the spell.

Empowered Spell. The Lunatic Magician can spend one sorcery point to reroll up to 4 damage dice on any spell they cast.

Spellcasting. The Lunatic Magician is a 4th-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The Lunatic Magician has the following sorcerer spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *dancing lights, fire bolt, mage hand, minor illusion, prestidigitation*

1st level (4 slots): *burning hands, silent image*

2nd level (3 slots): *crown of madness, mirror image, scorching ray*

ACTIONS

Sickle. Melee Weapon Attack. +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 3 (1d4+1) slashing damage.

LUNATIC RINGMASTER*Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 15 (studded leather armor)**Hit Points** 33 (5d8+10)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (-1) **INT** 12 (+1)**DEX** 17 (+3) **WIS** 10 (+0)**CON** 14 (+2) **CHA** 17 (+3)**Saving Throws** DEX +6, CHA +6**Skills** Acrobatics +6, Arcana +4, Perform +9, Persuasion +6, Stealth +6**Senses** passive Perception 10**Languages** Vintari, Gultari**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

Nimble Acrobatics. Whenever a creature makes a reaction attack against the Lunatic Ringmaster, the Ringmaster may make an Acrobatics check against the attack roll. If the Acrobatics check is higher than the attack roll, the attack misses automatically.

Lunatic Leadership. As a reaction, the Lunatic Ringmaster can add +1d8 to any ability check, attack roll, or saving throw made by a creature within 60 feet of them who can hear them. This ability can be used three times before a short or long rest must be taken to replenish it.

Called Shot. When the Lunatic Ringmaster is making a weapon attack that is not at disadvantage, they can declare it a called shot. The attack roll is made with disadvantage, but if the attack hits there is an additional effect chosen from the list below.

Ankle shot. Target creature has their movement reduced by half.

Wrist shot. Target creature takes disadvantage on all attacks made using the targeted hand.

Eye shot. Target creature is blinded until healed by a lesser restoration spell or equivalent.

Flat strike. The lunatic ringmaster strikes the target with the flat of their blade. The target must make a DC 14 CON save or be stunned. The affected creature may make an additional save at the end of each of their turns to end the effect.

Artery shot. The lunatic ringmaster opens up a vital blood vein, usually in the thigh or armpit. The target takes 2d6 slashing damage at the end of each of their turns. The target continues bleeding until someone takes an action to bandage them and passes a DC 10 Medicine check or they receive at least one point of magical healing.

Spellcasting. The Lunatic Ringmaster is a 5th-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The Lunatic Ringmaster has the following bard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *friends, minor illusion, vicious mockery*

1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds, silent image, hideous laughter*

2nd level (3 slots): *enhance ability, invisibility*

3rd level (2 slots): *fear, hypnotic pattern, major image*

ACTIONS

Jester's Twins. The Lunatic Ringmaster attacks three times, either twice with their rapier and once with their sickle or three times with their throwing knives.

Rapier. Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8+3) piercing damage.

Sickle. Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4+3) slashing damage.

Throwing Knife. Ranged Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

CLOWN*Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 16 (half-plate)**Hit Points** 73 (7d12+28)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 16 (+3) **INT** 8 (–1)**DEX** 12 (+1) **WIS** 10 (+0)**CON** 18 (+4) **CHA** 13 (+1)**Skills** Athletics +6, Perform +4, Persuasion +4**Saving Throws** STR +6, CON +7**Resistances** Bludgeoning, piercing, slashing**Senses** passive Perception 10**Languages** Vintari, Gultari**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)**ACTIONS****Multiattack.** Clown makes three attacks with his great sword.**Great sword.** Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (2d6+5) slashing damage.**COLOMBINA***Medium humanoid***Armor Class** 13 (studded leather)**Hit Points** 40 (9d8)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (–1) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 12 (+1) **WIS** 20 (+5)**CON** 13 (+1) **CHA** 16 (+3)**Saving Throws** WIS +9, CHA +7**Skills** Insight +9, Performance +7, Persuasion +7**Senses** passive Perception 15**Languages** Vintari, Gultari**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)**Blessing of the Trickster.** Colombina touches a willing creature other than herself and grants them advantage on Stealth checks for one hour or until she uses this ability again.**Channel Divinity.** Colombina may channel the divine power of Klaus and Julianne twice before she must take a long rest to do so again. Each channeling may have any of the three following effects:

Turn Undead. All undead within thirty feet of Colombina who can see or hear her must make a DC 15 Wisdom save. If they fail and their CR is ½ or lower, they are immediately destroyed. If they fail and their CR is 1 or higher, it is turned and must flee from Colombina as fast as it can. For its action, it can only use the Dash action or try to escape an effect that prevents it from moving. If there's nowhere to run, the creature can use the Dodge action.

Invoke Duplicity. Colombina creates an illusory duplicate of herself within 120 feet that lasts for one minute or until she loses her concentration. As a bonus action, she can move the illusion up to thirty feet. When casting a spell, she may cast the spell from the illusion's position instead of her own. When the illusion is adjacent to a creature being attacked by Colombina or one of her allies, the attack gets advantage as they are flanked by the illusion. The illusion must remain within 120 feet of Colombina at all times.

Cloak of Shadows. Colombina becomes invisible until the end of her next turn. If she makes an attack or casts a spell, she becomes visible immediately.

Spellcasting. Colombina is a 9th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). Colombina has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, resistance, sacred flame, spare the dying*

1st level (4 slots): *bless, charm person, cure wounds, disguise self, guiding bolt*

2nd level (3 slots): *enhance ability, hold person, mirror image, pass without trace, prayer of healing*

3rd level (3 slots): *blink, dispel magic, mass healing word, protection from energy, remove curse, revivify*

4th level (3 slots): *death ward, dimension door, freedom of movement, polymorph*

5th level (1 slot): *dominate person, modify memory, raise dead*

ACTIONS**Sickle.** Melee Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 3 (1d4+1) slashing damage plus 4 (1d8) poison damage.

HARLEQUIN

Medium humanoid (human)

Armor Class 17 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 58 (9d8+18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR 10 (+0) **INT** 14 (+2)

DEX 20 (+5) **WIS** 12 (+1)

CON 16 (+3) **CHA** 18 (+4)

Saving Throws DEX +9, CHA +8

Skills Acrobatics +9, Arcana +6, Intimidation +8, Perform +12, Persuasion +8, Stealth +9

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Vintari, Gultari

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP)

Nimble Acrobatics. Whenever a creature makes a reaction attack against Harlequin, she may make an Acrobatics check against the attack roll. If the Acrobatics check is higher than the attack roll, the attack misses automatically.

Lunatic Leadership. As a reaction, Harlequin can add +1d8 to any ability check, attack roll, or saving throw made by a creature within 60 feet of her who can hear her. This ability can be used three times before a short or long rest must be taken to replenish it.

Called Shot. When Harlequin is making a weapon attack that is not at disadvantage, she can declare it a called shot. The attack roll is made with disadvantage, but if the attack hits there is an additional effect chosen from the list below.

Ankle shot. Target creature has their movement reduced by half.

Wrist shot. Target creature takes disadvantage on all attacks made using the targeted hand.

Eye shot. Target creature is blinded until healed by a lesser restoration spell or equivalent.

Flat strike. Harlequin strikes the target with the flat of their blade. The target must make a DC 14 CON save or be stunned. The affected creature may make an additional save at the end of each of their turns to end the effect.

Artery shot. Harlequin opens up a vital blood vein, usually in the thigh or armpit. The target takes 2d6 slashing damage at the end of each of their turns. The target continues bleeding until someone takes an action to bandage them and passes a DC 10 Medicine check or they receive at least one point of magical healing.

Red smile. Harlequin slits the target's throat. Her attack is automatically a critical hit and the target takes 3d6 slashing damage at the end of each of their turns. The target continues bleeding until someone takes an action to bandage them and passes a DC 10 Medicine check or they receive at least one point of magical healing.

Spellcasting. Harlequin is a 9th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). Harlequin has the following bard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *friends, minor illusion, vicious mockery*
 1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds, silent image, hideous laughter*
 2nd level (3 slots): *enhance ability, invisibility*
 3rd level (3 slots): *fear, hypnotic pattern, major image*
 4th level (3 slots): *confusion, freedom of movement, polymorph*
 5th level (1 slot): *animate objects*

ACTIONS

Harletwins. Harlequin attacks three times, either twice with her rapier and once with her sickle or three times with her throwing knives. If she attacks with her rapier and hits, the sickle attack she makes in the same action has advantage.

Rapier. Melee Weapon Attack. +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (1d8+5) piercing damage.

Sickle. Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d4+5) slashing damage.

Throwing Knife. Ranged Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

PANTALOOON

Medium humanoid

Armor Class 16 (breastplate)

Hit Points 24 (7d6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR 8 (-1) **INT** 13 (+1)

DEX 16 (+3) **WIS** 12 (+1)

CON 10 (+0) **CHA** 18 (+4)

Saving Throws WIS +4, CHA +7

Skills Deception +7, Insight +4, Perform +7

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Vintari, Mithrallar, Gultari

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Tides of Chaos. Pantaloon may grant advantage to any attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, regardless of whose it is. After Pantaloon uses this ability, he cannot use it again until he takes a long rest or casts a spell of 1st level or higher, which triggers a wild magic surge (see the table on pg. 104 of the PHB).

Font of Magic. Pantaloon has seven sorcery points. As a bonus action, he may spend 2 points to gain a bonus 1st level spell slot, 3 points to gain a 2nd level spell slot, 5 points to gain a 3rd level spell slot, and 6 points to gain a 4th level spell slot.

Quickened Spell. Pantaloon can spend two sorcery points to reduce the casting time of a spell from an action to a bonus action.

Empowered Spell. Pantaloon can spend one sorcery point to reroll up to 4 damage dice on any spell he casts.

Bend Luck. As a free action, Pantaloon may spend two sorcery points to roll 1d4 and apply the result as a bonus or penalty to any attack roll, ability check, or saving throw.

Spellcasting. Pantaloon is a 7th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). Pantaloon has the following sorcerer spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *dancing lights, fire bolt, friends, minor illusion, prestidigitation*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person, sleep*

2nd level (3 slots): *scorching ray, web*

3rd level (3 slots): *fear, lightning bolt, hypnotic pattern*

4th level (1 slot): *greater invisibility*

ACTIONS

Sickle. Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d4+3) slashing damage.

