

← LoreSmyth's Ultimate Guide to: →

REMARKABLE SHOPS

— & THEIR WARES —



Alex Clippinger, Elf Vesala, JVC Parry, Richie Lewin

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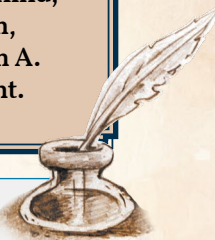
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EVERY ITEM HAS A STORY

"If there is one thing I have discovered, from all the places I have been, it is that if you want to learn about the world, you should visit a shop. They are the vanguard, the shields pointing toward the arrow of time. For you never know what lurks on the unventured shelves of some far distant store. I once procured a dagger made out of Illuvian Marble from a merchant in the isles of Montrel. They said it was old, older than the ancients. I even managed to get the quill—the very quill—that Landberg the Great used to write the scroll that banished the dark forces and ended the Blood Moon Wars. To be out there again, exploring unknown riches, trinkets, and wares, each a page of history at a time, that is what moves me. Traveling the world, to be a part of just one more remarkable story."

- Brildur Grost, Traveling Merchant Extraordinaire



THE ORIGINS OF NEW DISCOVERY



Shops are a city's beating heart, and there is nothing more indicative of a settlement's health than the state of its businesses. A society that flourishes will boast establishments with artisans at the peak of their craft and goods at their most potent and remarkable quality. Even a city that struggles will often be reflected in the sparse supplies of its shops. A location that enjoys peace and freedom will see goods and patronage from exotic, far-flung locations; a society full of fear or desperation will close themselves off, their craftsmen limited to local materials and traditions.

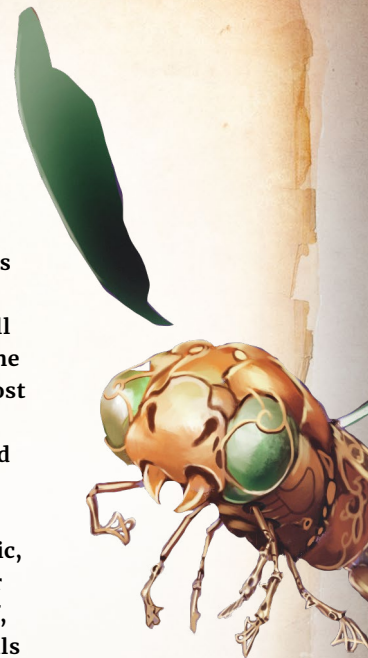
More than an economic barometer, a shop is the enabler and origin of adventure. What intrepid do-gooders could brave the deepest dungeons without supplies from magic lanterns to a common rope? What skilled craftsman is not called upon to forge weapons and trinkets used to best the foulest creatures that threaten the land? How many lost artifacts, tomes of forgotten knowledge, hidden maps, and family heirlooms have traveled countless miles and untold years to lie in wait on a proprietor's shelf in anticipation of discovery?

EMPIRES FROM SMALL BEGINNINGS

Traders and their routes have created empires from ashes. But they do so much more than supply; they build. The world as we know it has been built on the back of a cart, trundling through an open desert and led by a merchant looking to sell his wares. It relies on every piece of gold placed into the hands of a blacksmith, on every boat of cargo safely reaching its destination. If the apothecaries were shuttered, the general stores abandoned, and the market stalls left empty, the world would simply stop moving.

USING THIS BOOK

Remarkable Shops & Their Wares is an inspirational world-building guide, to turn ordinary shop visits into memorable roleplaying experiences. It will provide you with everything you need to elevate your fantasy stores beyond dull bookkeeping or simply swapping gold for items. Random generation tables encourage new avenues of roleplaying as characters enquire about



various goods and services, or haggle over prices. This book will help you look beyond one-dimensional buying experiences and nondescript businesses, replacing them with locations of wonder and active engagement. From crooked, back-alley establishments to haberdasheries filled with breathtaking magic, personality in both environment and characters turns locations from generic supply depots to memorable recurring locations.

CHAPTER 1: REMARKABLE SHOPS

Brildur Grost has scribed all of his exciting and strange experiences across the expanses of the world, finding many new or weird, but always useful shops along the way. These stores are brought to life within these pages, and every one of them has its own wealth of items, history, staff, and story to tell. They have been designed in such a way that the characters are deep, the shelves wide, and the wares are remarkable, making sure that your stores will never be mundane again.

CHAPTER 2: BRINGING YOUR SHOPS TO LIFE

Keeping shop visits interesting is never an easy task. This chapter provides you many ideas to bring life to your fantasy stores. From the type of wares they sell, to their disposition towards certain folk, to the special services they offer. How about the differences between a poor establishment and a wealthy emporium? Expand your selection of special wares, magical mounts and familiars, clothing, armor, weapons, and more.

CHAPTER 3: PLAYER OPERATED SHOPS

Running a shop can be a welcome distraction for higher-level adventurers who are tired of scouring dungeons and saving the world from peril. To many, the prospect of wealth has a strong appeal to turn down their blades. For others, it offers a means to fulfill a different role in society, and a break from the chaos of battle. This chapter provides a range of ideas to help players to start their own emporium, from drawing up the architects' plans, buying land, and construction, to daily operations, sourcing goods, and calamities. No one said running a store would be uneventful.

CHAPTER 4: CREATING YOUR OWN SHOPS

This chapter provides you, the game master, endless ideas and nuggets of detail to create your own fantastical shops, complete with interesting NPCs and memorable aesthetics. Bring something to your campaign world that has never been seen before: create new and exciting experiences that your players will never forget. This chapter is bursting with all the generation tables and information you need to construct your very own store.

APPENDIX 1:

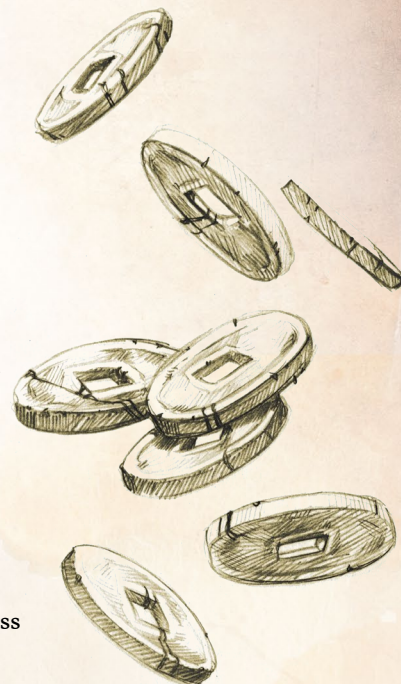
CREATING CUSTOM STAFF

An entire section filled to the brim with colorful ideas to create shopkeepers and staff NPCs, from how they look and act, to their past life events, motivations, and dark secrets. There's no end to the depths of inspiration found in the myriad of random tables here. Have a look around and pick what you like to introduce new remarkable characters to your world.

APPENDIX 2:

CREATING CUSTOM ITEMS

Crafting custom items such as weapons and armor can be a fantastic way for players to express their own unique character, or a means for the GM to introduce thrilling new artifacts into the world. This chapter provides you with a framework to handle custom item creation: from taking a base item all the way to enchanting it, adding flourishes, special properties or, even a mysterious history.



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

Yours truly, Chris van der Linden

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris van der Linden'.



CHAPTER 1

THE REMARKABLE SHOPS



THUNDERSPIRE FORGE

Wealth	★★★★★
Prices	○○○○○
Security	♥♥♥♥♥
Influence	↖↖↖↖
Wares	Lightning-powered weapons and armor
Services	Combat Training, Repairs, Enchanting, Smithing
Disposition	Elves, Sorcerers (Unwelcome)
Favored	Dwarves, Giants, Fighters, Barbarians

"Have you ever seen a thunder-forged hammer? It possesses the devastating wrath of a storm. Imagine distilling a roiling tempest into hardened steel. Lightning crackles across the surface of the gleaming metal, a deep thunder growling in its core. Now imagine unleashing that on yer foes: the brief lightning glimmer in their eyes as they realize their end is nigh."

- Barran Stonekin, Royal Armorer of the Nordguard

A ten-day journey through the tempestuous and icy landscape brings you to Mount Angrav, a towering mountain whose peaks pierce the clouds but remain ever-shrouded by storm. Signs of past doomed travelers on this trail are plenty, and the eternal storm is merciless. Avalanches are frequent here, and crushed boulders line the edge of the winding trail, accompanied by frozen-over caravans and still standing corpses covered in frost.

When the storm quiets down and mists recede, you can see multi-colored lights piercing through the obsidian sky in the distance. Beautiful yet ominous, like a prophecy waiting to be fulfilled, this aurora is not all it seems to be. The lights are lightning strikes finding their way to the towering, copper-plated pinnacle that signifies and powers Thunderspire Forge. On the last day of travel, when the building peeks into view over the ragged icy ridges, constant electrical crashes send shivers throughout the landscape and color the skies above blue, green, violet, and orange. Static electricity and ozone sizzle through the air, making the hairs on the back of your arms stand upright. Thick fumes of sulfur blacken the snow for miles, and tiny embers rain down on the snow, hissing like a million vexed vipers.



FROZEN FURY

Legends tell of this strange building high on the peak of Mount Angrav. They say the place is as tall as a temple, with an imposing copper-plated tower that pierces the sky. Few have ever visited this place, for vicious storms assault it day and night, whose thunder shakes the snow from the mountain cap, and whose hail falls as large as a clenched fist. For those who would brave the climb, great treasures await: items forged by masterwork artisans with lightning-powered forges.

Built by dwarves many thousands of years ago, this temple-like smithy is constructed of great stone blocks quarried from Mount Angrav itself. Angular, octagonal bulwarks stand stoic against the icy winds. The copper-plated tower, for which the forge is fabled, is known as the Lightning Rod, and is frequently struck by the lightning of the perpetual storm that shrouds Thunderspire Forge. This constant electrical activity means the place smells of burning hair and ozone, an unwelcome scent when you're struggling for air at such an altitude. When the light of the setting sun and lightning strikes combine in the right ratios and directions, the stark silhouette of the forge can sometimes be seen from the base of the mountain. While many ridicule those who claim to have seen the place, it is real, and it is a singular destination for the most powerful magical weapons and armor.

BRIDGE OF SOULS

For those who seek Thunderspire Forge, attaining entry is no mean feat. The building is raised up on a plateau of granite only accessible by a treacherous bridge of ice over 100 feet long. Legend says that only the staunchest of warriors make it across the frozen walkway, and the souls of those who fail are whipped into the great storm above, forever trapped in the tempestuous wrath. The swirling storm that surrounds the ice bridge exerts such force that lesser folk are blown over the edge, never to be seen again. The bridge is said to be guarded by packs of ferocious ice trolls and, during the full moon, winter wolves that grow as large as warhorses.

AT THE GATES OF MERCY

Even if you can make it across the legendary ice bridge, there is no assurance of admittance. At the end of the bridge is a pair of enormous, frost-covered stone doors, over 50 feet tall, whose aspect is covered in frozen weapons and armor. The myths speak of some challenge or puzzle a warrior must overcome before the great doors swing open of their own volition, admitting entrance to those strong of body and mind. The truth is that all who wish to enter must surrender a weapon to the doorway. Placing a metal blade against the entrance causes magical ice to freeze over it, forever sealing the weapon to the others. Any who attempt to open the door before the offering is made are instead frozen into the doors; the corpses of those who have tried bear testament to this.

OWNER & STAFF

✿ MASTERSMITH HORGRIM FELLHAMMER (MALE DWARF ARTISAN)

While Elvindir is the owner of Thunderspire Forge, Horgrim is responsible for managing the production of the magical weapons and wondrous items renowned throughout the realms. Horgrim is a grim dwarf of advanced years who lost his left



eye and arm in a devastating accident many centuries ago. This has left him with branching white scars across his face and torso. Since then, Horgrim has been a wary man. Although he is always happy to outfit worthy warriors with the arms they seek, he constantly warns them against hasty use of the powerful items. He has tasted the wrath of the storm like no other, and his scarred face serves as a powerful reminder of the dangers of thunder-forged weaponry. Despite his disability, Horgrim is still one of the best smiths in Thunderspire Forge thanks to the multitude of metal and stone prosthetics he has designed to assist him in his work.



✿ ANGBERA BRAWN - MISTRESS OF THE COIN (FEMALE DWARF TRADER)

Responsible for the sale and commissioning of magic items at Thunderspire is the Mistress of Coin, Angbera Brawn. Angbera was named after Mount Angrav itself and has inherited many of its aspects. She is tall for a dwarf and built as wide as the burliest dwarven wrestlers. She is stoic and calm most of the time but, like a storm-triggered avalanche, can be truly fearsome when needed. Angbera is rarely seen without her winter wolf companion and steed Hrim. The Mistress of Coin is most often seen wearing layer upon layer of thick furs, adorned with chains of mixed precious metals that glitter in the cold light. On each of her hands are a dozen rings, some of which are formed of magical nevermelt ice. Those who have proven themselves worthy of the thunder-forged weapons must speak with Angbera first, to design the items they desire. Then, in the coming weeks, these items are crafted from thunder-forged steel, and enchanted with powerful storm magic by dwarven

✿ FORGEMASTER ELVINDIR OF ANGRAV (MALE STORM GIANT)

The Forgemaster - The rumors and legends of the Forgemaster of Thunderspire are true. The ancient smithy was built and is run by Elvindir, an aged storm giant. Elvindir is almost 30 feet tall, with pale blue skin and ice-white hair tied up into a pile of braids. The sides of his head are tattooed with magical giant runes that give the ability to shape lightning into any form Elvindir desires. His magic keeps the storm raging around the peak of Mount Angrav, and his hand teaches the dwarven artisans to create thunder-forged weapons and other magical items. Elvindir greets any who make it past the doors of Thunderspire Forge with great respect, as the road to Thunderspire Forge is a test to the brawn and brains of any who would wish to possess weapons of such great power. Those who come with ill intent should tread carefully: any whiff of foul play is met with a stroke from Elvindir's greatsword, violently crackling with blue lightning.

artisans. When payment has been made and the items completed, there is a ceremony in which the items are bestowed to their new owner. The ceremony takes place in the great hall of Thunderspire, where statues of the dwarven artisans who have lost their lives while working in the forge look on. The ghosts of these dwarves sometimes appear during the ceremonies to bless the newly equipped warriors and to beseech them to use the items for good. After the items have been handed over, there is a feast of roasted meats and fine mead.

❖ OLD SPARK (MALE DWARF ARTIFICER)

Unlike the other dwarves of Thunderspire, whose reverence for the place sometimes borders on dour, Old Spark, as he is known, is of a different disposition. Old Spark's white hair shoots out from his head like crackling electricity, his wit is as fast as lightning, and his laugh as sonorous as the storm. He is almost always accompanied by at least one of his wyvern hatchlings, whom he dotes on as if they were his own children. Old Spark is responsible for the upkeep of the Lightning Rod, a task he has been fulfilling for centuries. He's been struck by lightning several times, but seems curiously immune to its effects; the electricity channels through him into the Lightning Rod without causing him harm. Old Spark is the most knowledgeable when it comes to the use of bottled lighting and how the stored energy can be used to fuel other items.

NOTABLE PATRONS

❖ AXOZAHN BRYCHOR (MALE DRAGONBORN BARBARIAN)

Axozahn is a renowned adventurer who frequents Thunderspire forge. He is a green dragonborn with dusky emerald scales, rippling muscles, and four twisting horns. Typically he hangs around the small bar-room drinking a blend of maple syrup and ale and eating his favorite meal; dragon turtle soup. Oddly, Axozahn always refers to himself in third-person, which can be confusing for new acquaintances.

The staff of Thunderspire loves the dragonborn. He provides entertainment for them by testing potential buyers with exquisite displays of combat techniques. Thunderspire believes that only worthy adventurers should wield certain weapons; and Axozahn is the one

to test them. He does this either in combat or by issuing quests. Axozahn is looking for a new, worthy individual to pass on ownership of his mighty greataxe Blitzfang. Only a worthy successor that succeeds at defeating Axozahn in a trial can claim governance of the magnificent weapon.

EXCLUSIVE ITEMS

Thunderspire Forge mainly produces bespoke weapons and armor forged using lightning in specialized forges. These items, made from what is known as thunder-forged steel, are enchanted with powerful storm magic that can confer a combination of unique and tempestuous qualities.

As well as weapons and armor, the dwarves are capable of 'bottling' the lightning in fist-sized metal flasks which can be opened to unleash the electrical energy within. This stored lightning can also be used to empower potions, wands, and other items with more minor enchantments. The dwarves are also capable of producing nevermelt ice which, as it sounds, never melts, despite the heat. Nevermelt ice is most commonly used in jewelry, as it has no magical strength and cannot store enchantments as well as steel.