PIERROT*Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 16 (studded leather)**Hit Points** 52 (7d8+21)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (-1) **INT** 12 (+1)**DEX** 18 (+4) **WIS** 10 (+0)**CON** 16 (+3) **CHA** 13 (+1)**Skills** Acrobatics +10, Investigation +7, Perception +6, Perform +4, Sleight of Hand +7, Stealth +10**Saving Throws** DEX +7, INT +4**Senses** passive Perception 16**Languages** Vintari, Gultari**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)**Sneak Attack.** Once per turn, when Pierrot makes an attack on an enemy adjacent to one of his allies or against whom he has advantage, the attack deals an extra 4d6 (14) damage.**Cunning Action.** Pierrot may disengage, dash, or hide as a bonus action.**Assassinate.** Pierrot has advantage against any creature who has not yet acted in combat. Any hit Pierrot makes against a surprised creature is automatically a critical hit.**Uncanny Dodge.** When an attacker that Pierrot can see hits him with an attack, he can use his reaction to instead take half damage.**Evasion.** When Pierrot succeeds on a Dexterity save and would take half damage, he instead takes no damage (regardless of type). If he fails a Dexterity save, he still takes only half damage.**ACTIONS****Multiattack.** Pierrot makes two attacks with his scimitars or throwing knives.**Scimitar.** Melee Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6+4) slashing damage.**Throwing knife.** Ranged Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d4+4) slashing damage.*Order of the Lion***BISHOP CORNELIUS***Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 20 (plate armor w/shield)**Hit Points** 38 (7d8+7)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 10 (+0) **INT** 12 (+1)**DEX** 8 (-1) **WIS** 20 (+5)**CON** 13 (+1) **CHA** 16 (+3)**Saving Throws** WIS +8, CHA +6**Skills** Insight +8, Perception +8, Persuasion +6, Religion +4**Senses** passive Perception 18**Languages** Vintari, Untari, Ogtari, Gultari**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)**Spellcasting.** Bishop Cornelius is a 7th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). Bishop Cornelius has the following cleric spells prepared:Cantrips (at will): *light, mending, sacred flame, spare the dying*1st level (4 slots): *bless, cure wounds, guiding bolt*2nd level (3 slots): *enhance ability, hold person, prayer of healing*3rd level (3 slots): *dispel magic, magic circle, mass healing word, revivify*4th level (1 slot): *divination***Channel Divinity.** Bishop Cornelius may channel the divine power of Selemis, goddess of compassion and healing, twice before he must take a long rest to do so again. Each channeling may have any of the three following effects:

Turn Undead. All undead within thirty feet of Bishop Cornelius who can see or hear him must make a DC 16 Wisdom save. If they fail and their CR is ½ or lower, they are immediately destroyed. If they fail and their CR is 1 or higher, it is turned and must flee from Bishop Cornelius as fast as it can. For its action, it can only use the Dash action or try to escape an effect that prevents it from moving. If there's nowhere to run, the creature can use the Dodge action.

Preserve Life. As an action, Bishop Cornelius may heal up to 35 HP to any number of creatures within 30 feet of his location. This cannot heal them to above half health. After using this feature, Bishop Cornelius must finish a short rest before using it again.

Disciple of Selemis. Whenever Bishop Cornelius uses a spell of 1st level or higher to restore hit points to a creature, the creature regains additional hit points equal to 2 + the spell's level.**Blessed Healer.** Whenever Bishop Cornelius uses a spell of 1st level or higher to restore hit points to a creature other than himself, he regains hit points equal to 2 + that spell's level.**ACTIONS****Mace.** Melee Weapon Attack. +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.

DAME LEONA*Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 21 (plate w/shield +1)**Hit Points** 66 (7d10+28)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 20 (+5) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 13 (+1) **WIS** 12 (+1)**CON** 18 (+4) **CHA** 8 (-1)**Saving Throws** STR +8, CON +7**Skills** Animal Handling +4, Athletics +8, History +3, Perception +4**Resistances** Bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing attacks from non-magical weapons**Senses** passive Perception 14**Languages** Vintari, Untari, Ogtari**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)**Second Wind.** Dame Leona may use a bonus action to recover 12 (1d10+7) HP. After using this ability, Dame Leona must finish a short or long rest before using it again.**Action Surge.** Dame Leona may take an additional action on her turn. Once she uses this ability, Dame Leona must finish a short or long rest before using it again.**Improved Critical.** Dame Leona scores a critical hit on a natural roll of 19 or 20.**Mounted Charge.** If Dame Leona moves at least 20 ft. in a straight line while mounted and then attacks an unmounted creature smaller than the creature she is riding, her first attack deals an extra die of damage.**ACTIONS****Multiattack.** Dame Leona makes two attacks with her lance, long sword, or longbow.**Lance** +1. Melee Weapon Attack. +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 14 (1d12+8) piercing damage.**Long sword.** Melee Weapon Attack. +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (1d8+7) slashing damage.**Longbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage.**LION ARCHER***Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 13 (studded leather)**Hit Points** 7 (2d6)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 10 (+0) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 13 (+1) **WIS** 11 (+0)**CON** 12 (+1) **CHA** 10 (+0)**Skills** Acrobatics +3, Perception +2**Senses** passive Perception 12**Languages** Vintari, Untari**Challenge** ½ (100 XP)**ACTIONS****Longbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage.**Short sword.** Melee Weapon Attack. +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6+1) piercing damage.**LION INFANTRY***Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 15 (half-plate)**Hit Points** 22 (3d10+6)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 12 (+1) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 11 (+0) **WIS** 11 (+0)**CON** 14 (+2) **CHA** 10 (+0)**Skills** Athletics +3, Perception +2**Senses** passive Perception 12**Languages** Vintari, Untari**Challenge** ½ (100 XP)**Polearm Expert.** When you are wielding a glaive, pike, halberd, or quarterstaff, you may make a reaction attack against any creature that enters your threatened space.**ACTIONS****Halberd.** Melee Weapon Attack. +3 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d10+1) slashing damage.**LION KNIGHT***Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 18 (plate)**Hit Points** 37 (5d10+10)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 16 (+3) **INT** 12 (+1)**DEX** 10 (+0) **WIS** 11 (+0)**CON** 14 (+2) **CHA** 15 (+2)**Skills** Animal Handling +3, Athletics +6, History +4, Persuasion +5**Senses** passive Perception 10**Languages** Vintari, Untari**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)**Mounted Combatant.** While mounted, you have the following benefits:

- You have advantage on melee attack rolls against any unmounted creature that is smaller than your mount.
- You can force an attack targeted at your mount to target you instead.
- If your mount is subject to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take half damage, it instead takes no damage if it succeeds and half damage if it fails.

ACTIONS**Multiattack.** The Lion Knight attacks twice with their lance, longsword, or longbow.**Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** For one minute, the Lion Knight can utter a special warning or command whenever a creature who they can see, who can hear them, and who is within thirty feet of them makes an attack roll or saving throw. That creature gets +1d4 to the attack roll or saving throw. The effect ends if the knight is incapacitated.**Lance.** Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d12+3) piercing damage.**Longsword.** Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8+3) slashing damage.**Longbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack. +3 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d8) piercing damage.

PRINCE DARIUS*Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 24 (plate armor +2 w/shield +2)**Hit Points** 76 (9d10+27)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 20 (+5) **INT** 14 (+2)**DEX** 12 (+1) **WIS** 10 (+0)**CON** 16 (+3) **CHA** 18 (+4)**Saving Throws** CON +7, WIS +4, CHA +8**Skills** Animal Handling +4, Athletics +9, History +6, Insight +4, Perception +4, Persuasion +8, Religion +6**Resistances** Bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons.**Senses** passive Perception 14**Languages** Vintari, Untari, Ogtari, Gultari**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)**Spellcasting.** Prince Darius is a 5th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks).

Prince Darius has the following paladin spells prepared:

1st level (4 slots): *bane, command, cure wounds, heroism, wrathful smite, hunter's mark*2nd level (3 slots): *branding smite, hold person, misty step*3rd level (2 slots): *aura of vitality, blinding smite, crusader's mantle, haste, protection from energy***Divine Smite.** When Prince Darius hits with a weapon attack, he may expend a spell slot to deal additional radiant damage. The damage is 2d8 for a 1st level spell and an additional 1d8 for each spell level higher, to a maximum of 5d8. The damage increases by 1d8 if the target is an undead or a fiend.**Divine Health.** Prince Darius is immune to disease.**Aura of Protection.** When Prince Darius or a creature friendly to him and within 10 feet of him must make a saving throw, they get a +4 bonus to the saving throw.**Vow of Enmity.** As a bonus action, Prince Darius may declare a vow of enmity on a creature. He gets advantage on all attack rolls against this target until it drops to zero HP. After using this feature, Prince Darius must finish a short or long rest before using it again.**Relentless Avenger.** When you hit a creature with an opportunity attack, you can move up to half your speed as part of the same reaction. This movement does not provoke attacks of opportunity.**ACTIONS****Multiattack.** Prince Darius makes two attacks with his long sword or his longbow.**Lay on Hands.** Prince Darius may heal an adjacent creature from a pool of 45 HP. He can heal as many HP as he likes at once.

Alternatively, he may spend 5 HP to neutralize one poison or heal one disease. Once the pool has run out, Prince Darius may not use this feature again until he finishes a long rest.

Long sword +2. Melee Weapon Attack. +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (1d8+9) slashing damage.**Longbow** +1. Ranged Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.*Order of the Third Eye***BALTHAZAR***Medium humanoid***Armor Class** 10**Hit Points** 49 (9d6+18)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (−1) **INT** 20 (+5)**DEX** 10 (+0) **WIS** 16 (+3)**CON** 14 (+2) **CHA** 13 (+1)**Saving Throws** CON +6, INT +9, WIS +7**Skills** Arcana +9, Insight +7, Nature +9, Perception +7**Senses** passive Perception 17**Languages** Vintari, Draconic, Khalag**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP)**Transmuter's Stone.** Balthazar's transmuter's stone grants its bearer proficiency in CON saves. Whenever Balthazar casts a transmutation spell of 1st level or higher, he may alter the effect of his transmuter's stone to any of the following:

- Darkvision 60 ft.
- +10 speed when unencumbered
- Proficiency in CON saves
- Resistance to any one of acid, cold, fire, lightning, or thunder damage.

Spellcasting. Balthazar is a 9th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks).

Balthazar has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, mending, message, prestidigitation*1st level (4 slots): *burning hands, mage armor, shield*2nd level (3 slots): *alter self, enlarge/reduce, web*3rd level (3 slots): *fireball, fly, haste, lightning bolt*4th level (3 slots): *conjure minor elementals, dimension door, polymorph*5th level (1 slot): *animate objects***ACTIONS****Rapier.** Melee Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 4 (1d8) piercing damage.

CASPAR*Medium humanoid***Armor Class** 11**Hit Points** 24 (7d6)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (−1) **INT** 20 (+5)**DEX** 12 (+1) **WIS** 16 (+3)**CON** 10 (+0) **CHA** 13 (+1)**Saving Throws** INT +8, WIS +6**Skills** Arcana +8, Insight +6, Perception +6, Persuasion +4**Senses** passive Perception 16**Languages** Vintari, Gultari, Mithrallar, Draconic**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

Sculpt Spells. When Caspar casts an evocation spell, he can exclude creatures numbering up to 1 + the spell's level from the effects. These creatures automatically succeed on saves against the spell, and take no damage from any effect that deals half damage on a successful save.

Potent Cantrip. Whenever a creature succeeds on a save against one of Caspar's cantrips, they take half damage from the cantrip (but suffer no other effects).

Spellcasting. Caspar is a 7th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). Caspar has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt, light, mage hand, shocking grasp*
1st level (4 slots): *burning hands, mage armor, magic missile, shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *acid arrow, hold person, scorching ray, web*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, fireball, lightning bolt*

4th level (1 slot): *ice storm*

ACTIONS

Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack. +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 1 (1d4−1) piercing damage.