◆ THUNDER MAUL – 2,500 GP (RARE)

Any weapon that deals bludgeoning damage can be forged of magical steel in Thunderspire, which causes it to deal an extra 2d6 thunder damage on a hit. When these weapons hit their foes, they emit a booming crash that sends shudders through their foes. Additional effects can be added to these weapons, such as the ability to knock creatures prone with powerful swings or deafen enemies with thunderclaps.

◆ LIGHTNING BLADE – 2,500 GP (RARE)

Any weapon that deals slashing damage can be forged of magical steel in Thunderspire, which causes it to deal an extra 2d6 lightning damage on a hit. These weapons crackle with white or blue electrical energy that flares up each time they land a successful strike. Additional effects can be added to these weapons, such as causing them to emit auras of bright light or stunning enemies with static jolts.

◆ SHIELD OF RESISTANCE – 1,500 GP (RARE)

Thunder-forged shields are enchanted to confer resistance to cold and electrical damage. The shield is typically forged to depict an epic battle scene or



imposing grimace. Runes covering the shield glow blue and white with crackling lightning and sounds like a roll of thunder when its wearer charges into battle.

◆ **BOTTLED LIGHTNING - 100 GP (UNCOMMON)**

The dwarves of Thunderspire can bottle lightning in metal flasks thanks to their lightning rod tower. When unstopped, the lightning shoots out in a 100-foot long, 5-foot wide line. Each creature in the area must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take 11 (2d10) lightning damage. The flask is then empty.

◆ **CHARGED BOOTS - 500 GP (UNCOMMON)**

These steel sabatons might look clunky, but they are charged with lightning that crackles across their surface in scintillating purple streaks. A character wearing these metal boots has a disadvantage on Stealth checks made to conceal the sound of their movement but can Dash as a bonus action on their turn.

◆ **BLITZFANG - SEE: AXOZAHN BRYCHOR**

Blitzfang is a legendary greataxe forged from the tooth of an ancient bronze dragon. It is exceedingly heavy and deadly sharp, and it can only be wielded by the strongest of warriors. When Blitzfang hits a target, it is as if they have been struck by a bolt of lightning taking 3d8 extra damage from its strikes. Weaker foes are also thrown from their feet by the thunderous blast that the weapon emits.

RUMORS & SECRETS

THE BLEEDING STORM

Elvindir the storm giant has heard news from his kin in the mountain range beyond Mount Angrav of a storm that rains red. A bloodthirsty pack of gnolls, whose numbers outmatch those of even the greatest armies of the north, rampage in the wake of this storm. It is said that the leader of these gnolls is a hulking beast with demon blood running through its black veins. The storm giants fear that they may have to leave their ancestral home if The Bleeding Storm blows their way. The truth of these rumors is perhaps more terrifying than the rumors themselves. A horde of mountain gnolls have indeed begun following The Bleeding Storm, and they are led by a demonic master who was once a gnoll. The creature is from a lower plane and was summoned by a naïve warlock who believed they could control it. The beast's true name is not known, but it has been dubbed the Black Dog thanks to its coat of matted black hair and canine snout filled with bloodstained fangs. The Black Dog is bent on chaos and is on a mindless rampage throughout the mountain range. The Bleeding Storm that foreshadows its arrival melts the ice and snow from the rock, and poisons the earth so that nothing may grow from it. Adventurers may decide to pursue the horde before the Black Dog leads them to civilized lands.

THE LOST HAMMER

The very first weapon to be created in Thunderspire was a thunder-forged hammer named Blizzard. For centuries, the magical hammer was kept in a warded vault in the chambers of Elvindir, but a century ago it was stolen from the forge. Elvindir and the dwarves searched high and low throughout the mountains for Blizzard, but it was never recovered. All that could be found was a torn corner of a cloak of invisibility that experts decided was of halfling creation. Now, new rumors have surfaced that the mighty hammer has been sighted in the Valley of the Dead. This glacial vale is so named because the ice-floe that created it destroyed a mountain city called Frosthalm overnight, freezing the corpses of its inhabitants in the frigid slurry. The bodies of Frosthalm are still frozen into the walls of the vale. The halfling master thief that stole Blizzard was one of the victims of the Frosthalm disaster, and the hammer was frozen solid into the walls along with him. In recent years, the Valley of the Dead has begun to melt, releasing the corpses from their frozen tomb. A vile ghoulish necromancer has taken up home in the ruins of Frosthalm and has begun to create an army of undead from the thawing bodies. The thunder-forged hammer Blizzard has found its way into the hands of this necromancer, turning him from a petty nuisance to a terrifying foe.

ROGUE REMORHAZ

The dwarves of Thunderspire Forge are heavily reliant on shipments of iron ore and coal from the nearby Citadel Khalban, a dwarven mining city due east of the forge. These shipments come once every few months and are guarded by a sturdy group of veterans and rangers who know the mountains like the back of their hands. Unfortunately, the last shipment of ore failed to arrive. A pair of the veteran caravan guards made it to Thunderspire and told tales of an enormous, many-legged worm who had nested near the trail. The caravan went over its lair and fell through the snow into a cavernous hole of sculpted ice. Within, the young worms devoured the other traders and guards. The pair escaped and fled from the monstrosities, a remorhaz and its young. They eventually arrived at the forge, nearly frozen and exhausted from the journey. If the characters could retrace the steps of the guards and recover the lost caravan, they would be doing a great favor to the forge and could be rewarded with magic items. Recovering the caravan from the cave and fending off the monsters will be no easy task, but success could earn them great renown.

THE BAZAAR OF MARKOON

Wealth	★★★★★
Prices	○○○○○
Security	●●●●●
Influence	///////
Wares	Magic Items, Clandestine Wares, Exotic Animals, Rare Artifacts
Services	Arcane Lore, Underworld Contracts, Desert Expeditions, Caravans
Disposition	Paladins (Unwelcome)
Favored	Warlocks, Tieflings, Monks

"If you can bear the dead stares of those who forgot to pay up, there's no better place to trade than the Bazaar. Although the skulls might suggest otherwise, the place is brimming with life from all reaches, with treasures and wonders unheard of. In Markoon, all peoples are equal, and everything is available for purchase."

-Dogan Coincutter, Lapidary and Known Thief

The sandstone statues of Markoon are an ominous but welcome sight to many travelers that risk the journey through the Sands of Despair. Though countless sandstorms have wiped their faces clean of features, the four pillars still rise high above the heat haze. There, dunes act as beacons, proclaiming shelter and humanity. Although the location of the Bazaar of Markoon may at first seem undesirable, those who know the desert trails understand its position is tactical. The Bazaar is far enough away from the giant city of Jauzun – and thus outside of the direct control of the Priests of Nekhathon – but close enough so that the ferry beasts can traverse the distance. The towering, quadrupedal, scaled creatures are fitted with enormous palanquins; they transport wealthy merchants and their goods from Jauzun and nearby enclaves to the outlying regions.

Behind the great faceless monoliths, a blood-red mountain face looms, into which a hundred-foot tall gateway is cut into the rock face. It is from this cinnabar ingress that the Bazaar sprawls; hundreds of market stalls shaded from the beating sun by brightly dyed sheets of cotton, silk, and satin. The Bazaar is a black market where anything can be bought or sold for the right price, making it a hotspot for merchants of illicit goods—wares that might not be appropriate for the grand city bazaars or

ramshackle roadside markets. Even the wailing of the winds cannot drown out the continual babble of haggling, nor stifle the scents of spices and perfume. The Bazaar of Markoon plays host to an egalitarian mix of street peddlers and fine vendors. Those who visit can acquire almost anything they desire; magical beasts, spirit totems, cursed jewelry, an edible desert-whale, even the fruits of the Charahad tree. The assemblage of stalls is fluid, so each visit might take you down a new street bordered by cages of snapping reptiles, hogshead vats filled with bubbling curries, and roll upon roll of woven rugs.

BEYOND THE STONE

Venturing deeper into the Bazaar of Markoon, the goods offered become ever more diverse. Soon the spice stands, fabric stalls, and purveyors of food and drink are left behind. Replacing the bundles of herbs are cabinets made of gemstones; instead of carpet rolls, one finds weapon racks. Strange creatures push their faces up against the bars of cages stacked high on either side of the trail, accompanied by a multitude of hoots, squawks, and chirps that blot out all other noise. Makeshift tavernas erupt sporadically throughout, where gelatinous soup bubbles away in iron cauldrons and hunks of purple flesh roast over open flames.

Colorful characters of all cultures populate the Bazaar, mingling with each other as they would in the heart of any great metropolis. The scents, sights, and smells are often overwhelming to newcomers. The closer to the cliff face one gets, the more expensive and dangerous the goods

become. Those seeking prohibited things at the front of the market are told to go ‘...*beyond the stone*’, where they are rarely disappointed. However, even these armorers and jewelers are not truly ‘beyond the stone’, for beneath the market, in the antediluvian ruins of some forgotten civilization, is another layer of trade, one quite disparate from the surface bazaar. In these unhallowed halls, one can buy magical artifacts created by long-dead gods.

RISK & REWARD

Trading in Markoon can be risky at the best of times. The type of merchants that the market entices within its walls tend to be those more interested in the clandestine side of life. Even if they’re not actually criminals, the majority of their patrons are. For every hour spent exploring the bazaar, characters can find themselves caught up in one situation or another. Use the following table to introduce random events to their visit.

d10 Bazaar Event

- 1 A scruffy-looking herder sidles up to one of the characters and points a wand at their throat. They tell the character to turn out their pockets.
- 2 A chubby gnome vendor jumps up from behind their stall and begins screaming in gnomish, accusing you of stealing a prized set of cards. The actual thief is an invisible imp trying to make a quick getaway.
- 3 Screams spread throughout the bazaar as a swarm of undead scarabs emerges from the *Tombs of Nekhathon* in the priest district.
- 4 A ferry beast accidentally knocks over a stall of noxious perfumes, causing a frenzy.
- 5 A dusky-skinned elf greets the characters and offers to act as their guide through the marketplace, protecting them from pickpockets and showing them the best wares the place has to offer.
- 6 A fire breaks out causing panic. Some of the stall owners try to find water to combat the flames while others simply try to flee.
- 7 A brawl between two rival gangs erupts. *The Martyrs of Markoon* are a group of anonymous humanoids, each wearing a carved sandstone mask. The other gang is a group of half-fiends called *The Infernals*.
- 8 A shipment of barrels topples and rolls through the market, knocking over stalls and patrons alike.
- 9 A purple plume of smoke emerges from a sewer beneath the market, causing concern.
- 10 A mysterious stranger halts you, showing a bounty paper with your name on it.

Once you get beyond the stone in the Bazaar of Markoon, things become even more delicate. The plundering of ancient tombs would not be looked upon kindly by the wealthy nobles of the city, who would see the ruins preserved, and out of reach to the common folk. Additionally, the treasure hunting expeditions launched into the tombs rarely come back unscathed, sometimes not coming back at all. Despite the risk, most seem to think that the potential treasures in the ruins are well worth it. When the explorers return, they are often laden with magical jewelry, precious gemstones, staffs, rods, orbs, and wands. These items are unlike those found anywhere else throughout the realms of mortals and fetch a splendid price.

BAZAAR MERCHANTS

☼ THE BLACK MASTER (HUMAN BARBARIAN OVERSEER)

Few know the truth about The Black Master, and he prefers it that way. He is described as a towering, bald barbarian with ash-black skin covered in scars. At his side, a lizard-creature’s scaly form does little to hide an infernal evil beneath. The Black Master governs all that happens at Markoon with an iron grip from his underground palace; no one escapes paying taxes and abiding by the Decree. The Black Master rarely mingles with the public. When he does, it is always prefaced by whispers from the many thugs working for him. The master makes his presence known, seemingly out of nowhere, appearing in a cloud of acrid smoke and ash. Some say The Black Master’s lizard companion is an elemental capable of taking human form, strolling the bazaar unnoticed. They claim it makes deals with unsuspecting merchants for unfathomable wealth and power, in which they unwittingly sign away their lives to expeditions into the ruins and ancient tombs underneath the bazaar.



☼ HOORAN TULASHAR (MALE CATFOLK MERCHANT)

One of the best-loved and most consistent merchants operating out of the Bazaar of Markoon is Hooran Tulashar, known to most as *Quick Whiskers*. The humble catfolk is so adored by locals and visitors alike because he acts not

only as a merchant but as a Bazaar guide. His liveliness and charming wit belie his true age; two-and-a-half centuries. In that time Quick Whiskers has come to know the other merchants extremely well and is sure to hook up potential buyers with his favored friends. Hooran himself is a purveyor of boots of all variety; buskins, sandshoes, sandals, and slippers. He even stocks the occasional pair of magical sabatons. Hooran is a portly gentleman who bedecks himself in the finest satins and wears dozens of chains of all variety of metals, the chinking of which can be heard long before he is seen. The other salesmen have become accustomed to the sound, and scramble to bump into Quick Whiskers before he passes them by.

❖ **GOIRMIRE UNDERVORK (MALE DUERGAR SHOPKEEP)**

Goirmire is a disheveled looking dwarf with a toothless grin and pale eyes standing out against his ash-gray skin. Hunched in tattered clothes on a stool of discarded armor, Goirmire sits stroking his stained, braided beard. His stall at the bazaar, Goirmire's Expeditionary Oddities, is just as rundown as his appearance, although he does sell various valuable goods, unearthed during his many past adventures. Goirmire specializes in clandestine goods and information such as the whereabouts of political targets, maps of underground locations, and underworld contacts that can be leveraged. Goirmire's prized possession, which can be seen hanging over the counter, is a beautifully wrought adamantite gauntlet in the shape of a scorpion with a spiked tail. He jeeringly tells stories of his past adventures, where he suggested his enemies, "talk to the hand" before engulfing them in a huge spout of fire, emanating from the scorpion's tail.

EXPLORING THE BAZAAR

Adventurers coming to the Bazaar of Markoon searching for specific wares will find the place constantly abuzz with stalls and stores of all varieties. Several special items are listed in this section. Characters may not always be able to immediately find exactly what they're looking for. Those who travel to Markoon for a specific item may be in luck, having to wait around no more than a few days before some merchant appears with it. Other, rarer items might take a lot longer. For any time spent here, see the **Risk & Reward** section to introduce random events occurring in the Bazaar. Heavily armed guards patrol the crowded alleys at all times, putting an end to any quarrels quickly.



❖ **SPIRIT SCARAB - 100 GP (UNCOMMON)**

One of the most common treasures found in the antediluvian citadel beyond the stone are spirit scarabs. These small amulets easily fit in the palm of one's hand or in a pocket, and some are strung on chains or leather cords. A spirit scarab is always made of an oval semi-precious stone engraved to resemble a beetle on its upper surface, and flattened on the underside. Trapped within each stone is a lesser spirit belonging to the slaves of the ancient empire. Though they cannot be summoned from the scarab, they can be consulted for advice once before disappearing. Trapped between this life and the next, the advice given by the spirit is often cryptic, but always truthful.

❖ **SCEPTER OF SUPREMACY - 750 GP (RARE)**

These brightly painted, curved rods of precious metal are often found interred with bodies in stone sarcophagi. Although no two are the same in pattern and color, they resemble each other in their form. The scepters contain a spirit of the ruling classes of the ancient civilization. They can be wielded as a magical club, adding +1 to attack and damage results. In addition, once per day, the spirit within the scepter can be called upon to exert their rulership over another humanoid. The targeted humanoid must attempt to resist the effect with their willpower, or have their will broken by the spirit, and become susceptible to suggestions by its wielder.

❖ **DEATH MASK - 2,000 GP (RARE)**

Sculpted from the finest materials, these masks resemble gaunt faces or skulls and can be worn in a similar fashion to a helmet. Although they are rather unsettling to wear and do little to protect the head from attacks, they shield the wearer from death. Each mask contains the spirit of a god-child, one of the absolute rulers of a forgotten culture. Should a creature wearing a mask be killed, the spirit trapped within the mask takes the wound instead and is banished, the wearer is spared, though still grievously wounded. A Death Mask can save a life only once and crumbles to dust instantly after its powers are used.

❖ **WINTER WOLF TALISMAN - 500 GP (UNCOMMON)**

This tiny, pearlescent, marble figurine hangs from a silver necklace. When kissed, the talisman summons a savage white wolf named Gris, that serves and protects the summoner until dawn breaks. Gris can attack and defend in combat, be a rideable mount and confers resistance to cold environments to the one who called it. Upon the first morning light, the wolf dissolves into thin air with a soft howl and can't be summoned until the next full moon.

◆ **OBSIDIAN SCORPION - 3,000 GP (RARE)**

Sculpted from magma while still hot, an obsidian scorpion allows its wearer to transform into a giant scorpion but maintain their intelligence and personality. They were reserved for the warrior-priests of Nekharthon, and rumors say the spirits of those combatants are trapped within the amulets.

◆ **SANGUINE ANKH - 7,500 GP (VERY RARE)**

Worn around the neck on a golden chain, this adamantite amulet is etched with hieroglyphs and symbols of a long-lost culture. Whenever a creature is killed near this amulet, it glows with heat and pulls the wearer towards the corpse. The blood of the fallen comes to life and is sucked into the ankh, healing the wearer. Those attuned to the ankh can sacrifice their own vitality to summon golems of boiling blood to protect them from attacks.

RUMORS & SECRETS

UNEXPLORED TOMBS

Merchants operating 'beyond the stone' are always on the lookout for new adventurers and explorers who are willing to take up arms and delve into the ruins of the Nekhathon - the ancient civilization. Any heroes brave enough to do so are promised half of the treasure they find there, or their share in gold should they prefer. The tombs and ruins are a dangerous place to explore, filled with deathtraps, cursed items, and undead mummies. Lurking in the depths of the ruins is the undead wizard Agrathax; a floating skull wreathed in purple smoke and adorned with a golden cap bearing hundreds of engraved symbols.

He delights in capturing adventurers and hexing them with mind-controlling curses so that they might act as his agents in the marketplace. Although few know it, Agrathax has been hoarding treasure in the ruins of Nekhathon for centuries. Rumor has it that a powerful magic item, enchanted by the soul of a ravenous demon, has been unearthed somewhere within the twisting tunnels.

STRANDED CARAVAN

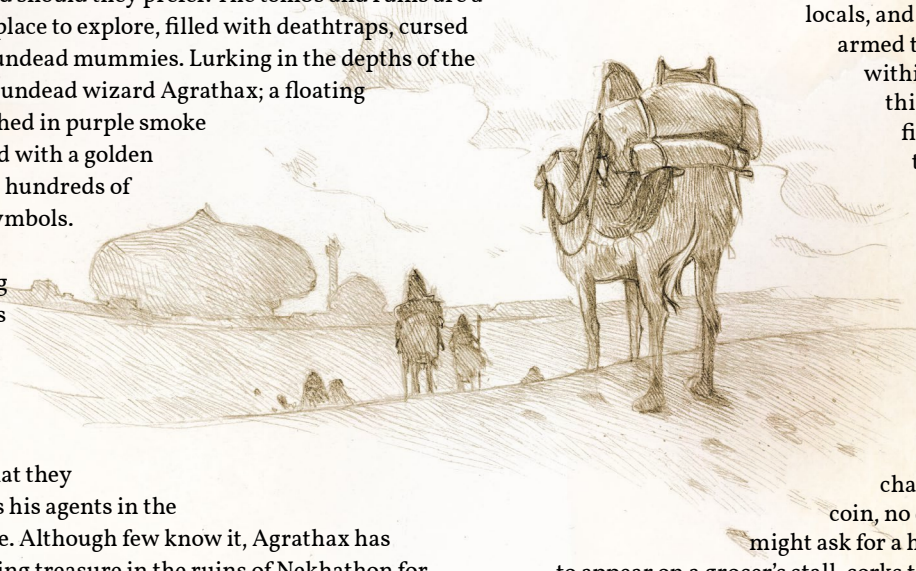
Several ferry beasts carrying customers of high esteem from Jauzun have been waylaid on the route to the Bazaar of Markoon by ash bandits. These notorious brigands scout the Sands of Despair on the back of giant vultures, looking for prime targets, such as wealthy nobles, to kidnap and

ransom back to their families. The characters can be given this quest either by the Sheikh of Jauzun, who wishes his relatives rescued, or by The Black Master, who wants to gain leverage over the Sheikh. Either way, the characters must spend days tracking down the missing ferry beasts by following their tracks, asking the nearby nomadic groups, or capturing and interrogating a member of the ash bandits. These criminals got their name thanks to their ancestral connection with an evil elemental who took humanoid form and spread their children throughout the Sands of Despair. The ash bandits have innate command over smoke, flame, and heat, making them dangerous foes in a searing desert. Eventually, the characters discover the nobles being held in an ash bandit encampment, securely guarded by the elite force. Retrieving the nobles without any casualties will have to be a stealthy affair.

MERCANTILE MANEUVERS

Although most of the merchants of the Bazaar of Markoon are peaceful cohabitants, there are some who refuse to get along. Open hostility in the bazaar is strictly prohibited and could be met with a death sentence from The Black Master in the worst cases. Though the outer bazaar is patrolled by thugs working for The Black Master, when 'beyond the stone', lawlessness causes vicious rivalries to break out. Although carrying weapons and wearing armor is not prohibited, drawing a weapon in the outer marketplace will shock the locals, and The Black Master's armed thugs are sure to arrive within minutes. Because of this, mortal enemies must find other, stealthier ways to undermine each other.

Much of this occurs through slander and gossip, but some merchants will go to even greater lengths to backstab their foes. Such a merchant might approach the characters with the chance to make a quick coin, no questions asked. They might ask for a handful of rotten figs to appear on a grocer's stall, corks to be cut in a vintner's store, or even a fire to start in a clothier's stand. These sleights range from discrete to dangerous, but any who will take the challenge is sure to be aptly rewarded.



THE OLD MILL

Wealth	★★★★
Prices	○○○○○
Security	♥♥♥♥
Influence	///
Goods	Adventuring Gear, General Goods, Common Weapons and Items
Services	Repairs, Lodging, Auctions, Storage
Disposition	Neutral (Welcoming to everyone)
Favored	Halfings, Rangers

"There's something about the place that just feels like home. Whenever I'm in town I'm drawn to it like a moth to a flame. They stock anything a traveler could need, no matter the quest ahead. Those looking for something exciting and unexpected will surely do so at the monthly auctions."

-Helena Brightbow, ranger of the moongrove

Built right on a riverbank in an idyllic glade, this disused watermill has been converted into the *Old Mill* general goods store and auction house. Well-loved throughout the province for its expansive product range and friendly service, the Old Mill sees a steady stream of visitors all year round. The store's regional renown far outshines its aged exterior's appearance. Quality goods, fresh produce, and adventuring gear can be purchased at fair prices, always with a kind smile from the staff. Most of these goods arrive at the Old Mill from across the river, which still serves as a major trade route throughout the countryside. The nearby tri-land crossing sees a constant flock of travelers, many of whom choose to spend the night at the Old Mill and stock up on supplies.

The wooden mill towers above the forest canopy. The landmark is easily spotted when traveling the roads that branch off from the tri-land crossing. Visitors are greeted by chickens freely roaming the perimeter. A finely painted wooden sign with a carved mill hangs from the patio roof. Inside, you get a sense of the breadth of stock available for purchase. The ground floor is filled with overflowing shelves packed with adventuring gear. Dried rations, waterskins, backpacks, bedrolls, tinderboxes, torches, rope, string, climbing spikes, harnesses, 10-foot-poles, walking staffs, candles, ink, parchment, mirrors, soap, and spyglasses are just some of the goods available. The first floor has a quaint little taproom and basic accommodation for folks who need a place to stay for the night. Though there's not much room to spare, the bar is always filled with quest patrons, fellow adventurers, and



people looking for help. In fact, the place has become a rendezvous point where traders and travelers from far and wide come to meet, trade stories, and share a meal. Suppliers access the expansive storage rooms through a large sliding door, large enough for carts to enter.

TRADE WINDS

The mill's tattered vanes still gently turn in the wind. It has been ages since they powered the wheat grinder. Nowadays, they rally visitors from all directions to come and enjoy the store's fine wares. The most prominent part of the establishment is the old mill itself; its round, towering structure is lined with circular shelves packed with goods all the way to the ceiling. Toward the back of the mill is a warehouse proper: aisle upon aisle of shelves stacked high with everything you could ever need. At the rear of the warehouse is a long wooden counter carved out of a huge tree trunk, behind which are staff rooms and the entrance to the enormous cellar. Also on the other side of the warehouse is a spiral staircase that leads up to the tavern.

Their vast collection of adventuring gear is sourced from the finest manufacturers available, and all kept at affordable prices thanks to the generations of connections forged with artisans all over the world. The entire place is always filled with laughter and chatter as the patrons and staff mingle throughout the warehouse, and the tavern above which looks down on the place from the gallery. Hanging from the ceiling are dozens of chandeliers made from elk antlers, whose magical candles cast a never-faltering orange glow throughout. As well as stocking general adventuring gear chosen specifically by the establishment, the warehouse also

provides the finest quality weaponry and armor. This section of the store is carefully monitored by staff to ensure no dangerous activities occur while the items are being tested. There's a small archery range to test your new bow, straw-filled training dummies to refine your axe-swing, and even cloth-wrapped wooden weapons to test out suits of armor. The resident wizard, Thorodell, is always on hand to repair any breakages or buff up a dented breastplate.

THE MONTHLY AUCTION

Each month, chatter and excitement build in anticipation of the auction that takes place at the Old Mill. Travelers take detours from their routes to visit, and adventurers from far and wide travel to the Old Mill. The auctions take place in the dead center of the ground floor, overlooked by the tavern above. The center of the old mill is cleared of shelves and instead filled with chairs to seat interested parties. Upon a wooden platform is a plinth atop which the item available for auction is displayed. **Floran Enderil**, the owner of the Old Mill, was once a famous adventurer and has a sizable collection of magic items, varying from uncommon trinkets to legendary helms. Tradition holds that each month one item is drawn from his horde and put up for auction. The auction always draws large crowds, and bids are placed by raising into the air a small magical torch, provided by the venue, which shoots a harmless, brightly colored ball of flame into the air.

SPENDING THE NIGHT

The upper floor of the Old Mill has been outfitted as an inn. It has been built into a ring-shaped gallery that looks down upon the warehouse below, and suspended above by ropes and chains are the cogs and wheels of the old mill. The tavern is outfitted with a handful of small wooden tables, a solid oak bar, and a few smaller private booths for groups to sit - ideal for adventuring parties. Indeed, many visitors from far and wide arrive

ahead of time, to ensure participation in the upcoming auction.

Here the ale is always cold and crisp and the food is fresh and filling. You'll never want for a warm meal or a refreshing



pint. Despite the quality, the prices are just as you'd expect. Never a bargain, but never expensive. In addition to food and drink, there is often entertainment provided by the resident jester and bard, Wicklefli. Explorers can stay at the Old Mill in their comfortable rooms for a short time to recover from their expeditions should they desire.

OWNER & STAFF

☼ GRETA BLOM (FEMALE HUMAN BARKEEP)

With a broad smile set between ruddy cheeks, Greta is the mother-figure everyone wishes for. She is a portly, beautiful woman with a kind heart and an open mind. She is head barkeep for the inn portion of the Old Mill, and loves her job. Hearing rumors and tales from passing travelers brings her great joy - as does doting upon her customers as if they were her children. As well as being jovial and caring, Greta is superb at her job. The barkeep can pour pints at a remarkable pace, remember the names of the most obscure drinks, and is surprisingly fit thanks to running up and down the mill stairs all day. Not only this, Greta can break up vicious bar fights in moments. Normally her formidable bellowing ends a brawl, but she can get physical too if required.



☼ WICKLEFLIT (MALE HALFLING JESTER)

Wickleflit is a jester in the truest sense; he wears a multicolored, many-tailed cap adorned with bells, carries a mock scepter, and wears spiraling red slippers. Wickleflit spends much of his time entertaining patrons of the Old Mill inn with songs and stories but also provides demonstrations of special wares to potentially piqued patrons. Despite his comedic flair, Wickleflit struggles with a deep feeling of melancholy, which occasionally pierces through his sunny facade, leaving unsuspecting customers somewhat bewildered.

☼ FLORAN ENDERIL (MALE HUMAN SHOPKEEPER)

The Owner: Floran Enderil is the proud owner of the Old Mill. A portly, middle-aged man who always has the spark of good humor in his eye, and bears the scars of his past adventuring life with a smile. Despite the difficulties that come with running such a well-stocked store, he never lets the stress get the better of him, and has a wit as quick as any jester or knave. Floran is also an exceptional mathematician, capable of recalling long lists of stock prices any time he requires. He even calculates the fluctuating prices of trade goods without the use of abacus or parchment and quill. Floran is normally found behind the checkout of the Old Mill, where he takes great pride in serving his customers face-to-face, despite his superior role in the store.

☼ **THORODELL EVERSPELL (MALE HALF-DRAGON WIZARD)**

Thorodell serves as the resident wizard at the Old Mill, and his talents are not wasted in the packed store. He can most often be found cleaning and repairing the weapons and armor in the old mill, but his roles extend far beyond that. Although he is somewhat shy about his talent, he is a powerful mage capable of using spells to teleport and transport goods, and even to alter their appearance and functionality – a service which only the best-paying adventurers can afford. Thorodell is scholarly, and always shows a keen interest in any magical items that adventurers openly sport.

AVAILABLE WARES

The Old Mill always stocks everything that can be considered adventuring gear. This includes magical foci for spellcasters, ready-made equipment packs, basic potions, musical instruments, gaming sets, weapons, armor, and artisan's tools. They also stock a collection of trade goods such as precious metals, spices, and gemstones. One can purchase ready-to-eat food and drink at the inn on the upper level, or dried and preserved rations in the warehouse. All of these items can be found here for their basic costs.

◆ **TRICKSTER STICKS - 500 GP (RARE)**

The Trickster Sticks were created by the roguish mages Isabelle and Fionelle, who were identical twins. These twisted, intertwining twigs fit together perfectly and can transform into a tall mundane tool or weapon that would be useful for thieves and mages. Example tools include a lock pick, a knife, or a potion vial.

The Trickster Sticks can be activated three times a day with a tap and are impervious to non-magical damage. The two sticks can be merged together with a command word. The merged sticks can transform into a medium-sized mundane tool or weapon. The sticks can be separated with a command word.

Engraved upon the Trickster Sticks are the initials of the mages. When the sticks are combined, both initials appear and glow with purple light.

◆ **BOX OF BOUNTIES - 1,500 GP (VERY RARE)**

These magic boxes always have what you need – at the right time, provided you can pay the price. Each box is magically attuned to a shop whose owner is a spellcaster. They are often lavishly decorated with gold filigree, gemstone-embedded handles, and carved sides depicting scenes of adventure. Characters who have such a box find that items they require urgently appear within it, but they cannot be retrieved unless the character pays the cost of the item first. Different incarnations of these boxes exist, but it is believed that the first one was created by a scholar who dedicated his life to research, leaving little room to

leave his sanctum. Creating such an item would enable him to never leave the sanctum, as all his required components would be available when required.

WEEKLY EXCLUSIVES

Each week, the central aisles of the Old Mill are dedicated to weekly specials that the store has managed to source from far-flung parts of the world. These items are limited in quantity and are only present in the week in which they appear. After that time is up, or all the stock is gone, they cannot be found again. Roll on the following table to determine what appears.

d10	Special Item	Price
1	Dragon's Breath. This spicy orange liquid is stored in iron flasks. Consuming it allows the drinker to exhale a cone of flame.	75 gp
2	Extendable Pole. These wooden poles can, at the press of a button, change length between 3-foot, 5-foot, and 10-foot.	10 sp
3	Presto Packets. These leather pouches of white powder can be used to remove stains from any fabric.	5 sp
4	Invisible Ink. These glass vials of ink can be used to write messages that are only legible directly after writing, or when warmed over a fire.	25 gp
5	Insta-hammock. These fabric cylinders have a button on the outside which causes them to unravel and shoot two wooden stakes into the ground, creating a hammock.	5 gp
6	Silent Bell. These small brass bells can only be heard by the person or creature whose name is engraved upon it.	20 gp
7	Chromachalk. These sticks of chalk can change color upon command, and never run out.	1 gp
8	Bright Ball. These delicate glass orbs can emit bright light in a small radius around themselves. They must be 'charged' in sunlight for several hours before they can do so.	5 gp
9	Rip Robes. These robes, available in a variety of colors and styles, can have pieces torn off by the wearer with no detrimental effect to the robe, allowing the creation of infinite cloth scraps.	10 gp

10 **Combat Chain.** These 5-foot lengths of chain can be wielded as clubs. In addition, pressing two links together and uttering a command word causes the links to fuse together. 50 gp

RUMORS & SECRETS

VERMIN IN THE BASEMENT

Rumor has it that the basement of the Old Mill, a sprawling metropolis of tunnels and stock rooms, is infested with giant rodents, blood-sucking bats, and goblins! If heroes are looking to make some easy coin (or earn some store credit), they can enquire with Floran about the basement. He will take the adventurers to one side before explaining that the rumors are true. The Old Mill is built atop an expansive underground network of chambers and corridors that occasionally plays host to insidious pests that are notoriously hard to remove. The river trickles down in places to fill caverns entirely with water, making it a dangerous place to explore. He is happy to award adventurers a set amount per rat foot, bat head, or goblin ear returned as proof.