MELCHIOR*Medium humanoid***Armor Class** 10**Hit Points** 31 (7d6+7)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (−1) **INT** 20 (+5)**DEX** 10 (+0) **WIS** 13 (+1)**CON** 12 (+1) **CHA** 16 (+3)**Saving Throws** INT +8, WIS +4**Skills** Arcana +8, Insight +4, Perception +4, Persuasion +6**Senses** passive Perception 14**Languages** Vintari, Gultari, Draconic**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

Arcane Ward. Whenever Melchior casts an abjuration spell of 1st level or higher, he may create an arcane ward on himself.

Whenever Melchior would take damage, the ward takes the damage instead. If the ward is reduced to 0 HP by an attack, Melchior takes any leftover damage. If a creature within 30 feet of Melchior takes damage while he has an active arcane ward, he may choose to take the damage to the ward instead. If the ward is dropped to 0 HP, the target creature takes the remaining damage.

Spellcasting. Melchior is a 7th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks).

Melchior has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *blade ward, fire bolt, mage hand, message*

1st level (4 slots): *burning hands, mage armor, shield, sleep*

2nd level (3 slots): *alter self, scorching ray, web*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell, dispel magic, lightning bolt*

4th level (1 slot): *private sanctum, stoneskin*

ACTIONS

Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack. +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 1 (1d4−1) piercing damage.

Order of the Wyrd**SHARRA***Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 15 (hide armor)**Hit Points** 31 (9d8)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (−1) **INT** 12 (+1)**DEX** 16 (+3) **WIS** 20 (+5)**CON** 10 (+0) **CHA** 13 (+1)**Saving Throws** INT +5, WIS +9**Skills** Insight +9, Nature +5, Perception +9, Survival +9**Senses** passive Perception 18**Languages** Vintari, Mithrallar, Gultari**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

Spellcasting. Sharra is a 9th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks).

Sharra has the following druid spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *druidcraft, guidance, mending, poison spray, thorn whip*

1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds, speak with animals, thunderwave*

2nd level (3 slots): *barkskin, enhance ability, hold person, spider climb*

3rd level (3 slots): *call lightning, conjure animals, dispel magic, plant growth, speak with plants*

4th level (3 slots): *confusion, divination, freedom of movement, ice storm, stoneskin, wall of fire*

5th level (1 slot): *commune with nature, mass cure wounds, tree stride, wall of stone*

ACTIONS

Wild Shape. Sharra transforms into any beast type creature of CR 1 or lower. She may revert back using a bonus action, and reverts back automatically if her hit points reach zero. Her statistics are replaced by the statistics of her beast form except for her Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma, and she retains all proficiencies she already has in addition to gaining those of the creature. While transformed, she assumes the beast's hit points and hit dice, and when she reverts back to normal form, she has the same hit points as when she first transformed, however if she reverts as a result of dropping to 0 hit points, any excess damage carries over to her normal form. Sharra may wild shape twice before she must finish a short or long rest to use this ability again.

Quarterstaff. Melee Weapon Attack. +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 2 (1d6−1) bludgeoning damage.

TALON*Medium humanoid***Armor Class** 15 in humanoid form, 16 (natural armor) in wolf or hybrid form**Hit Points** 73 (7d12+28)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 22 (+6) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 12 (+1) **WIS** 13 (+1)**CON** 18 (+4) **CHA** 8 (-1)**Saving Throws** CON +7, WIS +4**Skills** Athletics +8, Perception +4, Stealth +4, Survival +4**Resistances** Bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from non-silvered, non-magical weapons**Senses** passive Perception 19**Languages** Vintari, Mithrallar**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)**Keen Smell.** Talon has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.**Shapechanger.** Talon can use her action to polymorph into human, wolf, or human-wolf hybrid form. The statistics given are for her hybrid form. In humanoid and wolf form, her hit dice are d8s and thus her health is 59 instead of 73 in wolf form, she deals 2 less damage on all melee attacks (this is already included in the longbow and long sword stat blocks – bite is reduced to 1d8+6) and she has no resistances. In humanoid form, her Strength and Constitution are reduced by 2, to 20 and 16, respectively, further reducing her HP to 52 in humanoid form.**Pack Tactics.** Talon has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of her allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.**ACTIONS****Multiattack.** In humanoid form, Talon makes two attacks with her longbow or long sword. In hybrid form, Talon makes three attacks, one with her bite and two with her claws. Talon cannot multiattack in wolf form.**Longbow (humanoid form only).** Ranged Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage. Talon may attempt to use her longbow in hybrid form, but every time she attacks she must make a DC 15 DEX save or else snap the bow.**Long sword (humanoid form only).** Melee Weapon Attack. +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d8+5) slashing damage. The hilt is too short for Talon to effectively wield a long sword in her hybrid form.**Bite (wolf or hybrid form only).** Melee Weapon Attack. +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (1d8+8) piercing damage. If the target is humanoid, they must succeed on a DC 12 saving throw or be cursed with werewolf lycanthropy.**Claws (hybrid form only).** Melee Weapon Attack. +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (2d4+8) slashing damage.**VINCENT***Medium humanoid***Armor Class** 17 (studded leather)**Hit Points** 68 (8d10+24)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 12 (+1) **INT** 8 (-1)**DEX** 20 (+5) **WIS** 13 (+1)**CON** 16 (+3) **CHA** 10 (+0)**Saving Throws** DEX +8, WIS +4**Skills** Acrobatics +8, Insight +4, Perception +4, Survival +4**Senses** passive Perception 19**Languages** Vintari, Mithrallar, Gultari**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)**Keen Hearing and Sight.** Vincent has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or sight.**Two Weapon Fighting.** When Vincent makes an attack with their short sword, they may make another short sword attack as a bonus action.**Colossus Slayer.** Once per turn, when Vincent hits a creature below its hit point maximum, they deal an extra 1d8 damage.**Multiattack Defense.** When Vincent is hit by an attack, he gains +4 AC against all attacks made by the same creature for the rest of the turn.**Spellcasting.** Vincent is a 4th-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks).

Vincent has the following ranger spells prepared:

1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds*, *goodberry*, *hail of thorns*, *hunter's mark*2nd level (2 slots): *barkskin***ACTIONS****Multiattack.** Vincent makes two attacks with his longbow or short sword.**Longbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack. +10 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 13 (1d8+9) piercing damage.**Short swords.** Melee Weapon Attack. +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 12 (1d6+9) piercing damage.

WYRD WARRIOR*Medium humanoid***Armor Class** 13 (hide)**Hit Points** 15 (2d12+2)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 14 (+2) **INT** 8 (−1)**DEX** 13 (+1) **WIS** 11 (+0)**CON** 12 (+1) **CHA** 10 (+0)**Skills** Athletics +4, Survival +2**Resistances** Bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from non-magical weapons**Senses** passive Perception 10**Languages** Vintari, Mithrallar**Challenge** ¼ (50 XP)

Pack Tactics. The Wyrd Warrior has advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of the warrior's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Battle axe. Melee Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8+2) slashing damage.

Throwing axe. Ranged Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6+2) slashing damage.

WYRD SCOUT*Medium humanoid***Armor Class** 14 (studded leather)**Hit Points** 16 (3d8+3)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 11 (+0) **INT** 8 (−1)**DEX** 14 (+2) **WIS** 13 (+1)**CON** 12 (+1) **CHA** 10 (+0)**Saving Throws** DEX +4, WIS +3**Skills** Acrobatics +4, Perception +3, Stealth +4, Survival +3**Senses** passive Perception 18**Languages** Vintari, Mithrallar**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

Two Weapon Fighting. When the Wyrd Scout makes an attack with their short sword, they may make another short sword attack as a bonus action.

Keen Hearing and Sight. The Wyrd Scout has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or sight.

Sneak Attack. Once per turn, the Wyrd Scout can deal an extra 2d6 damage when they hit a target with advantage on the attack roll or if the target is adjacent to a friendly creature.

ACTIONS

Longbow. Ranged Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

Short swords. Melee Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

WYRD KNIGHT*Medium humanoid***Armor Class** 16 (studded leather)**Hit Points** 42 (5d10+15)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 12 (+1) **INT** 8 (−1)**DEX** 18 (+4) **WIS** 13 (+1)**CON** 16 (+3) **CHA** 10 (+0)**Saving Throws** DEX +7, WIS +4**Skills** Acrobatics +7, Perception +4, Survival +4**Senses** passive Perception 19**Languages** Vintari, Mithrallar**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

Keen Hearing and Sight. The Wyrd Knight has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on hearing or sight.

Two Weapon Fighting. When the Wyrd Knight makes an attack with their short sword, they may make another short sword attack as a bonus action.

Colossus Slayer. Once per turn, when the Wyrd Knight hits a creature below its hit point maximum, they deal an extra 1d8 damage.

Spellcasting. The Wyrd Knight is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). The Wyrd Knight has the following ranger spells prepared:

1st level (4 slots): *cure wounds*, *hail of thorns*, *hunter's mark*

2nd level (3 slots): *barkskin*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Wyrd Knight makes two attacks with his longbow or short sword.

Longbow. Ranged Weapon Attack. +9 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (1d8+6) piercing damage.

Short sword. Melee Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 9 (1d6+6) piercing damage.

Vlatla Clan

LIDIA VLATLA*Medium undead***Armor Class** 17 (natural armor)**Hit Points** 66 (7d12+21)**Speed** 30 ft., climb 20 ft.**STR** 16 (+3) **INT** 11 (+0)**DEX** 20 (+5) **WIS** 10 (+0)**CON** 16 (+3) **CHA** 15 (+2)**Saving Throws** DEX +8, WIS +3**Skills** Acrobatics +8, Deception +8, Perception +3, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +11**Vulnerabilities** Radiant**Resistances** Necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical weapons**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13**Languages** Tvalti, Vintari**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)

Regeneration. Lidia Vlatla regains 10 hit points at the start of her turn if she has at least one hit point and isn't in sunlight or running water. If Lidia takes radiant damage, this trait stops working for one turn.

Shapechanger. If Lidia Vlatla isn't in sunlight or running water, she can use her bonus action to transform into a bat, rat, or wolf. If her HP is reduced to zero in her alternate form, she is returned to her normal form at the same HP she was when she entered it, however any excess damage from the attack that reduced her alternate form to zero will spill over to damage her. While in animal form, Lidia Vlatla retains her intelligence, vampiric powers, and vampiric weaknesses.

Mist Form. If Lidia Vlatla isn't in sunlight or running water, she can use her bonus action to transform into mist. While in mist form, Lidia is immune to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from non-magical weapons and has resistance against bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from magical weapons. She gains a 30 ft. fly speed and can fit through any space small enough to let air through, and she may revert to her vampire form as a free action.

Vampire Weaknesses. Lidia Vlatla has the following weaknesses:

- **Forbiddance.** Lidia Vlatla can't enter an inhabited building without an invitation from one of the inhabitants. To count as an inhabitant, a creature must not be a fey, fiend, undead, or celestial and must have taken a long rest in the building.
- **Harmed by Running Water.** Lidia Vlatla takes 20 acid damage when they end their turn in running water.
- **Stake to the Heart.** If Lidia's heart is pierced by wood, she is pinned in place and cannot move a muscle. Any critical hit from a wooden weapon dealing piercing damage will paralyze Lidia until the weapon is removed.
- **Sunlight Sensitivity.** Lidia has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks while in sunlight. Additionally, many of her powers do not work in sunlight.

Enthralled. Lidia Vlatla must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom save in order to make any attempt to directly harm, deceive, or disobey her sire, Petre Vlatla. Even if she passes the save, any such attempts take disadvantage. Lidia may freely engage in indirect harm and malicious compliance, and may still tell half-truths or keep secrets.

Sneak Attack. Once per turn, when Lidia Vlatla hits an opponent she has advantage on or who is adjacent to one of her allies, she may deal an additional 4d6 damage.

Cunning Action. Lidia Vlatla may disengage, dash, or hide as a bonus action.

Misty Counter. When Lidia Vlatla is hit with an attack, she may use her reaction to turn into mist for the duration, making her immune to any non-magical bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage dealt by the attack and resistant to any magical damage of the same types. She may move up to one square as part of the same reaction, and if she is adjacent to the attacker after moving, she may make an attack of opportunity on them as part of the same reaction.

Misty Evasion. When Lidia Vlatla succeeds on a Dexterity save and would take half damage, she turns to mist and instead takes no damage (regardless of type). If she fails a Dexterity save, she still takes only half damage.

Spellcasting. Lidia Vlatla is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks).

Lidia Vlatla has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *fire bolt*, *mage hand*

1st level (4 slots): *mage armor*, *sleep*, *hideous laughter*

2nd level (2 slots): *ray of enfeeblement*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Lidia Vlatla makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

Rapier. Melee Weapon Attack. +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 9 (1d8+5) piercing damage.

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 8 (2d4+3) slashing damage. Instead of dealing damage, Lidia Vlatla can grapple the target (escape DC 13).

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature or creature that is grappled by Lidia, incapacitated, or restrained. Hit: 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by the necrotic damage taken, and Lidia Vlatla is healed equal to the necrotic damage dealt. The reduction lasts until the target takes a long rest. If the target's maximum hit points are reduced to zero by the vampire's bite, they instantly die and will return as a Lidia thrall at the next moon rise.

NATALIA VLATLA*Medium undead***Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)**Hit Points** 66 (7d12+21)**Speed** 30 ft., climb 20 ft.**STR** 16 (+3) **INT** 18 (+4)**DEX** 16 (+3) **WIS** 10 (+0)**CON** 16 (+3) **CHA** 13 (+1)**Saving Throws** DEX +6, WIS +3**Skills** Arcana +7, History +10, Perception +3, Stealth +6**Vulnerabilities** Radiant**Resistances** Necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical weapons**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13**Languages** Tvalti, Vintari**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)

Regeneration. Natalia Vlatla regains 10 hit points at the start of her turn if she has at least one hit point and isn't in sunlight or running water. If Natalia takes radiant damage, this trait stops working for one turn.

Shapechanger. If Natalia Vlatla isn't in sunlight or running water, she can use her bonus action to transform into a bat, rat, or wolf. If her HP is reduced to zero in her alternate form, she is returned to her normal form at the same HP she was when she entered it, however any excess damage from the attack that reduced her alternate form to zero will spill over to damage her. While in animal form, Natalia Vlatla retains her intelligence, vampiric powers, and vampiric weaknesses.

Vampire Weaknesses. Natalia Vlatla has the following weaknesses:

- **Forbiddance.** Natalia Vlatla can't enter an inhabited building without an invitation from one of the inhabitants. To count as an inhabitant, a creature must not be a fey, fiend, undead, or celestial and must have taken a long rest in the building.
- **Harmed by Running Water.** Natalia Vlatla takes 20 acid damage when they end their turn in running water.
- **Stake to the Heart.** If Natalia's heart is pierced by wood, she is pinned in place and cannot move a muscle. Any critical hit from a wooden weapon dealing piercing damage will paralyze Natalia until the weapon is removed.
- **Sunlight Sensitivity.** Natalia has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks while in sunlight. Additionally, many of her powers do not work in sunlight.

Enthralled. Natalia Vlatla must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom save in order to make any attempt to directly harm, deceive, or disobey her sire, Petre Vlatla. Even if she passes the save, any such attempts take disadvantage. Natalia may freely engage in indirect harm and malicious compliance, and may still tell half-truths or keep secrets.

Blood Magic. When Natalia Vlatla drains health using necrotic damage (for example, using her bite attack or the vampiric touch spell), instead of healing, she may set the damage dealt aside as blood points. As a bonus action, she may convert the blood points into spell slots, paying 10 blood points per level of the slot she is restoring. She cannot use blood magic to get more slots than her maximum, nor to refresh spell slots of a higher level than she actually has. Natalia loses all her excess blood points whenever she takes a long rest. Natalia usually has 40 or 50 spare blood points at any given time, but she may have as many as double or triple that if preparing for a specific occasion.

Undead Thralls. When Natalia Vlatla casts animate dead, she may raise or command one additional skeleton or zombie. Any undead she creates using any necromancy spell has its hit point maximum increased by 7 and adds +3 to its damage rolls.

Spellcasting. Natalia Vlatla is a 7th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). Natalia Vlatla has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *fire bolt*, *mage hand*

1st level (4 slots): *burning hands*, *mage armor*, *sleep*, *hideous laughter*

2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *scorching ray*

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead*, *lightning bolt*, *vampiric touch*

4th level (1 slot): *blight*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Natalia Vlatla makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 8 (2d4+3) slashing damage. Instead of dealing damage, Natalia Vlatla can grapple the target (escape DC 13).

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature or creature that is grappled by Natalia, incapacitated, or restrained. Hit: 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by the necrotic damage taken, and Natalia Vlatla is healed equal to the necrotic damage dealt. The reduction lasts until the target takes a long rest. If the target's maximum hit points are reduced to zero by the vampire's bite, they instantly die and will return as a Natalia Thrall at the next moon rise.

NICOLAE VLATLA*Medium undead***Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)**Hit Points** 73 (7d12+28)**Speed** 30 ft., climb 20 ft.**STR** 18 (+4) **INT** 11 (+0)**DEX** 18 (+4) **WIS** 10 (+0)**CON** 18 (+4) **CHA** 15 (+2)**Saving Throws** DEX +7, CON +7, WIS +3**Skills** Athletics +7, Perception +3, Persuasion +5, Stealth +7**Vulnerabilities** Radiant**Resistances** Necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical weapons**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13**Languages** Tvalti, Vintari**Challenge** 8 (3,900 XP)

Regeneration. Nicolae Vlatla regains 10 hit points at the start of his turn if he has at least one hit point and isn't in sunlight or running water. If Nicolae takes radiant damage, this trait stops working for one turn.

Shapechanger. If Nicolae Vlatla isn't in sunlight or running water, he can use his bonus action to transform into a bat, rat, or wolf. If his HP is reduced to zero in his alternate form, he is returned to his normal form at the same HP he was when he entered it, however any excess damage from the attack that reduced his alternate form to zero will spill over to damage him. While in animal form, Nicolae Vlatla retains his intelligence, vampiric powers, and vampiric weaknesses.

Vampire Weaknesses. Nicolae Vlatla has the following weaknesses:

- **Forbiddance.** Nicolae Vlatla can't enter an inhabited building without an invitation from one of the inhabitants. To count as an inhabitant, a creature must not be a fey, fiend, undead, or celestial and must have taken a long rest in the building.
- **Harmed by Running Water.** Nicolae Vlatla takes 20 acid damage when he ends his turn in running water.
- **Stake to the Heart.** If Nicolae's heart is pierced by wood, he is pinned in place and cannot move a muscle. Any critical hit from a wooden weapon dealing piercing damage will paralyze Nicolae until the weapon is removed.
- **Sunlight Sensitivity.** Nicolae has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks while in sunlight. Additionally, many of his powers do not work in sunlight.

Enthralled. Nicolae Vlatla must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom save in order to make any attempt to directly harm, deceive, or disobey his sire, Petre Vlatla. Even if he passes the save, any such attempts take disadvantage. Nicolae may freely engage in indirect harm and malicious compliance, and may still tell half-truths or keep secrets.

Blood Discipline. When Nicolae Vlatla drains health with the necrotic damage of his bite attack, instead of healing, he can set the drained health aside as blood points. Nicolae Vlatla may spend five blood points each to activate any number of the following effects for a single round:

- **Auspex.** Nicolae Vlatla has advantage on all WIS checks and he gains Truesight out to 30 ft.
- **Celerity.** Nicolae Vlatla has +2 AC, advantage on all DEX checks, and may take an extra action on his turn. This action must be to either make a single attack, dash, disengage, hide, or use an object.
- **Dominate.** Nicolae Vlatla has advantage on all INT checks. As an action, he may roll Persuasion against the Wisdom save of any creature who he can see and who can see him. If they fail, they are dominated as though by the dominate monster spell. A creature may make themselves immune by closing their eyes or otherwise blinding themselves, but only if they do so continuously (i.e. you cannot declare that you are closing your eyes only when Nicolae Vlatla is attempting to dominate you).
- **Fortitude.** Nicolae Vlatla has advantage on all CON checks and his regeneration increases to 15 points per round.
- **Potence.** Nicolae Vlatla has advantage on all STR checks and doubles the damage dice on all attacks.
- **Presence.** Nicolae Vlatla has advantage on all CHA checks. As an action, he may roll Persuasion against the Wisdom save of all creatures within 30 feet who he can see and who can see him. If they fail, they are charmed as though by the charm person spell.

Nicolae can have as many effects active simultaneously as he has the blood points to sustain. Whenever Nicolae takes a long rest, he loses all of his excess blood points. He usually has 40 or 50 blood points on hand at any given time, but may drain significantly more in preparation for a major confrontation.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Nicolae Vlatla makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

Rapier. Melee Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 8 (1d8+4) piercing damage.

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 9 (2d4+4) slashing damage. Instead of dealing damage, Nicolae Vlatla can grapple the target (escape DC 14).

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature or creature that is grappled by Nicolae, incapacitated, or restrained. Hit: 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by the necrotic damage taken, and Natalia Vlatla is healed equal to the necrotic damage dealt. The reduction lasts until the target takes a long rest. If the target's maximum hit points are reduced to zero by the vampire's bite, they instantly die and will return as a Nicolae Thrall at the next moon rise.

PETRE VLATLA*Medium undead***Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)**Hit Points** 85 (9d12+27)**Speed** 30 ft., climb 20 ft.**STR** 16 (+3) **INT** 16 (+3)**DEX** 18 (+4) **WIS** 10 (+0)**CON** 16 (+3) **CHA** 14 (+2)**Saving Throws** DEX +8, CON +7, WIS +4**Skills** Athletics +7, History +11, Perception +4, Stealth +8**Vulnerabilities** Radiant**Resistances** Necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical weapons**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14**Languages** Tvalti, Vintari**Challenge** 9 (5,000 XP)

Regeneration. Petre Vlatla regains 10 hit points at the start of his turn if he has at least one hit point and isn't in sunlight or running water. If Petre takes radiant damage, this trait stops working for one turn.