SPOILED SPECIALS

Thorodell recently sourced an amazing new Weekly Special: freshly smoked fish from the nearby fishing town of Wullridge. The quaint town, about a tenday's journey following the river is well known for its delicacies. Unfortunately, when the batch of cured fish arrived, Wickleflit ate a sample and found himself incapacitated with painful stomach cramps. Thorodell is on the lookout for anyone willing to return the spoiled goods and exchange them for a fresh batch. Upon arrival at Wullridge, perceptive characters might investigate and discover that the fishmonger is being held hostage by a spiteful sorceress, intent on agonizing the region, claiming it was Thorodell that put her small apothecary out of business.

UNDESIRE ATTENTION

The monthly auctions attract adventurers looking to spend their coin on magical items to help them defeat the forces of evil, but that which they aim to defeat is never far away. Recently, some clandestine folk have been attending the auctions with a lot of gold, and have been winning a large number of them. If the characters investigate, they discover an infamous orc warlock named *Grukkian Borko* has taken great interest in the items available at these auctions and is sending his cronies to buy up as many as they can afford in order to increase their grip on the lands nearby.

The staff of the Old Mill are getting increasingly worried by the recent developments and are willing to pay for sellswords to defend the shop in the face of increasing clandestine customers.

THE FIRE

Not long ago, there was a serious fire at the Old Mill Auction that resulted in much of the upper floors being consumed by flame, and the vanes of the mill itself being totally destroyed. The past few months have been spent renovating the place so that it is suitable once more for patrons and staff alike. Most of the serious damage has been fixed - the walls are complete again and the mill's vanes are spinning - but the inside is still bare, and much of the charred furniture has yet to be removed and replaced. Helpful characters might offer to assist with the renovations if they have carpentry or masonry skills, or might simply be willing to remove the old furniture. If they enquire about the cause of the fire, they are told of Grukkian Borko, an infamous orc warlock who derives his power from an ancient primordial being. Grukkian has had his eyes on the Old Mill for some time, and frequently sends his agents into the shop to purchase magical items that appear for auction. However, it seems that the Ashtusk orcs, whom Grukkian commands, were responsible for the fire. Local law enforcement is happy to pay for any information about the arson, and also for any captive orcs brought to the nearby jail.



UNDERSEA ARCHIVE

Wealth	n/a
Prices	n/a
Security	♥♥♥♥♥
Influence	///
Goods	Memories, Knowledge, Arcane Lore
Services	Divination, Mind Restoration
Disposition	Evil Alignments (Intolerant)
Favored	Merfolk, Aboleth

"Consciousness is a strange concept. One can never truly know whether another being is sentient, only that they themselves have the ability to appreciate 'the sense of self'. But if we lose our memories, if we lose that sense of self, what is left? When left without context, without purpose, are we still conscious?"

-Aelorea Silvercurrent, Synos of the Undersea Archive.

Many humanoids have a peculiar phobia of the ocean depths. This emerges not just from a rational fear of drowning, or of the enormous marine monstrosities beneath the waves, but from the terrifying depths of one's subconsciousness, in which, hopes, fears, dreams, and memories are embedded. Many scholars believe that life began in the oceans. The oldest gods are those of elemental fury, of which water is the most stoic and everlasting. The amalgamation of elements is said to form matter, and from matter, man. This prehistoric sense of belonging has never left the hearts of humanoids. The subconscious awareness of their origins is deep-seated in their psyche. What leaves the deep must eventually return.

In one of the deepest sea trenches of the realms is the Undersea Archive, a sprawling network of flowing coral tunnels and geometric, crystalline domes. This network is built into the sheer face of an underwater gully, from which two immense stone turrets have been constructed. The twinned towers solemnly overlook the interconnected domes; a pair of panopticons in silent vigil. This complex is the Undersea Archive. The archive is populated almost exclusively by merfolk, though many scholars and monks of other races pass through in their pursuit of knowledge or enlightenment. The archive is a unique and unparalleled source of information. Rather than trading in ancient

tomes, oral tradition, or historic artifacts, the archive deals exclusively with stored memories. Each layer of the archive contains a vault of gelatinous globes and vials, formed from a symbiotic relationship between the enormous jellyfish that circle the archive and cultivated algae which the merfolk maintain. Each container holds a memory. These memories vary from the most mundane tasks and emotion to near-incomprehensible thoughts of past geniuses. Collected through eons of ever-shifting tides, the archive now holds a virtually endless depth of knowledge, attainable to others through memories.

LAYERS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

The main libraries of the Undersea Archive are cut into the rock of the ocean floor. The deeper one goes, the older the memories they find. No one is sure exactly how far down the archive goes, but it's not recommended that you stray further than a thousand years. Some say that the memories project outward from their viscous bubbles into one's mind, and getting too close to the older memories can warp your sense of reality, or even completely drive a person mad. It's no easy feat to find your way down in the archive, and many curious mortal minds have become lost, never to return. Thankfully, the merfolk who run the Undersea Archive know the uppermost layers as well as they know the ocean currents, and safely escort visitors to wherever they want to go.



SEEDS OF KNOWLEDGE

The layers of stone and coral have been cut away throughout the archive to create chambers lined with hundreds of shelves. These shelves are each stacked high with gelatinous bubbles in a variety of colors, each of which contains a captured, donated, or traded memory. The memories appear as silent, moving pictures in different hues depending on the nature of their contents. At a glance, not much is discernible from a memory globe save for its color, and perhaps a quick glimpse of a moment within the memory.

THOUGHT TRADE

Should you wish to purchase memories from the library, you are required to exchange a memory of equivalent 'value'. The exact value of a single memory is indefinable, but the merfolk wardens of Undersea Archive have their own systems of judgment. Typically, if one wanted to learn a new skill to a journeyman level, you would have to give up a skill you already know, though the wardens might accept a memory of hidden lore that they deem equivalent, or of an emotion so powerful that to feel it would be as mind-expanding as learning a new talent. Often, the easiest memories to trade are those associated with an object. The wardens encourage bringing along a trinket or item of sentimental value to help focus your thoughts when the time for extraction comes. Bear in mind that some memories are so powerful or valuable, they might be unavailable to characters. Try to consider the rough 'level' of a memory, and ensure that only characters of that level or higher have access to it.

PAINLESS EXTRACTION

The process of taking a memory is painless. The merfolk use magic to induce sleep in the willing donor, during which the creature has vivid dreams of the memory they are soon to lose. As they experience the memory through a dream, one of the farmed jellyfish that surround the archive is placed atop the slumberers' head. As the dream is experienced, the jellyfish pulsates with chromatic light, and its tentacles begin to construct a viscid bubble or globe from algae provided by the merfolk. The memory is infused into the orb, and can only be accessed by communing with it. Once the memory has been safely

stored, the creature is allowed to awaken, though they will have forgotten any trace of the memory they donated.

OBTAINING MEMORIES

To truly understand a memory, you must obtain it (after it has been encased in an orb) and commune with it over a period of hours. The process of communing with a memory is mentally draining and potentially dangerous. Whenever a creature attempts to commune with a memory, roll a d20. On a roll of a 1, roll on the following *Mind Mishaps* table to see what occurs.

d10 Mind Mishaps

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | The weight of knowledge from the new memory takes a toll upon your body. You instantly age 1d10 years. On an even result, your age is reduced instead. |
| 2 | The memory is in a language you don't speak, but you come to a sudden understanding of it at the expense of another. You learn a new language but randomly forget an old one. |
| 3 | The memory only partially attunes with your mind. Every time you try to recall it, you must succeed on a History check or become stunned for one minute. |
| 4 | The memory comes from a creature of a different race. You take on some aspects of this race, such as pointed ears, webbed hands, or an enormous beard. |
| 5 | You take on one of the personality traits of the creature the memory belonged to. This might change your alignment or give you a new character flaw. |
| 6 | The memory settles, but the traumatic experience of communing with it deals 1d10 psychic damage to you. |
| 7 | The new memory eats an old memory of yours that was of equal importance. This might be the password for a secret lair, the name and face of a family member, or how to properly use an axe in combat. |
| 8 | Recalling the old memory brings back some of the creatures from within it. These creatures manifest as spirits that haunt you, and may even attack you. |
| 9 | The memory causes some small trait of yours to change. You might change your dominant hand, shift eye color, or grow taller or thinner. |
| 10 | The memory is too much for you to bear. You cannot commune with it, and you fall into madness for 2d10 days. |

OWNER & STAFF

☀ **THE AWAKENED (ANCIENT KRAKEN WIZARD)**

While the Undersea Archive is mostly staffed by merfolk, its true owner is an ancient Kraken known only as The Awakened. The Kraken rarely makes an appearance in-person to those who visit the Archive but has the ability to possess any member of its staff, talking through their body like a ventriloquist. This process of possession is uncanny; uncomfortable to behold for even the most seasoned travelers and scholars. The possessed creature's eyes go entirely white, and their muscles relax as if asleep. The Awakened then animates each muscle individually to talk through their mouth in a sonorous echoing vocalization, or to cause them to swim, point, or even extract a memory of great value. Rumor has it that The Awakened is so named because they personally experience and retain every memory stored within the archive. With such an inconceivable trove of knowledge stored in their mind, the Kraken has transcended mortal existence.

☀ **SYNOS AELOREA SILVERCURRENT (NON- BINARY MERFOLK SCHOLAR)**

The title of Synos is afforded to only the most experienced and knowledgeable member of the staff of the Undersea Archive. It is a role that every new member seeks to attain, and is currently held by a merfolk named Aelorea Silvercurrent. Aelorea has light turquoise skin, tattooed with flowing silvery designs that glitter in the light. They wear a tall, crown-like headdress of corals and crystals.

They wield a scepter that is passed down from

Synos to Synos that is capped

with an enormous pearl, and wear a magical band around their bicep (see below). The soft manners of Aelorea help create a calming ambience which the Undersea Archive values highly. Volatile emotions can sometimes cause memories to become tainted or impure.

◆ **VECTRON'S BAND OF TRUTH - 25,000 GP (VERY RARE)**

Currently owned by Aelorea, this small band is made of gold reinforced with adamantite and has a radius of exactly 4.398 inches. The band is unpredictable: it often vibrates, emits odd smells, or randomly

heats or cools the air around it while not in use. Characters owning the item can use it to reveal the truth in situations where lies abound. It can provide them with insight into potential forgeries and frauds, as well as prevent other creatures from deceiving the wearer. While being used, the band glows with soft light. The more fraudulent a claim, document, or individual is, the brighter the band glows. When faced with an outright lie, runic symbols appear on the surface of the band.

☀ **CAPTAIN OLREA STORMSWELL (MALE CRUSTACEAN WARRIOR VETERAN)**

Containing the world's vast wealth of knowledge makes the Undersea Archive vulnerable, requiring ever vigilant protection. Housed in the twin towers that overlook the archive are the Mind's Guard, a force of elite warriors who have trained since childhood to protect the Undersea Archive.

These warriors are highly skilled because they have access to one of the best libraries of military history in the world, as well as their own training facilities. Captain Olrea Stormswell, the leader of the Mind's Guard, is no exception. Over the decade or so that he has been Captain, he has changed his personality on three occasions. This strange side-effect comes from the overuse of the memories stored in the archive. Every few years, Olrea swaps out his memories with those of other fighters from across the Realms so that his fighting style continues to evolve and remain unpredictable. He currently fights with an infusion of orcish brutality and dwarven efficiency, wielding a heavy spear of whalebone. His voice has taken on a slight dwarven slur, but his mannerisms are distinctly orcish.



RUMORS & SECRETS

ANONYMOUS DONATIONS

For the past few weeks, memory globes have been turning up in the antechamber of the archive without any explanation. The memories are piecing together a story from a few hundred years ago of an otherworldly, aquatic creature amassing an army of thralls and heading toward the continent. The characters might recognize the creature as an aboleth. It seems like the aboleth has made its lair in a network of sea caves a few days swim from the Undersea Archive. Characters who think to stake out the antechamber rather than head straight to the cave are rewarded when a mind-controlled merfolk comes to deposit more memories. It is clear that the merfolk is still

under the command of the aboleth, and has been laying this false trail of memories to lure adventurers into a trap; the sea caves. The sea caves are outfitted with all manner of magical traps and monstrous beasts designed to capture or kill adventurers so that the aboleth may take their goods, their memories, or enthrall them. The true lair of the aboleth is an enormous kelp forest not far from the caves.

THE THOUGHT PLAGUE

For the last month or so, something has been going wrong throughout the world. People's memories have been vanishing or manifesting in strange mass-visions in city squares and temples. The forgotten memories sometimes reappear with slight variations or clouded by dark matter. In the Undersea Archive, memories stored in the globes in the vaults have been tainted by the same dark force. When the merfolk go to access the memories, they are corrupted by shadow and smoke, and ghostly figures that never quite materialize seem to be watching from the periphery of the memory. At first, it seemed like a coincidence, but as more and more memories are suffering from the malady, it seems evil is at work. The merfolk believe that the Thought Plague must have originated here, in the depths of the archive.

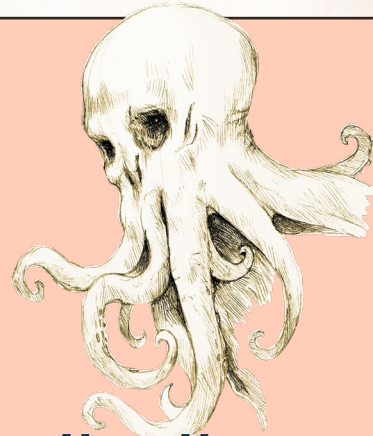
The characters can investigate this by traveling into the memories of the vault with the help of the merfolk. Here they can investigate the shadows, and may be forced to fight the clouded creatures that reside within the memories. The heroes eventually uncover that a powerful specter is trying to make changes to the past to prevent their own death, using the memories as a vector for the alterations. Should the adventurers fail to stop the evil spirit, the present could be catastrophically modified, and people throughout the realms will be affected.

WHAT LURKS BELOW

The merfolk of the Undersea Archive recommend that no scholar travel down into the rock past a thousand years. Beyond that depth, the layout of the vaults is not obvious, and it is easy for even the most seasoned guides to become lost. Not only this, but something lurks down there, something even the Mind's Guard are afraid to face. If the adventurers are bold enough, they must navigate the labyrinthine tunnels of the Undersea Archive down in the deepest layers of the seafloor. At this depth, creatures and beings from within the memories have managed to manifest in almost corporeal forms, attacking the characters or luring them to their doom.

At the heart of this is a merfolk scholar who became lost many centuries ago, but discovered the secret of lichdom in a long-lost memory globe, allowing them to become an immortal undead. Since then, they have used their necromantic magic to animate some memories to tempt new souls into the deep to feed to their phylactery. The merfolk lich is locked in a seemingly eternal battle

with The Awakened, the deific Kraken that oversees the Undersea Archive. Both have lairs in the lost eons of the archive, and both search desperately for ancient memories and secrets that could help them defeat the other.



MISSING MEMORIES

The Thought Plague is a great story hook to build a full campaign around. It contains ample opportunity for combat, exploration, and roleplay. If you want to start a campaign based around it, consider having the Thought Plague affect a village through which low-level characters are passing. The village could be in the middle of a festival when the malady hits, causing each individual to forget why they are dressed up, and what the ceremonies they were conducting are. While the characters help the villagers remember, ghostly shadows appear throughout the village, acting out the lost memories themselves. These shadows attack anyone who regains their memories, including the characters if they are assisting.

After this initial event, and similar ones across the world, small cults dedicated to the Thought Plague begin emerging. The cults believe that the plague is a gift from the gods - a way to remove memories of sins that should be purged from society. They begin actively hunting those fighting to cure the plague, and can draw magic from the plague that includes memory manipulation, mind reading, and domination.