Shapechanger. If Petre Vlatla isn't in sunlight or running water, he can use his bonus action to transform into a bat, rat, or wolf. If his HP is reduced to zero in his alternate form, he is returned to his normal form at the same HP he was when he entered it, however any excess damage from the attack that reduced his alternate form to zero will spill over to damage him. While in animal form, Petre Vlatla retains his intelligence, vampiric powers, and vampiric weaknesses.

Mist Form. If Petre Vlatla isn't in sunlight or running water, he can use his bonus action to transform into mist. While in mist form, Petre is immune to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from non-magical weapons and has resistance against bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from magical weapons. He gains a 30 ft. fly speed and can fit through any space small enough to let air through, and he may revert to her vampire form as a free action.

Vampire Weaknesses. Petre Vlatla has the following weaknesses:

- **Forbiddance.** Petre Vlatla can't enter an inhabited building without an invitation from one of the inhabitants. To count as an inhabitant, a creature must not be a fey, fiend, undead, or celestial and must have taken a long rest in the building.
- **Harmed by Running Water.** Petre Vlatla takes 20 acid damage when he ends his turn in running water.
- **Stake to the Heart.** If Petre's heart is pierced by wood, he is pinned in place and cannot move a muscle. Any critical hit from a wooden weapon dealing piercing damage will paralyze Petre until the weapon is removed.
- **Sunlight Sensitivity.** Petre has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks while in sunlight. Additionally, many of his powers do not work in sunlight.

Misty Counter. When Petre Vlatla is hit with an attack, he may use his reaction to turn into mist for the duration, making him immune to any non-magical bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage dealt by the attack and resistant to any magical damage of the same types. He may move up to one square as part of the same reaction, and if he is adjacent to the attacker after moving, he may make an attack of opportunity on them as part of the same reaction.

Blood Discipline. When Petre Vlatla drains health using necrotic damage (for example, using her bite attack or the vampiric touch spell), instead of healing, he can set the drained health aside as blood points. Petre Vlatla may spend five blood points each to activate any number of the following effects for a single round:

- **Auspex.** Petre Vlatla has advantage on all WIS checks and he gains Truesight out to 30 ft.
- **Celerity.** Petre Vlatla has +2 AC, advantage on all DEX checks, and may take an extra action on his turn. This action must be either a single attack, dash, disengage, hide, or use an object.
- **Dominate.** Nicolat Vlatla has advantage on all INT checks. As an action, he may roll Persuasion against the Wisdom save of any creature who he can see and who can see him. If they fail, they are dominated as though by the dominate monster spell. A creature may make themselves immune by closing their eyes or otherwise blinding themselves, but only if they do so continuously (i.e. you cannot declare that you are closing your eyes only when Petre Vlatla is attempting to dominate you).
- **Fortitude.** Petre Vlatla has advantage on all CON checks and his regeneration increases to 15 points per round.
- **Potency.** Petre Vlatla has advantage on all STR checks and doubles the damage dice on all attacks.
- **Presence.** Petre Vlatla has advantage on all CHA checks. As an action, he may roll Persuasion against the Wisdom save of all creatures within 30 feet who he can see and who can see him. If they fail, they are charmed as though by the *charm person* spell.

Petre can have as many effects active simultaneously as he has the blood points to sustain. Whenever Petre takes a long rest, he loses all of his excess blood points. He usually has 70 or 80 blood points on hand at any given time, but may drain significantly more in preparation for a major confrontation.

Blood Magic. When Petre Vlatla drains health using necrotic damage (for example, using her bite attack or the vampiric touch spell), instead of healing, he may set the damage dealt aside as blood points. As a bonus action, he may convert the blood points into spell slots, paying 10 blood points per level of the slot he is restoring. He cannot use blood magic to get more slots than his maximum, nor to refresh spell slots of a higher level than he actually has. Petre loses all her excess blood points whenever she takes a long rest. Natalia usually has 70 or 80 spare blood points at any given time, but he may have as many as double or triple that if preparing for a specific occasion.

Spellcasting. Petre Vlatla is a 9th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks).

Petre Vlatla has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *fire bolt*, *mage hand*

1st level (4 slots): *burning hands*, *mage armor*, *sleep*, *hideous laughter*

2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *scorching ray*

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead*, *lightning bolt*, *vampiric touch*

4th level (3 slots): *blight*

5th level (1 slot): *cloudkill*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Petre Vlatla makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 8 (2d4+3) slashing damage. Instead of dealing damage, Petre Vlatla can grapple the target (escape DC 13).

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature or creature that is grappled by Petre, incapacitated, or restrained. Hit: 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by the necrotic damage taken, and Petre Vlatla is healed equal to the necrotic damage dealt. The reduction lasts until the target takes a long rest. If the target's maximum hit points are reduced to zero by the vampire's bite, they instantly die and will return as a Petre Thrall at the next moon rise.

TEREZA VLATLA*Medium undead***Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)**Hit Points** 66 (7d12+21)**Speed** 30 ft., climb 20 ft.**STR** 16 (+3) **INT** 11 (+0)**DEX** 16 (+3) **WIS** 10 (+0)**CON** 16 (+3) **CHA** 13 (+1)**Saving Throws** DEX +6, WIS +3**Skills** History +6, Perception +3, Stealth +6**Vulnerabilities** Radiant**Resistances** Necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical weapons**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13**Languages** Tvalti, Vintari**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

Regeneration. Tereza Vlatla regains 10 hit points at the start of his turn if she has at least one hit point and isn't in sunlight or running water. If Tereza takes radiant damage, this trait stops working for one turn.

Shapechanger. If Tereza Vlatla isn't in sunlight or running water, she can use her bonus action to transform into a bat, rat, or wolf. If her HP is reduced to zero in her alternate form, she is returned to her normal form at the same HP she was when she entered it, however any excess damage from the attack that reduced her alternate form to zero will spill over to damage her. While in animal form, Tereza Vlatla retains her intelligence, vampiric powers, and vampiric weaknesses.

Vampire Weaknesses. Tereza Vlatla has the following weaknesses:

- **Forbiddance.** Tereza Vlatla can't enter an inhabited building without an invitation from one of the inhabitants. To count as an inhabitant, a creature must not be a fey, fiend, undead, or celestial and must have taken a long rest in the building.
- **Harmed by Running Water.** Tereza Vlatla takes 20 acid damage when she ends her turn in running water.
- **Stake to the Heart.** If Tereza's heart is pierced by wood, she is pinned in place and cannot move a muscle. Any critical hit from a wooden weapon dealing piercing damage will paralyze Tereza until the weapon is removed.
- **Sunlight Sensitivity.** Tereza has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks while in sunlight. Additionally, many of her powers do not work in sunlight.

Enthralled. Tereza Vlatla must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom save in order to make any attempt to directly harm, deceive, or disobey her sire, Petre Vlatla. Even if she passes the save, any such attempts take disadvantage. Tereza may freely engage in indirect harm and malicious compliance, and may still tell half-truths or keep secrets.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Tereza Vlatla makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 8 (2d4+3) slashing damage. Instead of dealing damage, Tereza Vlatla can grapple the target (escape DC 13).

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature or creature that is grappled by Tereza, incapacitated, or restrained. Hit: 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by the necrotic damage taken, and Tereza Vlatla is healed equal to the necrotic damage dealt. The reduction lasts until the target takes a long rest. If the target's maximum hit points are reduced to zero by the vampire's bite, they instantly die and will return as a Tereza Thrall at the next moon rise.

VLATLA THRALL*Medium undead***Armor Class** 15 (natural armor)**Hit Points** 47 (5d12+15)**Speed** 30 ft., climb 20 ft.**STR** 16 (+3) **INT** 11 (+0)**DEX** 16 (+3) **WIS** 10 (+0)**CON** 16 (+3) **CHA** 12 (+1)**Saving Throws** DEX +6, WIS +3**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +6**Vulnerabilities** Radiant**Resistances** Necrotic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from non-magical weapons**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13**Languages** Vintari**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

Regeneration. The Vlatla thrall regains 10 hit points at the start of their turn if they have at least one hit point and isn't in sunlight or running water. If the thrall takes radiant damage, this trait stops working for one turn.

Shapechanger. If the Vlatla thrall isn't in sunlight or running water, they can use their bonus action to transform into a bat, rat, or wolf. If their HP is reduced to zero in their alternate form, they are returned to their normal form at the same HP they were when they entered it, however any excess damage from the attack that reduced their alternate form to zero will spill over to damage them. While in animal form, the Vlatla thrall retains their intelligence, vampiric powers, and vampiric weaknesses.

Mist Form (Lidia and Petre thralls only). If the Vlatla thrall isn't in sunlight or running water, they can use their bonus action to transform into mist. While in mist form, the thrall is immune to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from non-magical weapons and has resistance against bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from magical weapons. They gain a 30 ft. fly speed and can fit through any space small enough to let air through, and they may revert to their vampire form as a free action. Vlatla thralls can and do use this to change position without provoking opportunity attacks or to float past a front line to attack squishies in the back.

Blood Discipline (Nicolae and Petre thralls only). When the Vlatla thrall drains health with necrotic damage (as in their bite attack or when using the vampiric touch spell, if they have it), instead of healing, they can set the drained health aside as blood points. The Vlatla thrall may spend five blood points each to activate any number of the following effects for a single round:

- **Celerity.** The Vlatla thrall has +2 AC, advantage on all DEX checks, and may take an extra action on their turn. This action must be to either make a single attack, dash, disengage, hide, or use an object.
- **Fortitude.** The Vlatla thrall has advantage on all CON checks and their regeneration increases to 15 points per round.
- **Potence.** The Vlatla thrall has advantage on all STR checks and doubles the damage dice on all attacks.

The Vlatla thrall can have as many effects active simultaneously as they have the blood points to sustain. Whenever the Vlatla thrall takes a long rest, they lose all of their excess blood points. They usually have 10 or 15 blood points on hand at any given time.

Spellcasting (Natalia and Petre thralls only). The Vlatla thrall is a 5th-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 11, +3 to hit with spell attacks). Natalia Vlatla has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *fire bolt*, *mage hand*

1st level (4 slots): *burning hands*, *hideous laughter*

2nd level (3 slots): *ray of enfeeblement*, *scorching ray*

3rd level (2 slots): *vampiric touch*

Vampire Weaknesses. The Vlatla thrall has the following weaknesses:

- **Forbiddance.** The Vlatla thrall can't enter an inhabited building without an invitation from one of the inhabitants. To count as an inhabitant, a creature must not be a fey, fiend, undead or celestial and must have taken a long rest in the building.
- **Harmed by Running Water.** The Vlatla thrall takes 20 acid damage when they end their turn in running water.
- **Stake to the Heart.** If the vampire's heart is pierced by wood, they are pinned in place and cannot move a muscle. Any critical hit from a wooden weapon dealing piercing damage will paralyze the vampire until the weapon is removed. Traditionally, this is when you decapitate them.
- **Sunlight Sensitivity.** The thrall has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks while in sunlight. Additionally, many of their powers do not work in sunlight.

Enthralled. The Vlatla thrall must succeed on a DC 20 Wisdom save in order to make any attempt to directly harm, deceive, or disobey their sire (one of the Vlatlas). Even if they pass the save, any such attempts take disadvantage. The Vlatla thrall may freely engage in indirect harm and malicious compliance, and may still tell half-truths or keep secrets.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Vlatla thrall makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite attack.

Claws. Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 8 (2d4+3) slashing damage. Instead of dealing damage, the Vlatla thrall can grapple the target (escape DC 13).

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one willing creature or creature that is grappled by the thrall, incapacitated, or restrained. Hit: 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic damage. The target's hit point maximum is reduced by the necrotic damage taken, and the Vlatla thrall is healed equal to the necrotic damage dealt. The reduction lasts until the target takes a long rest. If the target's maximum hit points are reduced to zero by the vampire's bite, they instantly die and will return as a vampire at the next moon rise.

Beryl Clan

COLGRU BERYL*Medium humanoid (dragonborn)***Armor Class** 16 (studded leather)**Hit Points** 33 (6d8+6)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (−1) **INT** 13 (+1)**DEX** 18 (+4) **WIS** 14 (+2)**CON** 12 (+1) **CHA** 16 (+3)**Saving Throws** DEX +7, INT +4**Skills** Acrobatics +7, Deception +9, Investigation +4, Perception +8, Persuasion +9, Stealth +10**Damage Resistances** Poison**Senses** passive Perception 15**Languages** Draconic, Vintari, Gultari**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)**Cunning Action.** Colgru Beryl can Hide, Disengage, or Dash as a bonus action.**Uncanny Dodge.** As a reaction, Colgru Beryl may halve the damage of any incoming attack from an attacker she can see.**Spellcasting.** Colgru Beryl is a 2nd-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks).

Colgru Beryl has the following sorcerer spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, *poison spray*, *prestidigitation*1st level (3 slots): *color spray*, *disguise self*, *silent image***ACTIONS****Sneak Attack.** Colgru Beryl makes an attack on with her rapier or longbow on an enemy adjacent to one of her allies or against whom she has advantage. The attack deals an extra 3d6 (10) damage.**Poison Breath.** Colgru Beryl exhales poison breath in a 15 ft. cone. Each creature in the area must make a DC 12 CON save, taking 3d6 (10) poison damage on a failed save or half that on a success.**Rapier.** Melee Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8+4) piercing damage.**Longbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8+4) piercing damage.**DALNETTO BERYL***Medium humanoid (dragonborn)***Armor Class** 16**Hit Points** 33 (6d6+12)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 10 (+0) **INT** 13 (+1)**DEX** 16 (+3) **WIS** 8 (−1)**CON** 12 (+1) **CHA** 18 (+4)**Saving Throws** WIS +2, CHA +7**Skills** Arcana +4, History +4, Religion +4**Damage Resistances** Poison**Senses** passive Perception 9**Languages** Draconic, Vintari, Gultari**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)**Draconic Resilience.** Dalnetto Beryl has a base AC of 13 when not wearing armor and 1 extra HP per hit die (included in stat block).**Font of Magic.** Dalnetto Beryl has six sorcery points. As a bonus action, he may spend 2 points to gain a bonus 1st level spell slot, 3 points to gain a 2nd level spell slot, and 5 points to gain a 3rd level spell slot.**Careful Spell.** Dalnetto Beryl can spend one sorcery point in order to shape any spell that requires a saving throw and exclude up to four creatures of his choice within the spell's area of effect to be excluded from the effects of the spell.**Empowered Spell.** Dalnetto Beryl can spend one sorcery point to reroll up to 4 damage dice on any spell he casts.**Poison Affinity.** Whenever Dalnetto Beryl deals poison damage with a spell, he deals an extra 4 damage.**Spellcasting.** Dalnetto Beryl is a 6th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks).

Dalnetto Beryl has the following sorcerer spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *acid splash*, *fire bolt*, *poison spray*, *ray of frost*, *shocking grasp*1st level (4 slots): *chromatic orb*, *ray of sickness*2nd level (3 slots): *scorching ray*, *web*3rd level (3 slots): *fireball*, *lightning bolt*, *stinking cloud***ACTIONS****Poison Breath.** Dalnetto Beryl exhales poison breath in a 15 ft. cone. Each creature in the area must make a DC 12 CON save, taking 3d6 (10) poison damage on a failed save or half that on a success.**Dagger.** Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d4+3) piercing damage.

ECHOKRETH BERYL*Medium humanoid (dragonborn)***Armor Class** 15 (studded leather)**Hit Points** 33 (6d8+6)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (−1) **INT** 12 (+1)**DEX** 16 (+3) **WIS** 14 (+2)**CON** 13 (+1) **CHA** 18 (+4)**Saving Throws** DEX +6, CHA +7**Skills** Acrobatics +9, Perception +5, Perform +10, Sleight of Hand +6**Damage Resistances** Poison**Senses** passive Perception 15**Languages** Draconic, Vintari, Gultari**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

Inspiration. Echokreth Beryl can inspire an ally within 60 feet as a bonus action. This ally may add a +1d6 bonus to any ability check, attack roll, saving throw, or damage roll they make at any time in the next ten minutes. Echokreth Beryl can use this ability up to four times, and regains any expended uses when she takes a short or long rest.

Jack of All Trades. Echokreth Beryl adds a +1 proficiency bonus to all ability checks that do not already benefit from her full proficiency bonus.

Song of Rest. Echokreth Beryl can strum a tune on her lute during a short rest, causing any resting creature who can hear him and who has spent one or more hit dice to regain health during that rest to gain an additional 1d6 HP.

Spellcasting. Echokreth Beryl is a 6th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). Echokreth Beryl has the following sorcerer spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *mage hand*, *message*, *vicious mockery*
 1st level (4 slots): *charm person*, *cure wounds*, *hideous laughter*
 2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness*, *crown of madness*,
enhance ability, *invisibility*
 3rd level (3 slots): *fear*, *hypnotic pattern*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Echokreth Beryl makes two attacks with her rapier or short bow.

Countercharm. You may play a song to counter the effects of charm or fear. Until the start of your next turn, any creature of your choice within 30 feet of your location (including yourself) has advantage on saving throws against being frightened or charmed.

Poison Breath. Echokreth Beryl exhales poison breath in a 15 ft. cone. Each creature in the area must make a DC 12 CON save, taking 3d6 (10) poison damage on a failed save or half that on a success.

Rapier. Melee Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8+4) piercing damage.

Short bow. Ranged Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, reach 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d6+4) piercing damage.

FAINSITHE BERYL*Medium humanoid (dragonborn)***Armor Class** 17 (half-plate)**Hit Points** 57 (6d12+18)**Speed** 40 ft.**STR** 18 (+4) **INT** 8 (−1)**DEX** 14 (+2) **WIS** 13 (+1)**CON** 16 (+3) **CHA** 10 (+0)**Saving Throws** STR +7, CON +6**Skills** Athletics +7, Stealth +5, Survival +4**Damage Resistances** Poison**Senses** passive Perception 11**Languages** Draconic, Vintari**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

Rage. Fainsithe Beryl can enter a rage as a bonus action. While raging, he has resistance to piercing, bludgeoning, and slashing damage, +2 damage to his great sword attack, advantage to all Strength checks and saving throws, is immune to being charmed and frightened, and can make a single great sword attack as a bonus action. His rage ends after one minute or after a full round passes in which he has not attacked an enemy or suffered any damage. When his rage ends, Fainsithe Beryl takes a level of exhaustion.

Danger Sense. Fainsithe Beryl has advantage on DEX saves against any effect he can see so long as he is not blinded, deafened, or incapacitated.

Reckless. At the start of his turn, Fainsithe Beryl can gain advantage on all melee attacks, but all attacks made against him have advantage until the start of his next turn.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Fainsithe Beryl makes two attacks with his great sword.

Poison Breath. Fainsithe Beryl exhales poison breath in a 15 ft. cone. Each creature in the area must make a DC 14 CON save, taking 3d6 (10) poison damage on a failed save or half that on a success.

Great sword. Melee Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6+4) slashing damage.

HISKI BERYL*Medium humanoid (dragonborn)***Armor Class** 14 (half-plate)**Hit Points** 45 (6d8+18)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 14 (+2) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 8 (–1) **WIS** 18 (+4)**CON** 16 (+3) **CHA** 13 (+1)**Saving Throws** WIS +7, CHA +4**Skills** Insight +7, Medicine +7, Religion +3**Damage Resistances** Poison**Senses** passive Perception 14**Languages** Draconic, Vintari**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

Spellcasting. Hiski Beryl is a 6th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks).

Dalnetto Beryl has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *guidance, resistance, sacred flame, spare the dying, thaumaturgy*

1st level (4 slots): *bane, bless, cure wounds, guiding bolt*

2nd level (3 slots): *aid, hold person, spiritual weapon, zone of truth*

3rd level (3 slots): *dispel magic, mass healing word*

ACTIONS

Blessing of the Trickster. Hiski Beryl touches a willing creature other than himself and grants them advantage on Stealth checks for one hour or until he uses this ability again.

Channel Divinity. Hiski Beryl may channel the divine power of Tiamat's beryl head twice before he must take a long rest to do so again. Each channeling may have any of the three following effects:

☞ **Turn Undead.** All undead within thirty feet of Hiski Beryl who can see or hear him must make a DC 15 Wisdom save. If they fail and their CR is ½ or lower, they are immediately destroyed. If they fail and their CR is 1 or higher, it is turned and must flee from Hiski Beryl as fast as it can. For its action, it can only use the Dash action or try to escape an effect that prevents it from moving. If there's nowhere to run, the creature can use the Dodge action.

☞ **Invoke Duplicity.** Hiski Beryl creates an illusory duplicate of himself within 120 feet that lasts for one minute or until he loses his concentration. As a bonus action, he can move the illusion up to thirty feet. When casting a spell, he may cast the spell from the illusion's position instead of his own. When the illusion is adjacent to a creature being attacked by Hiski Beryl or one of his allies, the attack gets advantage as they are flanked by the illusion. The illusion must remain within 120 feet of Hiski Beryl at all times.

☞ **Cloak of Shadows.** Hiski Beryl becomes invisible until the end of his next turn. If he makes an attack or casts a spell, he becomes visible immediately.

Poison Breath. Hiski Beryl exhales poison breath in a 15 ft. cone. Each creature in the area must make a DC 14 CON save, taking 3d6 (10) poison damage on a failed save or half that on a success.

Mace. Melee Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

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

SAIZ BERYL*Medium humanoid (dragonborn)***Armor Class** 18 (plate armor)**Hit Points** 51 (6d10+18)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 18 (+4) **INT** 8 (–1)**DEX** 10 (+0) **WIS** 13 (+1)**CON** 16 (+3) **CHA** 14 (+2)**Saving Throws** STR +7, CON +6**Skills** Athletics +7, Insight +4, Religion +2**Damage Resistances** Poison**Senses** passive Perception 11**Languages** Draconic, Vintari**Challenge** 4 (1100 XP)

Great Weapon Fighting. When Saiz Beryl is wielding a two-handed or versatile weapon in both hands and rolls a 1 or 2 on a damage roll with that weapon, he may reroll the damage die and keep the new result (even if it is also a 1 or 2).

Spellcasting. Saiz Beryl is a 3rd-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks).