Once these cults have been subverted by the characters, they discover the Thought Plague seems to have originated in the Undersea Archive. The characters must then travel to this exotic location, and undergo a ritual that allows them to travel through various memories stored within the archives. Here, they have to fight through the hordes of incorporeal beings that have appeared in the memories, and locate the true cause of the plague. This true cause could be almost anything you desire. Examples can include an undead warlock bent on revenge against those who wronged him, a powerful being from beyond the stars that feeds on humanoid memories, or a group of giants who intend to rewrite history with themselves as the absolute rulers.

GRIMBLE & SONS TINKERLINGS

Wealth	★★★★★
Prices	○○○○○
Security	♥♥♥♥♥
Influence	~~~~~
Goods	Constructs, Automatons, Weapons, Armor, Navigational Devices
Services	Repairs, Custom Item Crafting, Enchanting, Engineering
Disposition	Commoners (Unwelcome), poorly dressed clients (Intolerant)
Favored	Gnomes, Wizards

"You won't believe it until you see it. An airship the size of a small town, surrounded by a cloud of whirring monocothers each trailing a pennant: 'Grimble & Sons, Now in Town!' Never have I seen such a marvel of invention."

—J'Harad al Khybar, Keeper of the Bazaar

The Grimble & Sons airship is perhaps the largest floating enterprise in the multiverse. Crewed by a staff of several dozens, the regal airship resembles a grand galleon with an enormous, glowing, glass globe, gilded with spiraling gold at its very center. The body of the ship is an infusion of fine, varnished wood and gleaming, exotic metals, all maintained by the ever-present mist of monocothers; flying glass orbs with mechanical wings that whizz and whirr. The monocothers also deliver Grimble & Sons' prime merchandise: mechanical inventions that the staff call Tinkerlings.

The airship, not dissimilar to a galleon, hosts dozens of different areas, each serving a specific purpose for the staff and customers. Much of the hold of the airship is reserved for crew accommodations and facilities. At the ship's center, accessible only in the company of an attendant, is the gigantic spherical showroom. This room is filled to the bursting point with magical, mechanical constructs that whirl, tick, grind, and puff, creating a cacophony of industrious noise. The most prized of all these are the monocothers. Additionally, there are dozens of other replicable designs, as well as unique automata designed by Grimble himself. These hybrids of machine and elemental are called 'Tinkerlings', a name coined by Hilmer Grimble in the early days of his business.



DIZZYING HEIGHTS

While the Grimble & Sons airship is customarily open to all, it runs private auctions for the wealthier citizens of the cities in which it docks, be they nobility, merchants, oligarchs, or affluent mercenaries. Such members of the upper echelon arrive at the airship's dock, often mounted on pegasi or griffons. They are escorted to guest quarters on the upper level of the ship, from where they are escorted to the auction once it commences. During these auctions, the most advanced and sought after constructs are sold to the highest bidder. Such items include monocothers fitted with magical eyes, capable of spying on whomever they are instructed to, mechanical bodyguards with adamantite shielding and spell-dissipating shields, and whirring, insect-like creations capable of picking locks and disarming traps. The lavish parties following the auctions never fail to please, and stories are told of the airship for many moons after it departs.

BESPOKE DESIGNS

If one is looking for custom automata, Grimble & Sons holds the highest renown. The talented gnome artificers led by Hilmer Grimble himself, are masters of assembling the most spectacular constructs, capable of fulfilling almost any task imaginable. Those who have the money can place orders for bespoke creations with the crew of the ship, and arrange a private consultation



with Hilmer, or his representatives, where designs are drawn up and costs discussed. Rarely does a customer leave dissatisfied, provided they adhere to Hilmer's single rule: "We do not design weapons." The unique machines that come from these orders sometimes take months, if not years, to create and refine, but the results are truly magnificent. Grimble & Sons have no rival in the field of construct creation.

OWNER & STAFF

❁ HOMER TIBERIUS GRIMBLE (MALE GNOME ARTIFICER)

The shopkeeper's son is a master of materials and appraisals. From a glance, he knows the value of most woods, metals, stones, and even precious gems. His near eidetic memory allows him to store huge amounts of information, from logbooks regarding the fluctuating prices of alpine *frostwood*, *ethyrium ore*, and *brightstar rubies*, to just about any market good you can name.

Homer typically works behind the scenes, ensuring that the ship stays in the air by managing the import of goods onto the vessel, and ensuring their docking paperwork is in order; no small feat considering their continual journeying. From time to time Homer and a crew of his most trusted gnomes make expeditions to far-flung regions to collect rare materials that are essential to the continued production of the automata. They are always on the lookout for adventurers to assist them on these missions.

❁ CALICO OF THE TEMPEST (MALE MINOTAUR ASTROMANCER)

Born in a small coastal fishing town, Calico was the lone survivor of the worst storm in generations. A golden airship pushed off course by storms lucked upon finding the child beneath the town's wreckage. Once aboard, they

named him Calico:
his freckled fur
resembling
a calico cat.



Years passed, and while traveling the realm's continents, with Grimble's crew, Calico learned the trades of shipwright, helmsman, and astrologer. His knowledge of crafting now extends beyond simple repairs, and includes weather and navigational devices, star map globes, and other peculiar contraptions. These wondrous magical items are sold for a high price.

Calico believes his ability to create these magic items comes from the storm during which he was born, which still appears to him in his dreams. When he has the means, he takes out his personal ship, the Stormrunner, in search of maelstroms to face his childhood demons.

❁ MULDIGO VOKS (NON-BINARY ELEMENTAL HOST)

Perhaps the most iconic member of staff aboard the Grimble & Sons airship is Muldigo Voks, an elemental being who serves as a host and provides tours of the airship and workspaces. Muldigo serves as a translator between master crafter Grimble and those who wish to commission custom automatons from him.

In their humanoid form, Muldigo appears as a morph between a giant blue toad and a dragonborn. Bedecked in beautiful clothing and with impeccable manners, Muldigo has an otherworldly charm to bedazzle even the most stoic clients. Muldigo speaks over one hundred dialects from dozens of different planes in the known multiverse, which is essential for the exclusive traveling airship's exotic (and high-rolling) clientele.



❁ HILMER CADEUS GRIMBLE (MALE GNOME ARTIFICER)

Shopowner - The eponymous gnome proprietor is somewhat of a manic genius. He's rarely seen without some half-formed creation in his hands, and once he becomes obsessed with a construct, he doesn't stop to eat or sleep, sometimes spending days on end in his atelier. Despite his old age, his wits have not left him, and he is well liked by the staff of the airship and the visitors privileged with the chance to meet him. However, there are those who remember Hilmer's past. Years spent in the underground weapon workshops of the Last Regime. Centuries ago, Hilmer's creations were infamous for spreading destruction in a gruelling war that dragged on for generations. In Hilmer's attempt to atone for the past, he now refuses to create war machines, instead peddling his 'tinkerlings', beautiful, harmless constructs that bring joy to the world.

NOTABLE PATRONS

❁ COUNTESS ARABELLA MIRAGIO (FEMALE HUMAN NOBLE)

Countess of the Western Icepeaks and founder of the Miragio Mercantile empire, Arabella is perhaps the most distinguished of Grimble & Sons regular patrons. She is a highly pompous individual but loves to socialize and takes great enjoyment from meeting new people and hearing about their differing lives. As of late, Arabella has been spending most of her time searching for a missing book that she acquired from a mysterious and anonymous wizard long ago. The tome, called *The Evocation Opus*, details hundreds of original spells that the wizard was perfecting. The book is bound in salamander hide and each page edge is gilded with gold. It went missing several months ago during a meticulous heist that must have been organized by a genius and left the Miragio

Mercantile empire awestruck. The only thing taken was the tome. Since then, Arabella has been working with Grimble to create 'tinkerlings' that might help her track down and retrieve her item. So far, there has been no success...

❁ REMERIN CLINK (MALE HALFLING INVENTOR)

Hailing from the Damaren Isles - great chunks of floating rock and earth hundreds of feet above the ocean, Remerin made a name for himself by inventing a new mechanism of flight after binding smaller motes of levitating ground into wooden ships. Word of these new flying vessels spread just

faster than the ships themselves, and soon Remerin's talents were in high demand. In the end, Remerin decided his ingenuity would be best used with Grimble & Sons. The company's artificers have already mastered their own flying ships and tinkerlings, and Remerin believes that if they can work effectively together, even bigger things are on the horizon - literally! Now that the halfling is here, he spends his time conducting extensive research into the flying tinkerlings, and shadowing Hilmer. Unfortunately, Remerin is a wanted man. The folk of the Damaren Isles haven't taken kindly to the halfling mining their floating earth. There are numerous dangerous factions out to get him.



EXCLUSIVE ITEMS

The Grimble & Sons airship is stocked with part-mechanical, part-elemental constructs. Each of these creations is powered by magic, or an elemental trapped within it, and has been created to fulfill a specific purpose. These 'tinkerlings' are revered in the higher classes of society as items of luxury, but can also be used for more practical affairs. Most of these creations were designed by Hilmer Grimble and produced by his team of talented engineers and artificers, though some of the more unique pieces are assembled by Grimble himself. Grimble also takes orders for bespoke automata that are designed for a specific purpose for a client, though the process of designing, creating, and refining can take years. Some of the more common items with practical purposes are listed below.

◆ SPYING EYE - 450 GP (UNCOMMON)

Spying Eyes are monocoverters; glass or crystal orbs with a single propellor that gives them the ability to fly and hover. In a spying eye, the orb acts as a magical eye through which the owner can see. Spying Eyes are often used by jealous partners who wish to spy on their counterparts, thieves who want to stake out a joint, or explorers who wish to be forewarned of dangers that lie ahead. Typically, a Spying Eye can be used once per day and hover a distance of 200ft and return to its master. The globe then shows a luminescent image of what it has seen. The whirring sound of the monocovert can alert others of its presence. Hitting the nimble copter is difficult, but even a single blow can have devastating effects on such a fragile contraption.

◆ METAL GUARDIAN - 3,000 GP (RARE)

These humanoid constructs are specifically designed to act as bodyguards for their owners. They are equipped with broad, shield-like forearms and lightning reflexes which allow them to interpose themselves between any would-be attacker and their owner. Sometimes, these automata are even imbued with spell-reflecting magic that allows them to divert attacks, both magical and mundane.

◆ DISARMATRON - 850 GP (RARE)

Skittering and spider-like, disarmatrons are skilled at picking locks, disarming traps, and any other task that requires pinpoint accuracy or fine motor skills. They can be used to stitch together cloth or a wound, mix minute quantities of potion reagents, or even paint tiny portraits.

◆ HIROMIN'S CANE - 550 GP (VERY RARE)

This otherwise inconspicuous cane is capped with a cap of etched brass, shaped like a coiled snake. The etchings demarcate several buttons which, when pressed, make the cane unfold and transform into various useful items, such as a rapier, glaive, 10-foot-pole, lightning shock prod, or a telescope. In a blink of an

eye, it reassumes its original form of an unremarkable cane. Grimble first made a cane like this as a custom order for Hiromin Koon, a legendary explorer from the Starry Isles. Grimble now makes these custom canes to meet any customer's wishes. At a price, of course.

◆ **ALL-SEEING VISOR - 5,000 GP (VERY RARE)**

While wearing one of these strange brass and glass contraptions, one can see creatures that would otherwise be invisible (both corporeal and incorporeal), as well as in darkness, or through certain barriers; no more than 1 foot of stone, 1 inch of common metal, or 3 feet of wood or dirt.

◆ **CALICO'S SPHERE OF HOLDING - 700 GP (RARE)**

These ornately etched chrome spheres are typically 3-feet in diameter and enchanted in several ways. Firstly, they never dent or scratch, nor require polish to restore their shine. Secondly, they are capable of rolling without propulsion, always following whomever they are attuned to. Thirdly, they can, upon utterance of a command word, unfold into an open-topped trunk within which one can store a considerable quantity of personal items, provided they do not exceed 8 cubic feet. Seemingly indestructible, Calico's Spheres of Holding are vulnerable to acids and crumble to ash when breathed upon by a pure soul.

◆ **GRAVITUS GAUNTLET - 2,500 GP (VERY RARE)**

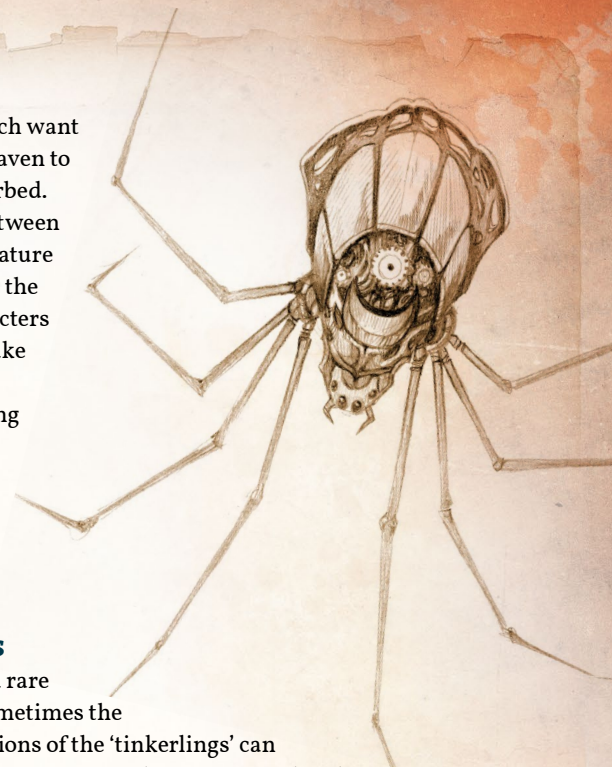
These enormous, bejeweled gauntlets of steel and copper are prized among architects and artists. Wearing one allows its bearer to temporarily reverse gravity for any object held within its grasp, causing them to become weightless, or float toward the heavens. The effect lasts 1d4 minutes and can be activated once per day. The jewels on the gauntlet glow faintly when charged, yet remain dim when depleted. Recharging the gauntlet requires it to be bathed in the first light of the sun at dawn.

RUMORS & SECRETS

ETHYRIUM ORE

Homer Grimble has heard rumor of a payload of ethyrium ore in an unexplored mountain range not far from the city where the airship is docked. He sent a fleet of monocoverters to scope out the potential location and discovered that indeed, there was ethyrium exposed on the surface of the mountains. Unfortunately, the majority of the monocoverters were destroyed by something on the return flight. Those that did make it were covered with dents and scratches. By inspecting the monocoverters, the characters might realize they seem to have been damaged by the plants. Twigs protrude from some of the workings of the monocoverters, and others have vines caught up in their propellers. Homer is looking for someone to join him and his fellow gnomes on the expedition to set up a mining camp by the ore. Should the characters accept, they have to face off against the spirits of the mountain forest, dryads, animated trees, and

blights, all which want their natural haven to be left undisturbed. The conflict between industry and nature should come to the fore, and characters will have to make a hard choice between earning their pay and preserving the natural world.



STRAY CONSTRUCTS

Although it is a rare occurrence, sometimes the elemental portions of the 'tinkerlings' can go rogue. The main cause of this is a magical malfunction that occurs when the airship travels through the planes. However, on this occasion, it has happened in the middle of the local bazaar. The characters need to track down all of the rogue constructs before they cause too much havoc within the city, if they want to maintain the high reputation of Grimble & Sons. If they can do so, they will be rewarded with a custom automaton of their design. Staying undercover, and keeping a low profile, the characters must track down the missing 'tinkerlings' and neutralize them without destroying them entirely. The more obvious they are, the worse Grimble & Sons will suffer, and the less likely the characters are to get their reward. As the characters subdue the 'tinkerlings', they uncover that a rival inventor caused the malfunctions, and is pursuing them through the streets, trying to draw attention to their activities.

ELEMENTAL ENTERPRISE

Every few years the airship must return to the elemental planes to recharge its engine - the glass globe that powers the ship. This journey is always a dangerous one, and the majority of the crew are replaced by hired mercenaries and adventurers who are more suited to the dangerous travel. The airship must spend ten days in each elemental plane in order to fully recharge, during which time they are likely to be attacked by devious genies, gargantuan chaotic elemental evils, and even planar pirates who skip between planes on lightweight craft hoping to capture other ships for their fleet.

THE SHEAR DREAD

Wealth	☆☆☆☆
Prices	○○○○○
Security	♥♥♥♥♥
Influence	///
Goods	Tonics, Poisons, Knives, Information
Services	Arson, Assassination, Blackmail, Forgery, Theft, Shadowing
Disposition	Good Alignments (Unwelcoming), Paladins, Priests (Intolerant)
Favored	Halfings, Rogues, Warlocks

"There is a metallic scrape that sets teeth on edge as a miniature wrought iron spiral staircase is dragged across the floor. With a steady click, click, click, a halfling ascends the stairs. Dressed in white trousers, gleaming black boots, and a blood-red vest, the barber silently begins neatly trimming away at the hair of a nervous-looking half-orc."