Saiz Beryl has the following paladin spells prepared:

1st level (4 slots): *command, cure wounds, hunter's mark*

2nd level (2 slots): *aid, misty step*

Divine Smite. When Saiz Beryl hits a creature with a melee weapon attack, he may expend one of his spell slots to deal radiant damage to the target. The extra damage is 2d8 for a 1st level spell slot, plus 1d8 for each spell level higher, plus 1d8 if the target is an undead or fiend.

Divine Health. Saiz Beryl is immune to all diseases.

Vow of Enmity. As a bonus action, Saiz Beryl marks one target as his enemy and gains advantage on all attack rolls made against them for one minute or until they drop to 0 hit points or fall unconscious. He must complete a short or long rest before using this ability again.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Saiz Beryl makes two attacks with his great sword.

Lay on Hands. Saiz Beryl has a pool of thirty hit points. As an action, he may heal any number from that pool to himself or an adjacent creature. Alternatively, he may expend five points of healing to cure any poison or disease affecting the target. He can heal damage, disease, and poisons in any amount with the same action so long as he has enough hit points left in his pool to do so. The pool is refreshed by a long rest.

Divine Sense. Saiz Beryl senses the location and type of any undead, fiends, or celestials within a 60 ft. radius, but not their exact identity. He may use this ability up to 4 times before he must take a long rest to use it again.

Poison Breath. Saiz Beryl exhales poison breath in a 15 ft. cone. Each creature in the area must make a DC 14 CON save, taking 3d6 (10) poison damage on a failed save or half that on a success.

Great sword. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6+4) slashing damage.

The Dead Knights

SKELETON

As in the MM, pg. 272, but with a vulnerability to radiant damage, resistance to necrotic, and no shortbow attack.

SKELETON ARCHER

As the skeleton in the MM, pg. 272, but with a vulnerability to radiant damage, resistance to necrotic, and wielding a longbow instead of a shortbow.

SKELETON INFANTRY

Medium undead

Armor Class 16 (half-plate)

Hit Points 30 (3d12+9)

Speed 30 ft.

STR 13 (+1) **INT** 6 (–2)

DEX 10 (+0) **WIS** 8 (–1)

CON 16 (+3) **CHA** 12 (+1)

Vulnerabilities Radiant

Resistances Necrotic

Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhausted, Poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Understands Vintari but cannot speak

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

ACTIONS

Halberd. Melee Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, reach 10 ft., disadvantage at 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d10+1) slashing damage.

SKELETON MAGE

Medium undead

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 14 (3d6+3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR 10 (+0) **INT** 14 (+2)

DEX 14 (+2) **WIS** 8 (–1)

CON 13 (+1) **CHA** 10 (+0)

Vulnerabilities Bludgeoning, Radiant

Resistances Necrotic

Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhausted, Poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Understands Vintari but cannot speak

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Spellcasting. The skeleton mage is a 3rd-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). The skeleton mage has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch*, *fire bolt*, *mage hand*

1st level (4 slots): *burning hands*, *mage armor*, *hideous laughter*

2nd level (2 slots): *scorching ray*

ACTIONS

Bony Claws. Melee Weapon Attack. +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 2 (1d4) slashing damage.

SIR BOLIVAR

Medium undead

Armor Class 17 (chain mail w/shield)

Hit Points 24 (3d8+9)

Speed 30 ft.

STR 12 (+1) **INT** 12 (+1)

DEX 10 (+0) **WIS** 11 (+0)

CON 16 (+3) **CHA** 12 (+1)

Saving Throws CON +5

Skills Athletics +3, Insight +2, Persuasion +3

Vulnerabilities Radiant

Resistances Necrotic

Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhausted, Poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Understands Vintari but cannot speak

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

ACTIONS

Long sword. Melee Weapon Attack. +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8+1) slashing damage.

SIR SYLVAS

Medium undead

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 25 (5d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR 12 (+1) **INT** 10 (+0)

DEX 18 (+4) **WIS** 15 (+2)

CON 11 (+0) **CHA** 7 (–2)

Saving Throws DEX +7, WIS +5

Skills Acrobatics +7, Perception +5, Stealth +7, Survival +5

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Vulnerabilities Bludgeoning, Radiant

Resistances Necrotic

Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhausted, Poisoned

Languages Understands Vintari but cannot speak

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Hordebreaker. Once per turn when Sir Sylvas has made a weapon attack against a creature, he may make an additional attack with the same weapon against another creature within five feet of the first and within range of his weapon.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Sir Sylvas makes two attacks with his longbow or short swords. If at least one of those attacks was made with a short sword, he may make an additional attack using the short sword in his off-hand as a bonus action. He does not add his DEX bonus to the damage for off-hand attacks.

Longbow. Ranged Weapon Attack. +9 to hit, range 150/600 feet, one target. Hit: 8 (1d8+4) piercing damage.

Short sword. Melee Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d6+4) piercing damage.

SIR TOBIAS*Medium undead***Armor Class** 20 (full plate w/shield)**Hit Points** 45 (5d10+15)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 18 (+4) **INT** 13 (+1)**DEX** 10 (+0) **WIS** 13 (+1)**CON** 17 (+3) **CHA** 7 (-2)**Saving Throws** STR +7, CON +6**Skills** Animal Handling +4, Athletics +7, History +5, Perception +4, Persuasion +1**Vulnerabilities** Radiant**Resistances** Necrotic**Immunities** Poison**Condition Immunities** Exhausted, Poisoned**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14**Languages** Understands Vintari but cannot speak**Challenge** 4 (1,150 XP)

Action Surge. Sir Tobias may make an additional action on top of his usual action and bonus action. After using this ability, Sir Tobias must take the Unholy Stamina action to refresh it. Using Unholy Stamina as the additional action granted by Action Surge does not refresh Action Surge, as it is not expended until the extra action has completed, so there is not yet anything to refresh.

Improved Critical. Sir Tobias scores a critical hit whenever he rolls a 19 or 20.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Sir Tobias makes two attacks with his longsword +1.

Unholy Stamina. Sir Tobias takes an action to summon up the unholy stamina brought about by his living death, healing 1d10+5 health to himself.

Longsword +1. Melee Weapon Attack. +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (1d8+7) slashing damage.

DAME CALLAI*Medium undead***Armor Class** 18 (full plate)**Hit Points** 40 (5d10+10)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 18 (+4) **INT** 16 (+3)**DEX** 8 (-1) **WIS** 13 (+1)**CON** 14 (+2) **CHA** 10 (+0)**Saving Throws** STR +7, CON +6**Skills** Arcana +6, Athletics +7, History +7, Perception +4, Persuasion +3**Vulnerabilities** Radiant**Resistances** Necrotic**Immunities** Poison**Condition Immunities** Exhausted, Poisoned**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14**Languages** Understands Vintari but cannot speak**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)

Action Surge. Dame Callai may make an additional action on top of her usual action and bonus action. After using this ability, Dame Callai must take the Unholy Stamina action to refresh it. Using Unholy Stamina as the additional action granted by Action Surge does not refresh Action Surge, as it is not expended until the extra action has completed, so there is not yet anything to refresh.

Great Weapon Fighting. When Dame Callai is wielding a two-handed or versatile weapon in both hands and rolls a 1 or 2 on a damage roll with that weapon, she may reroll the damage die and keep the new result (even if it is also a 1 or 2).

Spellcasting. Dame Callai is a 2nd-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). Dame Callai has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *mage hand*

1st level (3 slots): *burning hands*, *hideous laughter*, *witch bolt*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Dame Callai makes two attacks with her greatsword.

Unholy Stamina. Dame Callai takes an action to summon up the unholy stamina brought about by her living death, healing 1d10+5 health to herself.

Greatsword. Melee Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d6+4) slashing damage.

Goblin Rebels**BUGBEAR**

As in MM pg. 33

GOBLIN

As in MM pg. 166

HOBGOBLIN

As in MM pg. 186, however wearing studded leather armor instead of chain mail for an AC of 15, and with Lesser Martial Advantage in place of Martial Advantage, dealing 1d6 extra damage instead of 2d6.

HOBGOBLIN LIEUTENANT*Medium humanoid (goblinoid)***Armor Class** 16 (studded leather armor w/shield)**Hit Points** 19 (3d8+6)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 15 (+2) **INT** 12 (+1)**DEX** 14 (+2) **WIS** 10 (+0)**CON** 14 (+2) **CHA** 10 (+0)**Skills** Insight +2, Persuasion +2**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10**Languages** Vintari, Gultari**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

Martial Advantage. Once per turn, the hobgoblin can deal an extra 3 (1d6) damage to a creature it hits with a weapon attack if that creature is within 5 feet of an ally of the hobgoblin that isn't incapacitated.

ACTIONS

Longsword. Melee Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8+2) slashing damage.

Longbow. Ranged Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, the hobgoblin can utter a special command or warning whenever a nonhostile creature that it can see within 30 feet of it makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand the hobgoblin. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. The effect ends if the hobgoblin is incapacitated.

SIR DAGAI*Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 11**Hit Points** 23 (5d6+5)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (-1) **INT** 17 (+3)**DEX** 12 (+1) **WIS** 10 (+0)**CON** 13 (+1) **CHA** 14 (+2)**Saving Throws** INT +6, WIS +3, CHA +5**Skills** Arcana +9, Insight +3, Investigation +6, Medicine +3**Senses** Passive Perception 10**Languages** Vintari, Untari, Gultari, Khalag**Challenge** 4 (1,150 XP)

Spellcasting. Sir Dagai is a 5th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). Sir Dagai has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*

1st level (4 slots): *charm person*, *longstrider*, *sleep*

2nd level (3 slots): *alter self*, *enlarge/reduce*, *hold person*

3rd level (2 slots): *blink*, *haste*

ACTIONS

Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack. +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 1 (1d4-1) slashing damage.

*Order of the Bear***ROGUE ELEMENTALIST***Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 11**Hit Points** 7 (2d6)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 8 (-1) **INT** 12 (+1)**DEX** 12 (+1) **WIS** 10 (+0)**CON** 10 (+0) **CHA** 15 (+2)**Skills** Deception +4, Persuasion +4, Stealth +3**Senses** passive Perception 10**Languages** Vintari, Untari**Challenge** 1 (200 XP)

Spellcasting. The rogue elementalist is a 2nd-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). The rogue elementalist has the following sorcerer spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *acid splash*, *fire bolt*, *poison spray*, *ray of frost*, *shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *chromatic orb*

Uncontrolled Evocation. Whenever the rogue elementalist casts chromatic orb, the damage type for the spell is selected randomly.

ACTIONS

Short sword. Melee Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

BEAR ARCHER

As the Scout found on page 349 of the MM.