—Brildur Grost, Traveling Merchant Extraordinaire

The Shear Dread, a famous barbershop owned by the unnerving halfling Gulimort Baldgrim, isn't so much nestled into its surroundings as it lurks and looms. The tall, thin building lurches upward to a high pinnacle roof with an accompanying tower; exterior walls of brick, once painted pure white, have been soured by years of weathering and obscured by green-and-purple vines that have wormed their way up the building's facade. The building stands taller than those to each side, but sits further back than either of them, as if reclusively staying back in the shadows.

The building's interior does little to improve its aesthetic: age-clouded windows allow only a shivering pale light to slink into the ground floor where Gulimort Baldgrim does his work. Customers wait their turn in cushionless wooden chairs near the entrance. The chairs are expertly crafted, as is everything in the building where Baldgrim works and lives.

There's no denying the halfling's measured, even aristocratic taste; but there's a drabness, a sense of grinning macabre that, combined with the halfling's own personality, sets the Shear Dread's patrons on edge.



CLEAN CUT

Another reason for Gulimort's success, and one far darker than a somber atmosphere, is his offering of special, clandestine services. Every so often, a customer sits in Gulimort's chair and tells him to "make it a clean cut." From that moment on, Gulimort knows he is with a different kind of customer entirely. After the haircut is finished, Gulimort goes into the back and retrieves a bottle of hair tonic, handing it to the customer with a personal recommendation or handwritten note. Even on the busiest of days when the waiting seats are full, no one would suspect the customer is a murderer who's just purchased a vial of deadly poison. Indeed, Gulimort's talent for alchemy goes beyond hair care; he is an accomplished poisoner, capable of crafting any number of toxins designed to be absorbed through contact, injury, or consumption. Criminal organizations and deadly assassins know of Gulimort's craft, and stop by on occasion as their professions demand a need for poison, or one of his many other dark services. Each such service is cryptically called for by a unique, curiously-phrased sentence, understood only by those in the know.

SECRET SERVICES

Beneath the salon is a damp, dingy basement that few folk have access to. At a glance it is just as you would expect; filled with old barber chairs, crates filled with empty tonic

vials, and tools for sharpening scissors, cleaning combs, and sweeping up hair. However, despite its appearance, the basement is the meeting place for one of the most notorious assassin syndicates in the mortal world. The folk who gather here are cutthroats, poisoners, executioners, and professional marksmen. Most disguise their identity and go by pseudonyms to maintain anonymity.

Regulars to the Shear Dread who fall in close with Gulimort, or those granted entry by uttering a code phrase, might be invited to one of these meets. Gulimort is always interested in meeting new characters that might improve his cultivated collection of cutthroats. Wealthy customers can dole out assassination jobs to the most accomplished killers, or even hire counter-assassins for themselves. The following table provides prices for the clandestine services Gulimort offers his patrons.

Code Phrase	Service	Cost
"I'd like the sideburns long"	Arson - Major Building	2,500 gp
"I'd like a hint of sideburns"	Arson - Minor Building	1,500 gp
"Make it a close shave"	Assassination - Accident	4,000 gp
"Make the scalp shine bright"	Assassination - Explosive	4,000 gp
"Make use of a strong hair tonic"	Assassination - Magical	7,500 gp
"Make good use of the razor"	Assassination - Melee	3,500 gp
"Make it a clean-cut"	Assassination - Poison	5,000 gp
"Keep the cut long"	Assassination - Ranged	3,000 gp
"Some dark coloring would be in place"	Blackmail	1,000 gp
"Could you pluck some eyebrows?"	Extortion	1,000 gp
"Can I order a custom-made wig?"	Forgery - Documents	500 gp

"Can I order a custom-made brush?"	Forgery - Items	750 gp
"A bit of wax for the mustache"	Impersonation - Commoner	50 gp
"A proper waxing for the mustache"	Impersonation - Noble	250 gp
"There may be some tiny lice to catch"	Kidnapping - Commoner	1,500 gp
"There is a big louse somewhere there"	Kidnapping - Veteran	3,500 gp
"Can you comb over the problem spot?"	Smuggling	250 gp
"A scourge of split ends need attention"	Theft - Major Item	1,000 gp
"Some split ends need attention"	Theft - Minor Item	50 gp

OWNER & STAFF

☼ TOM WOOD (MALE HUMAN COMMONER)

Tom Wood is a teenager and assistant to Gulimort Baldgrim. Tom has worked as Gulimort's assistant in the shop for three years, the longest of any employee in the business other than the barber himself. It's straightforward for Tom, who lives in a poor part of town and needs the good pay that Gulimort offers, but it's a mystery why Gulimort has kept the young man on staff for so long when other capable assistants were fired within months. Some say (only half-joking) that Tom is the only thing, other than cutting hair, that Gulimort likes. This is actually not very far from the truth, as Gulimort is deeply fond of Tom, ever since he got the youngster off the hook after being caught stealing at a local market.

☼ NURGUM (IMP SERVANT)

Hideous to behold, constantly grumbling, and on the chubbier side, Nurgum is a grumpy old imp who was outwitted by Gulimort and forced to spend the next

☼ GULIMORT BALDGRIM (MALE HALFLING ARTISAN)

Shopkeeper: Anyone who has been to Shear Dread will tell you there's something distinctly un-halfling-like about Gulimort Baldgrim, but they'd be hard-pressed to tell you what it is. Certainly, his hairstyle is unusual for a halfling, with its chestnut brown locks smoothed back into a small ponytail without a single hair out of place, but that isn't it. Gulimort's eyes are certainly large and bright blue, but some might say that brightness is more of an unnerving gleam. It's mostly Gulimort's demeanor that makes his customers squirm, the way he works unsmiling from open until close, the way his movements are stiff and mechanical until he's sweeping those human-sized scissors down with that gleam in his eyes.



nine-hundred and ninety-nine years serving the barber in his salon. Nurgum's chores include sharpening scissors, cleaning combs, sweeping the floor and refilling empty tonic bottles. He also serves as a lookout during meetings in the barber's basement. When Gulimort is in a particularly

cruel mood, he forces Nurgum to fly around his customers, picking individual strands of hair off their collars and lapels. Nurgum would do anything to free himself from bondage, and to get vengeance upon the barber. Perceptive characters might notice that Nurgum wears a strange, ornate key around his neck.



HAIRCUTS & TONICS

Despite its unnerving atmosphere and proprietor, people come to Shear Dread for one important reason: Gulimort

Baldgrim might be the greatest barber alive. No matter how tricky or exotic of a style is requested, Gulimort can do it. Additionally, Gulimort is a skilled alchemist, and tonics sold from his shops can help sculpt unruly hair or make a bald man's hair grow rapidly if you believe the rumors. Some of Gulimort's favored hairstyles and colors are magical, and have additional effects:

◆ EMOTIVE OINTMENT - 250 GP (UNCOMMON)

This ointment, when rubbed onto the scalp, causes the individual's hair to change shape based upon their emotions for the next 8 hours. Any emotion felt by the individual is reflected in their hairstyle; standing on end for shock or surprise, swishing valiantly for happiness or pride, drooping low for sadness and dejection. Hundreds of potential hairstyles can occur, each of which is unique to the individual and the situation.

◆ BLOODY-BEARD OIL - 1,000 GP (RARE)

This unremarkable substance, bottled in a small dropper bottle, has the exact appearance, feel, and smell of regular beard oil - an essential grooming tool for the distinguished gentleman. However, Gulimort's alchemical expertise has allowed him to brew a deadly poison into the mixture which, when mixed with oil from human hair and inhaled, can be lethal. A creature subjected to this poison must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, it takes 21 (6d6) poison damage and is poisoned for 24 hours. On a successful save, the creature takes half damage and isn't poisoned.

ODDS & ENDS

Tucked away on dusty shelves in a locked backroom are a few other items of note. Collected by Gulimort himself over the years, perhaps gifts from clients who failed to pay in coin, these items are curious as they are valuable.

◆ GIUSEPPE'S FINE SILVERWARE - 250 GP (RARE)

Anything eaten with this fine set of silverware tastes like the finest cuisine imaginable. The silverware was created when Giuseppe, the original gnome owner, failed to live up to the reputation of his family as a masterful chef. Thankfully, the gnome was a superb silversmith. He created the dining set and had it enchanted by a fiend with a grim taste for mortality. Since then the silverware has fallen into the hands of a notorious assassin, who uses it to disguise the foul poisons slipped into noble's dinners.

◆ EMBER MARBLES - 450 GP (RARE)

These three ashen-colored marble balls are each marked with a giant rune that glows like the embers of a dying fire, and are well balanced for juggling. As a bonus action, the owner of the balls can speak a command word, which causes them to burst into a magical flame that doesn't harm the owner. While using the balls, checks relying on charisma and performance are made with advantage. The owner can make a ranged weapon attack with one of the balls by throwing it or hurling it with a sling. On a hit, the target takes 1d6 fire damage. Hit or miss, the ball extinguishes. The owner can also extinguish the marbles by speaking the command word again.

◆ GULIMORT'S RAZOR - 1,700 GP (VERY RARE)

Gulimort has a range of razors that he sells to his most faithful customers. These cut-throat razors provide not only a superior shave but are also magically enchanted to defend their users. They can easily be concealed in a jacket pocket, backpack, or socks. When their owner is attacked by another creature, they fly out from concealment, unfold to reveal the blade and slash out at the attacker (+5 to hit, reach 5 ft., dealing 2 (1d4) slashing damage on a hit). The blade remains animated, provided that it remains within 30 feet of its owner, or until the attacker has been knocked unconscious or killed.

◆ MASTERWORK ARTFUL GLOVES - 2,500 GP (VERY RARE)

Originally reserved as a gift for those attaining the highest rank in thieves' guilds, replications of these gem-studded leather gloves have spread across the world. The gloves improve their wearer's attempts at clandestine activities including picking pockets, opening locks with thieves' tools, and even influencing those who shake hands with the character. Additionally, once per day, the wearer can remove the gloves and speak a command word to send them off on their own. They animate as a pair of flying hands and can perform one task for the wearer before returning. By this method, the

wearer can unlock doors from the inside by sending the gloves through a window, pickpocket someone at the top of a tower, or move objects blocking line of sight.

NOTABLE PATRONS

☼ DUROWALT ROSCOE (HUMAN RETIRED DISTILLER)

Durowalt is an elderly man, frail of frame with wispy white hair parted to the side. His small pale face is dominated by a large blood-red nose, upon which is perched a pair of wire spectacles encircling his squinty eyes. He frequents The Shear Dread, where he and Gulimort constantly bicker and poke fun at each other. The two are old friends who go back years. Adventurers can get all sorts of information from Roscoe that they might not otherwise be able to acquire, and he seems to have a knack for uncovering tidbits of gossip that often turn out to be true.

☼ GURR BAAH (MALE HALF-ORC ASSASSIN)

No one questions why this scarred, gray-skinned, half-orc comes in for a shave and a trim every two weeks. Gurr Baah is one of Gulimort's most frequent customers, a killer-for-hire that sells his loyalty to the highest bidder from week to week. Competing criminal organizations respect Gurr's independence and don't begrudge the half-orc when he is hired to kill one of their assets—or at least they're too intimidated by the assassin to do anything about it.

☼ MIRRA NUSK (FEMALE DRAGONBORN WARLOCK)

One of Gulimort's frequent visitors is an infrequent customer: Mirra Nusk is a powerful warlock who liaises with Gulimort to execute many of his 'special services'. To avoid the discovery of her employer's craft, Mirra enlists both her impressive intellect and a fearsome arsenal of dark magic without remorse. Her presence is enough to keep regular patrons sitting in their seats, while Gulimort's sharp scissors and stare keeps them silent and obedient.

RUMORS & SECRETS

THE STRAY FLOWER

Martin Malicroix, the apothecary's son, saw something he wasn't supposed to while wandering through the alleys of the town. As Gulimort Baldgrim was unloading crates of supplies behind the Shear Dread, an improperly

packed box spilled its contents onto the ground. The potion maker's son knows deadly Nightshade when he sees it, but when Gulimort snatched the plant from the ground and turned his cold gaze to Martin, the boy pretended he hadn't seen. Now Martin walks around exhausted and pale, unable to sleep. Ever since that day, he swears he's heard the sound of scissors outside his bedroom window at night going *snip. snip. snip.*

THE SIGN

There are no signs inside the Shear Dread, save one. It doesn't list prices, politely ask customers to wait their turn, or to be seated; it simply reads, in flowing Common script, "CHOOSE YOUR WORDS WISELY OR DONT SPEAK" When the Shear Dread first appeared, people, puzzled over the sign, but ultimately dismissed it. As the years passed, some began to wonder; what could it mean? Gulimort or his assistants simply smile while dutifully sweeping the floor between each customer, relegating the trimmings to a small bin. When Rebad Mok, an old local carpenter, once spoke up in the middle of his haircut to ask, "*I'd like the sideburns long*", Gulimort smiled a mad smile. Leaning over the edge of his miniature staircase, he whispered something in Rebad's ear, causing the man to turn pale and break out in a sweat.

THE KEY

Characters who take an interest in Nurgum might notice or be shown the ornate key that the imp keeps around its neck. Although it looks to be a hefty iron object, the key is practically weightless, and doesn't hinder the imp's movements in any way. Additionally, the key is warm to the touch, almost hot enough to burn.

If characters ask Nurgum about the key, he explains that it belongs to one of the Princes of Hell. He was forced to take ownership of it as part of a deal that he thought would make him incredibly rich, but he failed to read the small print and instead must look after the key until he dies. Once dead, he'll be rewarded, but Nurgum isn't exactly sure where the money will be sent. The key is supposed to unlock a chest that contains a magical weapon tied to the soul of one of the Infernal Princes. If the weapon is used against them, they are made mortal for a moment and can be killed. Nurgum reveals this information to powerful characters who they think might be able to help defeat the Prince, and thus earn Nurgum their freedom. The first hurdle will be smuggling Nurgum out of Shear Dread before Gulimort notices, and ensure the imp is back in time to fulfill his end of the deal with the barbershop owner.



HOUSE OF HARMONY

Wealth	✱✱✱✱✱
Prices	○●○●○●
Security	♥♥♥♥♥
Influence	♣♣♣♣♣
Goods	Musical Instruments, Clothing, Sheet Music, Performance Equipment
Services	Musical Tuition, Storytelling and Acrobatics Lessons, Fashion Advice
Disposition	Evil Alignments (Intolerant)
Favored	Bards, Elves

There's no place out there quite like the House of Harmony. The place is dripping in drama, pocked with performance, and gushing with glamor. If you're ever in Meladonia, be sure to take a visit, you will never forget it. The sounds of the place alone will bring you to tears.

- Selenia Firedos, Ringmistress of the Charadeux Circus

The city of Meladonia, floating above the giant lake Moko, is a place filled with delights. At all times of the year, the streets are heavy with decorations, scintillating bunting, painted statues, and multicolored drapery. The lean buildings crowd around canals, which form a labyrinth of passageways, ducts and traverses, eventually pouring into the lake. Meladonia is known as the City of Song & Dance, because of the great volume of performers it attracts. These performers, and their wealthy patrons, fill the city with wonder. Circuses perform in the court plazas, filling the onlookers with gasps of awe as acrobats fly through the air and fire breathers scorch the gutters with gout of flame. Each street is filled with a different melody thanks to the hundreds of bards that gather on corners in impromptu bands. In the center of the city is a grand opera house, the House of Harmony, where nightly performances thrill captive audiences.

It is because of the House of Harmony that the city of Meladonia flourished. Once word of the performances began to spread, more and more performers arrived in the hopes of making their big break. The House of Harmony now serves as a venue for all varieties of performance, but unlike the courtyards throughout the city, one must have

a mastery of magic to perform there. Mere talent is not enough, a performer must be able to bend reality to create the most awe-inspiring spectacles the city has ever seen!

PEAK PERFORMANCE

As well as being a place for performance, the House of Harmony serves as a shop of high renown amongst performers of all sorts, but especially in bardic circles. It seems that no matter the time of day, music and laughter emanate from the place. Performers of all varieties come to the shop to purchase the most fashionable attire and items on the market. The House of Harmony is also a proving ground for newcomers to show off their skills in front of an audience. The shop has spread into four distinct buildings, which are connected by the central courtyard. The buildings are made of pale stone, though each has been decorated with beautiful murals in bright colors. Clay-tiled roofs overhang the courtyard, and flags hang down from these so that their gentle flapping fills the space. The courtyard itself is filled with long benches and tables where one can enjoy a show with a glass of crisp white wine or snifter of brandy.

At one time the House of Harmony was but a small establishment called Lustrous Lutes, owned by a talented luthier named Diabolo. The young man ascended to fame when he imbued a violin with a spell that caused illusions



to pour forth from it when played. These mirages told the story of each piece with perfect accuracy, leaving audiences in floods of tears or raucous laughter. Since that fateful day, the House of Harmony has continued to grow in size. Now, the four buildings each have their own specific purpose; one for vestments and glad rags, one for instruments and tools of the finest quality, one for magically enchanted items, and one as a performance space for newcomers and seasoned performers alike.

UNMATCHED ARTISTRY

The shop is best known for the riddle after which it was named; a complex poem magically etched into a viol. In comparison to this incredible artifact, many of the amazing instruments, tools, and clothes created by the craftspeople of the House of Harmony are considered relatively mundane. Despite their incredible value, and the care, and detail that has gone into their craft, most of the clientele of the shop are disinterested in them, favoring instead the magical items created by the esteemed bards who work for a season in the shop before moving on. During these brief tenures, the famous bards work on special projects of their own devising, be they blessed instruments, cursed songbooks, or enchanted costumes. Fledgling performers often come to be apprenticed to these famous individuals, hoping to glean some insight into their talent. This arrangement ensures that the House of Harmony is always well-stocked with incredible, unique items that cannot be found elsewhere, and thus coin flows through the establishment with ease.

TAKING THE STAGE

For newcomers looking to make their debut in the performance scene, the incredible magical items and expensive attire can seem totally daunting, and impossible to

acquire through honest means. Thankfully, the House of Harmony encourages these novices by allowing them to perform in a specially designed stage within one of the buildings. Sometimes called the **Bard's Board** or the **Bard's Basement**, the wooden stage is elevated above the floor of the room, with tiered seating around the walls and galleries in the upper stories of the lanky building. This stage allows the performers to be seen and heard throughout the building with ease, occasionally even out to the courtyard. Some claim that the wooden boards of the stage have spells captured within them to raise the spirit of a crowd, and even camouflage a performer's mistakes. By performing for a few nights, the tips given by the audience can serve as a downpayment for items that a novice might wish the purchase from the shop, thus allowing them to slowly pay for whatever it is they desire.

OWNER & STAFF

✿ RADAVAN MELODIVARI (MALE HUMAN CRAFTSMAN)

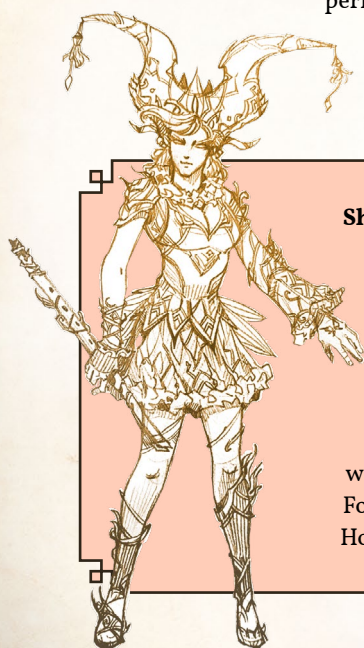
Ask anyone who is the best luthier alive, and the answer will always be Melodivari. Truthfully, it might not be Radavan Melodivari each time, but it will always be a member of the family. Radavan is, despite his amazing talent for creating musical instruments and imbuing them with spells, a grump. He takes his work extraordinarily seriously and flies into passionate fits of outrage if he is ever disturbed. Forte and Radavan are continuously at odds. Forte cannot stand the way Radavan speaks to customers, and Radavan despises the socialite attitude of Forte. Despite this, both begrudgingly acknowledge that they need each other. There are very few Melodivari family members currently living, let alone open for work, and few studios can pay as well as the House of Harmony.

✿ GOBBLEUP (FEMALE GOBLIN PERFORMER)

No performer's shop would be complete without a resident jester - a role which Gobbleup, the goblin, happily fills. Gobbleup is also a walking mannequin of sorts, exhibiting some of the most exciting items that

✿ MINA FORTE (FEMALE TIEFLING BARD)

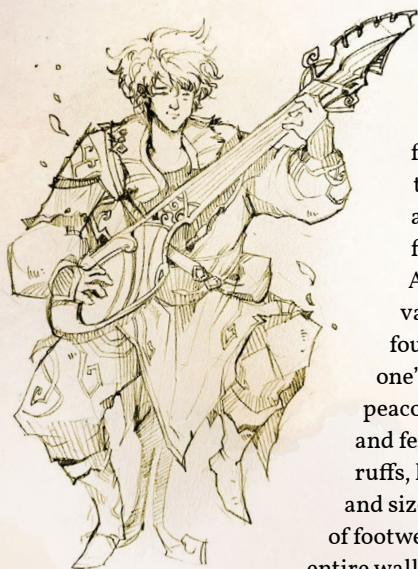
Shopowner: As a direct descendant of Diabolo, Mina is a tour de force. She is always dressed in the most fashionable attire, has her hair magically sculpted each morning into braids and curls, and is never seen without an entourage of devoted followers. She earned fame for herself through her mastery of the flute, and is hailed as a virtuoso throughout the realms. On rare occasions Forte will perform in public, which is sure to draw a record-breaking crowd to the shop. But most often Forte is engaged in the day-to-day affairs of running a successful business. Mina is interested in recruiting the next rising star to perform at the shop before any other venue can snatch them away. Because of this, she is extremely well connected within Meladonia, and mingles in a wide variety of social circles. Despite her fame and fortune, Forte remains humble and happily engages in conversation with any eager customer that enters the House of Harmony. She understands that talent comes in all shapes and sizes.



the shop has to offer. Her personal favorites are the hats. Most frequently Gobbleup can be seen wearing a jester hat that sprinkles glitter wherever she goes, spins of its own volition, and plays a merry little jingle with each springing stride. Gobbleup is also a proficient juggler with razor-sharp knives, flaming torches, or a combination thereof. During the shows in the Basement, she keeps the crowds entertained during the intermissions between acts with her multitude of circus skills.

MUSICAL WARES

One of the buildings of the House of Harmony is a warehouse filled with items for burgeoning performers. The range of goods spans from fine and fancy clothing to outrageous costumes embroidered with tiny gemstones that



glitter in the footlights. The costumes on display cover the full gamut of possible uses, from jester costumes to clown outfits, from acrobat leotards to fireproof duster coats. Accessories of any varieties can also be found to complement one's outfit; ostrich and peacock feathers, fox and ferret furs, stiff paper ruffs, hats of all shapes and sizes, and a collection of footwear that takes up an entire wall. Unfortunately, with so much stock in such a small space, any structure or organization has fallen to pieces.

Although similar items may be in roughly the same room of the building, they are scattered throughout trunks, shelves, hangers, and rails. Finding the exact item you desire could take hours of sifting. Of course, it's not only costumes and outfits that are available, but different rooms also contain musical instruments, juggling projectiles, trapezes and tightropes, whips and wheels, and just about anything else you can think of for performing.

MAGIC INSTRUMENTS

An experienced performer might quickly tire of using mundane items in their performances, and seek something a little more magical for their shows. the House of Harmony has the perfect store of such items. The Melodivari family has been enchanting musical instruments for generations, many of which are available for sale at the House of Harmony. In addition, the resident luthier Radavan can create bespoke instruments for bards with specific goals in mind. As well as instruments, the

resident performers and craftsmen who take a season at the shop create a whole variety of other magical items to help a performer really catch the eye of their patrons.

◆ THE STRINGED AXE - 100 GP (COMMON)

This stringed, lute-like instrument is surprisingly shallow for its deep, gravelly timbre. A magical enchantment placed upon the piece gives it an unnaturally loud and sludgy tone that cuts through the noise with ease. The body of the instrument is plated with iron and shaped like the letter V. It is painted black with white lightning patterns that ripple across its surface. On the headstock of the instrument is an additional peg, not attached to any string which, when pressed, causes the strings to coil up and disappear; the body of the instrument then flattens out into a battleaxe.

◆ LOOKSHARP LUTE - 150 GP (UNCOMMON)

This beautifully crafted lute has a gold-plated soundboard, silver strings, and mother-of-pearl inlay on the pegs. Etched into the filigree is a ballroom scene of ladies and lords dancing the night away. As well as having a sonorous yet crisp tone, this lute is magically enchanted with the ability to alter the attire of its owner. With a strum of the strings, one's outfit can change from ragged robes to a full ball gown bedazzled with diamonds. Of course, the illusion only lasts as long as the lute remains in its owner's hands.

◆ BLADE'S AID - 500 GP (RARE)

This relatively unremarkable ring might be frowned upon by most performers. It was created by a master knife-thrower named Nathaniel 'Never Miss' Napolioni, who could cut a straw held in a man's mouth from one hundred feet. He designed this ring to give a boost to his apprentice, the unfortunately named Bruno 'Badeye' Bagini. The ring has 3 charges. The ring regains 1d3 charges daily at dawn. If the wearer succeeds on a DC 15 Charisma (Performance) check using their action, they can expend a charge from the ring to make a ranged weapon attack with a dagger as a bonus action. The character has advantage on the attack roll.

◆ SONNETS FROM THE NINTH - 15,000 GP (VERY RARE)

This grimoire of poetry has been with the House of Harmony for nearly a century (if the records are correct). It is as thick as a human fist, and bound with scaled, black leather of unknown origin. Nine padlocks clamp the covers shut, preventing it from being opened. The House of Harmony has six of the keys, and a few hints as to the location of two more, but no word on the ninth. Rumors abound about the book, claiming it to be written by the lord of Hell himself, by his spurned lover, or by a heretical cult looking to usher in the apocalypse. Either way, anyone who manages to open the book will find themselves with an arsenal of spell-like poems that can dramatically alter the fabric of reality.

◆ **ELEGIES OF LOST EPOCHS - 10,000 GP (VERY RARE)**

These haunting, sorrowful poems are encased in a black, leather-bound tome whose purple cover swirls like a glittering portal. The subject matter of the poems are mostly about lost loves from time immemorial, fallen empires, and creatures older than time. A bard in possession of this tome can use it to summon creatures from beyond the stars, and to gain control over other humanoids.

◆ **GALLANT GARMENTS - 2,500 GP (RARE)**

While wearing this immaculate, brightly colored costume, your natural charisma and charm are significantly boosted. The outfit comes with a flowing robe that also deflects missiles. The garments are said to have belonged to Ser Shigamoto, a valiant knight of the realm who refused to don armor, instead of relying on wit and guile to avoid combat.

◆ **ROPEWALKER'S BOOTS - 500 GP (UNCOMMON)**

These pointed, green-leather shoes are incredibly soft and supple, bending easily with the feet of the wearer. While wearing these boots, a creature has superior balance, falls at a slower rate to reduce impact damage, and can move silently across any surface.

RUMORS & SECRETS

POOR PERFORMANCE

Currently, rumors are circulating throughout the House of Harmony about sabotage. Though no one knows the exact details of the affair, there is speculation that the Gilded Galore - an incredible talent competition held each year by the shop - has been rigged. With the competition only weeks away, the organizers are desperately looking for help. The patrons of the House of Harmony are willing to pay 500 gp for anyone who thoroughly investigates these rumors and gets to their source.

If the characters spend a week solidly digging up more rumors, and following them throughout the bars, courtyards, and venues in Meladonia, they eventually come to the truth of the matter. A musician of questionable talent, who was spurned by the judges last year, has concocted a plan to get their revenge upon the competition. While the auditorium is filled, they intend to release a swarm of dire wasps into the stands, preventing the competition from going forward, and threatening the lives of all within. The performer, known as Nightingale, has purchased the dire wasps from a traveling circus that passed through the City of Song & Dance a few weeks prior, and has been paying a seedy barkeep to store them in his basement.

GOBBLEUP'S GAMBIT

Having spent many years working for Forte at the House of Harmony, Gobbleup is starting to think about her life beyond the shop. If the characters take an interest in Gobbleup, she is more than happy to befriend them. If they become staunch companions, Gobbleup tells the characters a tale of a long-lost pan flute that she read about in Forte's library. The pan flute is rumored to be hidden in a cavern at the top of a nearby mountain. Gobbleup is too scared to go alone, but if the characters would be willing to escort her, she promises them any other treasure they find along the way.

If the characters accept the quest, they must survive a harsh mountain climb and the freezing cold to ascend to the apex of Dragonspire Peak. At the top of the mountain, the characters discover a cavern which, through fey magic, is filled with luscious growth. Throughout the cavern are fey creatures large and small, as well as animated plant-life. In the very center of the cavern is a fey shrine, atop which are the Pipes of Paradise, the legendary pan flute about which Gobbleup has read. Taking the instrument is sure to anger its fey guardians, but will elevate Gobbleup above her current occupation of a jester.

THE INFAMOUS RIDDLE

An ancient, prophetic riddle was found etched upon a viol in the shop when it was owned by Diabolo. The viol was, Diabolo always claimed, his true masterpiece, a once in a lifetime creation. The luthier claimed that he had not made the marks upon the instrument, and was indignant that the guard should help him find the vandal. The perpetrator was never found, but the crime slowly drove Diabolo mad. Eventually, his sanity failing him, Diabolo left the shop to a close friend and departed to the wilderness in search of the culprit. He was never seen again.

Forte still has the viol sealed away in a vault hidden within the shop. Curious and powerful adventurers might persuade her to show it to them, though only briefly, as she fears its power. The markings on the viol are in Infernal, and bear the following riddle;

*"Without a mouth, I'll tell you a name,
that is not mine and has been claimed.
Without eyes, I'll show you the years,
which I have seen my owner feared.
In your mournful tears, I shower.
Each year I'm gifted with a flower."*

The answer to the riddle is a tombstone. The specific tombstone they need to visit is that of Diabolo's. By collecting clues from Forte, and from some of the older patrons of the shop who knew Diabolo, they should be able to track down his grave. What they discover there, only time will tell...

EMPORIO VERDANTIS

Wealth	★★★★★
Prices	○○○○○
Security	♥♥♥♥♥
Influence	~~~~~
Goods	Spell components, rare herbs and plants, potions, elixirs, tonics
Services	Healing, Alchemy, Fey Lore
Disposition	Warlocks, Tieflings (Unwelcome)
Favored	Fey, Elves, Druids, Rangers

"It's the only place for miles around where you can truly get a breath of fresh air. Quite a remarkable construction, and filled with the most beautiful of the gods' creations. In addition, the wonderfully rare plants they keep have restorative properties. I'd certainly recommend taking a look if you're suffering; physically or spiritually."

-Celeste Augreve, Mayoress of Madeaux

In the heart of the bustling metropolis of Madeaux is the Emporio Verdantis. A grand hall of wrought iron and crystal clear glass, inside which grows a veritable forest of plant life, both great and small. Nowhere else in the great city can one find such tranquility, surrounded by nature growing in harmony, oblivious to the industrious city beyond its crystal borders. Flowing through the Emporio Verdantis is a broad stream of life-giving water that is magically refreshed, providing the garden with all its nutrients. Sheets of light, amplified by the glass ceiling, cut through the canopy of towering ferns and verdant trees to strike the undergrowth. The ample lighting promotes the blooming of exotic flowers in every color of the rainbow, peppering the viridescent vista with patches of prismatic petals. To finish the illusion, a host of songbirds make their nests in the upper branches, filling the air with their scintillating song.

Although Emporio Verdantis is a haven for wildlife and plants that could not otherwise survive in Madeaux, its primary function is as a boutique. The rare plants provide not only a sense of the sublime, but their fruits, sap, leaves, bark, roots, buds, and flowers are also utilized as reagents for a myriad of tonics and potions that many of the city dwellers swear by. A troop of gardeners employed by the Emporio Verdantis toils tirelessly from dusk to dawn to grow the most exotic flora. The world's

most renowned alchemists and brewers frequent the Emporio Verdantis. Druids, rangers, and wizards from far and wide travel to gaze at its wonders and enjoy its fruits. Through the ages, the Emporio Verdantis has become an indispensable library of natural lore, and a prime location to purchase potions and tinctures.

RESPLENDENT ECOLOGY

Many thousands of years ago, before the city of Madeaux was even an idea in the mind of an unborn child, there stood a wild and tangled grove of sage-oaks where the Emporio Verdantis now blooms. Though that magical grove is long since forgotten, the power in the earth that allowed it to flourish lingers ever potent. A century ago, when the archdruid Elodie Greenheart first came to the great city, they sensed life beneath the cobbles waiting to be set free. Being a wealthy individual, Elodie bought the plot where the power was strongest, and began construction of the Emporio Verdantis, importing rare plants from all reaches of the world to create a unique and flourishing ecosystem inside the glass paradise.