BEAR INFANTRY

As the Bandit found on page 343 of the MM

OGRILLON

As the Ogrillon found on page 238 of the MM

BEAR KNIGHT*Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 21 (plate armor w/shield)**Hit Points** 40 (5d10+10)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 16 (+3) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 12 (+1) **WIS** 13 (+1)**CON** 15 (+2) **CHA** 10 (+0)**Saving Throws** CON +5**Skills** Animal Handling +4, Athletics +6, History +3, Intimidation +3, Perception +4**Senses** passive Perception 14**Languages** Vintari, Untari, Ogtari**Challenge** 4 (1,100 XP)**Action Surge.** The Bear Knight may take an additional action on top of his usual action and bonus action. After using this ability, the Bear Knight cannot use it again until he's had a long or short rest.**Improved Critical.** The Bear Knight scores a critical hit whenever he rolls a 19 or 20.**Defense.** The Bear Knight has +1 AC whenever he is wearing armor (included in the stat block).**ACTIONS****Multiattack.** The Bear Knight makes two attacks with his long sword or longbow.**Second Wind.** As a bonus action, the Bear Knight may catch a second wind and heal 1d10+5 damage. Once the Bear Knight uses this ability he cannot use it again until he's taken a short or long rest.**Long sword.** Melee Weapon Attack. +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8+3) slashing damage.**Longbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack. +4 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d8+1) piercing damage.**SIR BRANDER***Medium humanoid (human)***Armor Class** 16 (breastplate)**Hit Points** 28 (5d8+5)**Speed** 30 ft.**STR** 12 (+1) **INT** 10 (+0)**DEX** 18 (+4) **WIS** 16 (+3)**CON** 13 (+1) **CHA** 12 (+1)**Saving Throws** DEX +7**Skills** Acrobatics +7, History +3, Intimidation +4, Perception +6, Survival +6**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 16**Languages** Vintari, Ogtari**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)**Action Surge.** Sir Brander may make an additional action on top of his usual action and bonus action. After using this ability, Sir Brander cannot use it again until he's had a long or short rest.**Archery.** Sir Brander gets a +2 bonus to all ranged attacks (included in the stat block).**Commander's Strike.** When making an attack action, Sir Brander may forego one of his attacks and instead use a bonus action to direct one ally who can see or hear him to make a single attack as a reaction. This ally gets +1d8 to the attack roll. After using this ability, Sir Brander must finish a long or short rest before using it again.**Evasive Footwork.** When moving, Sir Brander may roll a d8 and add the result to his AC until the start of his next turn. After using this ability, Sir Brander must finish a long or short rest before using it again.**Riposte.** When a creature misses Sir Brander with an attack, he may counterattack that creature with his rapier as a reaction. If the counterattack hits, it deal and extra 1d8 damage. After using this ability, Sir Brander must finish a long or short rest before using it again.**ACTIONS****Multiattack.** Sir Brander makes two attacks with his rapier or longbow.**Second Wind.** As a bonus action, Sir Brander may catch a second wind and heal 1d10+5 damage. Once Sir Brander uses this ability he cannot use it again until he's taken a short or long rest.**Rapier.** Melee Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8+4) piercing damage.**Longbow.** Ranged Weapon Attack. +9 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8+4) piercing damage.*Sahuagin***GIANT OCTOPUS**

As in the MM, pg. 326

MERROW

As in the MM, pg. 219

SAHUAGIN

As in the MM, pg. 263

SAHUAGIN PRIESTESS

As in the MM, pg. 264

SHOGGOTH*Large aberration***Armor Class** 12 (natural armor)**Hit Points** 76 (9d10+27)**Speed** 20 ft., swim 40 ft.**STR** 21 (+5) **INT** 12 (+1)**DEX** 9 (−1) **WIS** 3 (−4)**CON** 16 (+3) **CHA** 4 (−3)**Saving Throws** STR +9, CON +7**Skills** Arcana +5, Athletics +9, Perception +4**Damage Resistances** Fire, psychic, bludgeoning, piercing, slashing**Condition Immunities** Grappled, Prone, Restrained**Senses** passive Perception 19**Languages** —**Challenge** 6 (2,300 XP)**Keen Sight.** The shoggoth has advantage on Wisdom (perception) checks that rely on sight.**A Million Heads Yet None At All.** The shoggoth is immune to critical hits.**ACTIONS****Devour.** The shoggoth makes a psuedopod attack against any number of creatures within range. Roll separately for each attack. For each successful psuedopod attack, the shoggoth drags the victim to a square adjacent to itself (if one is available) and makes a bite attack.**Psuedopod.** Melee Weapon Attack. +9 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 11 (1d10+5) bludgeoning damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 15).**Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack. +9 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 16 (2d10+5) piercing damage.*Spiders***GIANT FUNNEL WEAVER***Medium monstrosity***Armor Class** 13**Hit Points** 12 (2d8+2)**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.**STR** 10 (+0) **INT** 3 (−4)**DEX** 16 (+3) **WIS** 12 (+1)**CON** 12 (+1) **CHA** 4 (−3)**Saving Throws** DEX +5**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +7**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13**Languages** —**Challenge** ½ (100 XP)**Spider Climb.** The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without having to make an ability check.**Web Sense.** While in contact with the web, the funnel weaver knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.**Web Sprinter.** The funnel weaver not only ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing, but can move an additional 10 ft. when moving across webbing.**ACTIONS****Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack. +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution save, taking 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.**GIANT HUNTSMAN***Huge monstrosity***Armor Class** 14 (natural armor)**Hit Points** 59 (7d12+14)**Speed** 60 ft., climb 60 ft.**STR** 18 (+4) **INT** 3 (−4)**DEX** 16 (+3) **WIS** 11 (+0)**CON** 14 (+2) **CHA** 4 (−3)**Saving Throws** DEX +6**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +6**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13**Languages** —**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)**Spider Climb.** The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without having to make an ability check.**Web Walker.** The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.**ACTIONS****Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d10+3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution save, taking 22 (4d10) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way. The target is also grappled (escape DC 13), and takes another 11 (2d10) poison damage on each of the huntsman's turns while it remains grappled.

GIANT JUMPING SPIDER*Small monstrosity***Armor Class** 14**Hit Points** 9 (2d6+2)**Speed** 25 ft., climb 25 ft.**STR** 10 (+0) **INT** 3 (−4)**DEX** 19 (+4) **WIS** 15 (+2)**CON** 12 (+1) **CHA** 4 (−3)**Saving Throws** DEX +6**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +8**Senses** passive Perception 14**Languages** —**Challenge** ¼ (50 XP)

Spider Climb. The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without having to make an ability check.

Web Walker. The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

ACTIONS

Pounce. The jumping spider leaps up to 20 feet in any direction, leaving a strand of web behind itself. It may leap onto a square containing a creature, making a bite attack on that creature. If it hits, it clings to the top of that creature (or lays atop it if the target is small size or smaller), grappling it (escape DC 12) and dealing another 7 (2d6) poison damage to the target for as long as it is grappled. If it misses, it rolls off to an adjacent square. If the spider misses an attack and is forced to roll off into a pit or other drop-off that is 20 feet or further deep, it will be saved by its web and able to climb back up to the point from which it originally jumped.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack. +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution save, taking 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

GIANT RECLUSE*Small monstrosity***Armor Class** 13**Hit Points** 9 (2d6+2)**Speed** 25 ft., climb 25 ft.**STR** 11 (+0) **INT** 3 (−4)**DEX** 16 (+3) **WIS** 14 (+2)**CON** 12 (+1) **CHA** 4 (−3)**Saving Throws** DEX +6**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +7**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14**Languages** —**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

Spider Climb. The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without having to make an ability check.

Web Walker. The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

ACTIONS

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack. +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 14 Constitution save, taking 21 (6d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

GIANT SPITTING SPIDER*Small monstrosity***Armor Class** 14**Hit Points** 9 (2d6+2)**Speed** 25 ft., climb 25 ft.**STR** 11 (+0) **INT** 3 (−4)**DEX** 18 (+4) **WIS** 14 (+2)**CON** 12 (+1) **CHA** 4 (−3)**Saving Throws** DEX +6**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +8**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15**Languages** —**Challenge** ¼ (50 XP)

Spider Climb. The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without having to make an ability check.

Web Walker. The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

ACTIONS

Web (Recharge 5–6). Ranged Weapon Attack. +5 to hit, range 30/60 ft., one target. Hit: The target is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained target can make a DC 12 Strength check, bursting the webbing on a success. The webbing can also be attacked and destroyed (AC 10; hp 5; vulnerability to fire damage; immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage).

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack. +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution save, taking 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.

GIANT TARANTULA*Large monstrosity***Armor Class** 16 (natural armor)**Hit Points** 42 (5d10+15)**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.**STR** 18 (+4) **INT** 3 (-4)**DEX** 13 (+1) **WIS** 12 (+1)**CON** 17 (+3) **CHA** 4 (-3)**Saving Throws** CON +6**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +4**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 14**Languages** —**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)**Spider Climb.** The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without having to make an ability check.**Web Walker.** The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.**ACTIONS****Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack. +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 8 (1d8+4) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution save, taking 9 (2d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.**GIANT TIGER SPIDER***Medium monstrosity***Armor Class** 14**Hit Points** 22 (4d8+4)**Speed** 40 ft., climb 40 ft.**STR** 12 (+1) **INT** 3 (-4)**DEX** 19 (+4) **WIS** 12 (+1)**CON** 13 (+1) **CHA** 4 (-3)**Saving Throws** DEX +6**Skills** Perception +3, Stealth +3**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13**Languages** —**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)**Spider Climb.** The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without having to make an ability check.**Web Walker.** The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.**ACTIONS****Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack. +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6+1) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution save, taking 14 (3d8) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.**GIANT TRAPDOOR SPIDER***Small monstrosity***Armor Class** 13**Hit Points** 5 (2d6-2)**Speed** 25 ft., climb 25 ft.**STR** 10 (+0) **INT** 3 (-4)**DEX** 16 (+3) **WIS** 14 (+2)**CON** 9 (-1) **CHA** 4 (-3)**Saving Throws** DEX +5**Skills** Perception +4, Stealth +7**Senses** passive Perception 15**Languages** —**Challenge** ¼ (50 XP)**Spider Climb.** The spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without having to make an ability check.**Web Walker.** The spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.**ACTIONS****Bite.** Melee Weapon Attack. +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 3 (1d6) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 11 Constitution save, taking 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one. If the poison damage reduces the target to 0 hit points, the target is stable but poisoned for 1 hour, even after regaining hit points, and is paralyzed while poisoned in this way.**GIANT WOLF SPIDER**

As in the MM pg. 330, but without Web Sense.

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A FRONTIER IN CHAOS, TORN BETWEEN FIVE DIFFERENT FACTIONS.

Prince Darius and his Order of the Lion have come to restore peace to the Eastern Frontier. Harlequin, like just about everyone in the Lunatic Court, is a war orphan who's been making her own way since she was a child. Caspar has been studying under the Order of the Third Eye since childhood. Lidia Vlatla isn't even close to the most vicious vampire in the Vlatla Clan, but she's definitely the most honest. Sharra is the keeper of the Order of the Wyrd's dirtiest secret: There's nothing natural about harmony at all.

PETALS AND THORNS: STRANGERS IN RAMSHORN is a 5E adventure that will take your party from level 3 to level 6 across approximately 40–50 hours of play, with plenty of both hack and slash and roleplay.

- Choose which faction to support in each situation, and grapple with the limitations of mortal power.
- Explore the town of Ramshorn and its surrounding dangers.
- Delve into the stygian depths of the Vlatla Catacombs, Sahuagin Lair, Hobgoblin Hideout, and Spider Pit.
- Choose when and with whom to compromise, or risk losing everything.

SO WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IN?