Elodie's greatest desire is to preserve life in a world whose cities are ever-expanding. The great metropolis of Madeaux covers nearly an entire continent now, and many of the endemic species only survived thanks to the work of Elodie and their fellow druids. Despite their motives, Elodie knew that they would need a steady flow of gold to keep the garden maintained, so began sourcing plants whose parts were known to be therapeutic, and thus the

shop was born. Since then, Elodie has continued to bring in new and exciting specimens from the far reaches of the realms. The fauna brought in has come to call the Emporio home. Today, the place is filled not just with the panoply of incredible vegetation, but also with songlarks, rainbow tree frogs, and even tiny, butterfly-winged dragons.

INVIGORATING WATERS

Running through the glasshouse of the Emporio Verdantis is a crystal-clear stream that makes a light tinkling like the beating of fairy wings. The water originates from a wellspring at the heart of the store and is tended to constantly to ensure it never becomes tainted. The stream is crucial to the Emporio Verdantis, for it allows for special flora to grow, as well as providing restorative properties. Clerics and druids who frequent the shop are permitted to use the waters in their rituals, allowing them to cast powerful healing spells or remove curses and diseases. Recently, shop aide Gill has heard dark rumors among his kin that someone is plotting to taint the wellspring. (see *Rumors & Secrets*)

THE PHARMACY

While the ecosystem of the Emporio is magnificent, in recent years the operation has flourished as a mercantile enterprise, specializing in remedies and even other illicit substances. Toward the rear of the enormous hall is a broad desk of varnished hardwood, behind which sit rows of glass-front cabinets whose shelves are stocked full of bottles, vials, carafes, and decanters of all shapes, sizes, and colors. Each is meticulously hand-labeled by one of the alchemists that the Emporio hires, providing the name, effect, and directions for use of the liquid within.

At the Emporio Verdantis, one can purchase almost any potion in known existence. Their circle of alchemists is at the forefront of their field, combining magic and science. Thanks to the rare plants that grow throughout the greenhouse, the alchemists have easy access to a variety of ingredients that would otherwise be extremely troublesome to acquire. This allows them to create magical brews that normally take months to prepare. As well as the available potions, those trusted by the Emporio are able to acquire deadly poisons and illicit substances on discrete terms.

♦ POTIONS OF HEALING - 50 TO 500 GP (VARIES)

All varieties of healing potions can be bought from the Emporium, making it a popular locale within Madeaux for adventurers and explorers who are soon headed out on quests or expeditions. Not only can these potions restore one's vigor and lust for life, but they can cure diseases, maladies, and other ailments that might plague an individual for longer durations.

♦ ANTITOXIN - 50GP (UNCOMMON)

These vials of vibrant green fluid are created by the druids from medicinal plants that grow in the Emporio. A creature that drinks this vial of liquid gains advantage on saving throws against poison for 1 hour. It confers no benefit to undead or constructs.

♦ ANIMIST ELIXIRS - 50 GP (UNCOMMON)

The alchemists of the Emporio have discovered a way to infuse their brews with the essence of a creature's spirit, bestowing upon any who would imbibe it the unique qualities of the animal whose character is captured. These particular tinctures are each named after their respective spirit, be that Cat's Grace, Bull's Strength, or Owl's Wisdom. The variety of these is seemingly endless, with each effect being unique.

♦ HEALER'S KIT - 5 GP (COMMON)

This kit is a leather pouch containing hempen bandages, herbal salves, wooden splints, and vegetable ointments. The kit has ten uses. As an action, you can expend one use of the kit to stabilize a creature that has 0 hit points, without needing to make a Medicine check.

Price	Special services
5 gp	Treatment for a common disease
10 gp	Curing ordinary wounds (restores full health)
20 gp	Purifying a contaminated wound (infected, festering, etc.)
40 gp	Curing paralysis or poisoning
50 gp	Curing supernatural wounds (necrotic, cursed, etc.)
90 gp	Removing a curse
100 gp	Minor cosmetic changes (changing hair color, etc.)
200 gp	Curing a supernatural disease (curses, etc.)
400 gp	Fixing a physical defect (hunchback, etc.)
500 gp	Restoring a petrified character into normal form
1,000 gp	Major cosmetic changes (changing appearance)
1,100 gp	Reattaching a cut off limb (limb must be fully preserved)
1,200 gp	Regrowing a lost organ
2,000 gp	Resurrecting a recently dead character
5,000 gp	Growing and attaching an additional fully functional limb

OWNER & STAFF

☼ **ELODIE GREENHEART (NON-BINARY FEYTOUCHED DRUID)**

Elodie has seen many centuries come and go, yet has always remained uncynical and hopeful that nature will find a way. Elodie serves as a druid of the old gods even in this new age, preserving life and nature wherever they can find it. When they founded the Emporio Verdantis, they created a legacy for themselves and reminded the citizens of Madeaux of the joys that nature could bring. In the decades since its founding, Elodie has gone from being the main host of the shop to a rare delight for visitors when they are present.

Most of Elodie's time is spent traveling in search of new plants to bring back to the greenhouse, and serving nature against the evils of the world.

Elodie is instantly recognizable thanks to their spiraling, goat-like horns and serene smile.



☼ **MIHLANNA THEOPHINE (FEMALE ELF ALCHEMIST)**

While Elodie is away on business, Mihlanna handles business. A long-time friend of Elodie, she set up the circle of alchemists in the Emporio and continues to experiment with her conclave in pursuit of new and innovative potions. Mihlanna is ruthlessly diligent, never leaving a bottle unstoppered, or a flask unlabelled, and ensuring that each guest who purchases from



the Emporio knows exactly what it is they are buying, how it should be used, and its effects. This exacting standard has allowed the Emporio to flourish not just as a garden, as was its inception, but also as a profitable pharmacy.

☼ **GILL (AWAKENED MUSHROOM AIDE)**

Gill is one of a kind. Awakened around a decade ago from a giant mushroom that had been growing in the Undercaverns beneath Madeux for more than a century. Since then, it has made a home in the Emporio Verdantis, where it is welcomed by the staff who like Gill's sense of humor. As well as entertaining the staff with jokes that only really make sense to other mushrooms, Gill helps keep the place clean by absorbing alchemical spills. Gill seems to be immune to the effects of most acids, poisons, and magical potions. Recently, Gill has been experiencing some strange phenomena. They describe the events as spore-dreams, which are similar to human *deja-vu*. Gill believes there is something stirring in the Undercaverns but is reluctant to explore them alone.

☼ **TORAM CURLHORN (MALE SATYR ALCHEMIST)**

If one spends enough time and money at the Emporio, one learns of Toram Curlhorn. Toram has a reputation for experimenting with plants that many would consider too dangerous to touch. If he were not such a genius alchemist, and not making generous donations to the Emporio for his continued research facilities, Elodie would kick him out. Toram is a master of poisons and stimulants. What he doesn't know about poisons could be written on the back of a leaf. If one is in need of such a brew, Toram is the safest place to assure a sale, though each and every purchase is sanctified by Mihlanna. Nothing is off books.

NOTABLE PATRONS

☼ **THARIDEUS GRORN (MALE DRAGONBORN TALE WEAVER)**

Tharideus is a rare sight with his richly adorned, massive oaken pipe, which doubles as his walking stick. He frequents taverns and inns that are popular with adventurers, living a roguish life as a tale weaver. He spins tales of pitched battles or a lover's tragedy into epic monologues and brings them to life with illusions of smoke from his pipe. The bearded half-dragon is easily spotted, wearing a mottled leather coat covered with countless pouches and satchels each filled with a strange variety of tobacco. Each exotic tobacco comes with a unique scent, flavor, and even tantalizing colorful sparkles that light up his smokey visions.

RUMORS & SECRETS

BUREAUCRATIC BOMBARDMENT

Although the Emporio is a delight to most of the citizens of Madeaux, the governors and patrons of the city are greedy to a fault and view the greenhouse as a waste of space that could otherwise be used for housing or court business. Word has spread through the grapevine that Chancellor Esquellier, a particularly malicious and cantankerous old man, is attempting to shut down the Emporio by digging up some ancient bylaw. Feeling rather out of their depth, Elodie needs someone to follow up on the rumors, and determine what is happening behind the closed doors of the Parliament of Madeaux. The truth is that Chancellor Esquellier is a devil in disguise. They hope to forge a document leading to the destruction of the Emporio, so they may create a meeting house for a diabolical cult atop the magical earth, and channel its magic into an infernal portal. If the characters can stop the Chancellor, they will save not only the Emporio Verdantis but the entire city.

WITHOUT A TRACE

Toram is in trouble. Recent experimentation created a poison capable of killing an individual leaving no trace of the substance used, which Toram dubbed 'Silent Death'. Ironically, his only vial of the substance has disappeared. He suspects foul play. He asks characters to examine his workshop, where they can discover clues that lead them on a trail through the city of Madeaux, chasing the thief. The thief has an agenda of their own, using the poison to kill their own brother, in an attempt to gain the inheritance of their wealthy, but dying, father. Toram needs the characters to be discreet in their investigation, lest he is expelled from the Emporio for good.

EXTINCTION THREAT

Elodie has heard that a rare species of plant, the ancient sage-oak, is under threat. Few of these amazing trees survive, and their locations are kept secret by a sacred circle of druids, of which Elodie is a member. The sage-oaks are not only majestic trees to behold, frequently growing taller than 500 feet in height, but are home to fey-touched communities who cannot survive elsewhere. The expanding cities of the world limit the green space where forests and plains can flourish, and each remaining sage-oak is an ecosystem in itself. In addition, those who commune with a sage-oak are capable of divination capable of altering the course of the future. Recently, however, a new sapling has sprouted in the Rubblewaste outside the city of Madeaux. What

has caused the tree to grow in such a desolate place is yet to be discovered, but without help, the sapling will surely be destroyed by the yearly migration of thunderhead mammoths that charge through the barren plain. Daring heroes must attempt to save the sapling from being trampled, either by rerouting the migration of mammoths, transplanting the sapling, or creating a defense structure for it.

POISON THE WELL

Gill, one of the patrons of the Emporio Verdantis, has recently been having disturbing spore-dreams about the Undercaverns - a network of caves beneath the crust of the world that house all variety of fantastic flora and fauna. Gill himself is a fungal being from the Undercaverns, and he believes that his connection to the place is warning

him of a coming attack. Gill's visions typically depict an enormous cavern filled with robed figures who are worshipping the bones of some ancient creature. These cultists have a variety of fungi and mold growing over their robes and faces, and seem to be in a kind of rapture. The reality is that they are possessed by a sinister intelligence that is embodied by the mold. The source of which are the bones of an ancient dragon.

Many centuries ago, that dragon tried to destroy a vast swathe of forest where Elodie's heart-tree grew. Elodie managed to banish the dragon into the

Undercaverns, where it died, but the feud between the two has now been rekindled thanks to the fungal cult. Gill thinks that the cult might be trying to corrupt the city of Madeaux, starting with the wellspring that feeds the invigorating waters of Emporio Verdantis. Gill believes that the cult will be creating a noxious fungal brew in the Undercaverns which would cause violent hallucinations and confusion in any who drank it. The ingredients for this are only found in certain places in the Undercaverns, to which Gill can lead the characters,

Hopefully, the characters can infiltrate the cult, prevent the brew from being created, and save the wellspring from corruption. Furthermore, they might take on the cult and destroy the mold priests before they are able to reanimate the skeleton of the ancient dragon as a half-undead, half-plant behemoth. However, if this does occur, the creature seeks out Elodie in Emporio Verdantis, where a pitched battle ensues.





CHAPTER 2

BRINGING YOUR SHOPS TO LIFE



BRINGING YOUR SHOPS TO LIFE

There I was, walking across the Sa'la Desert, when out of nowhere appeared a door, and before I could do anything came a voice. It was loud and booming, yet curiously warm and inviting. "I bet it's hot out there in that desert" the voice said. And before I could even reply, the door opened wide, revealing behind it a vast sprawling store full of everything you could imagine: potions, food, clothing, weaponry, and I think I even spotted a stein or two getting thrown about in the back. At the front of all this, half-hidden behind the air-drawn door, stood a dwarf. "Come on in. Even if yer' ain't buying it's hotter than dragon's breath out here." He turned, moving away, "Oh," he said, "I'm Dragur, and welcome to my shop."

- Brildur Grost, undated journal entry.



his chapter provides everything you need to bring your fantasy shops to life. Elevate your roleplaying experience by offering your heroes exciting things to do next time they are looking to spend their hard-earned gold. Some materials in this chapter are presented as optional rules you can tailor to fit your needs; other concepts are intended to spark your imagination. At all times you are encouraged to find your own unique way to roleplay store visits, trading, purchasing rare goods, and dealing with a colorful cast of shop staff.

WEALTH & PRICES

Whether it's one of a hundred stalls in a cacophonous outdoor marketplace or the finest brick-and-mortar shops on the favored boulevard of the elite, a shop is defined by its wealth. In the *Worldshaper's Foundry*, customers stare up in awe as great adamantite fountains send molten metal flying through the air in white-hot streams. In a local adventuring supply warehouse, the legendary monster hunters *Skinner and Grinn* attract most of their foot traffic from the animated dragon head mounted outside, which growls and sends out gouts of illusory flame.

Store Wealth Level	Overall Quality on Offer
★	Squalid
★★	Common
★★★	Respectable
★★★★	Prosperous
★★★★★	Mythical

A shop's **Wealth** generally indicates the quality, variety, and the price of its goods and services. It can also serve as an indicator of the quality of an establishment's level of service and building prowess. Outstanding shops shower their visitors in luxury, making them feel very welcome. To describe a shop's level of wealth, use a scale from 1 to 5.

A wealth level of **Common** represents a shop with normal prices and a normal level of variety or supply for its type. Different levels of wealth suggest that prices, available stock, and the quality of goods may be higher or lower than normal.

In many cases, the quality of the merchandise is reflected in the cost: quality comes at a price. Other factors such as regionality, competition, and scarceness all factor into determining the cost of goods on sale. A store in the heart of a bustling metropolis commands different prices for their wares than a similar shop in a rural countryside.



Store Wealth Level	Suggested Price Level
Squalid	Half the normal price
Common	Normal prices
Respectable	10-25% higher prices
Prosperous	25-50% higher prices
Mythical	150-500% higher prices

Other aspects of a business that can be strongly dictated by its **Wealth** level are:

IMPORTS. A shop with a higher Wealth level can afford to import rare specialty goods or the highest-quality supplies; lower-rated shops must rely on local suppliers and tradesmen to fill their stock. In most rural areas, it is common to rely just on what is provided by the surrounding lands and craftsmen.

MAGIC. A simple local business might treasure a simple magic item as their most precious product, while a similar business with a higher Wealth level takes its plentiful stock of such items for granted. Both the power and frequency of magic, even mundane magic, can scale steeply with wealth level.

PRESENTATION. A wealthy establishment has the coin for added flair. How could the local wizard's trinket shop be as flashy as their wealthy competitor, whose entrance allows shoppers to walk straight through a petrified dragon's maw?

BEYOND THE PRICE TAG

Wealth is a dynamic and relative concept that can encompass more than a shop's prices and available goods. In some cases, it can be interesting to skew prices away from what is expected to provide a unique experience. For example, the disheveled trading house at the edge of town could have surprisingly valuable items for sale, suggesting its owner is more affluent than he lets on, or cultivates high-ranking connections in the nearby city. Players often use monetary value to gauge the perceived quality of magical goods, so always have a good reason when deviating from the norm in your world.

In some cases, there can also be an inverse relationship between a shop's wealth and the prices it charges. A rich shop owner with a high Wealth level can often charge lower prices, or offer discounts while keeping a healthy profit margin. A poor shop, however, may be forced to inflate prices simply to stay afloat. A shop with a lower Wealth level might also represent a shady establishment where the wares are ill-gotten loot or are even considered contraband. A wizard's

emporium in a humble fishing village or a back-alley black market stall might not have the best selection, but a lack of other available options could let these otherwise unimpressive shops pressure customers into paying a premium for the goods they need.

POOR ESTABLISHMENTS

Shops with a squalid or common rating generally have a smaller selection and less plentiful stock. This also means sometimes better deals can be had because the seller needs every sale. Adventurers usually have no problem finding a shop of this kind in a pinch. Even the poorest village often has a local shop or traveling merchant who can supply basic needs. In large cities, adventurers can find a dedicated little stall when the wealthiest shops are shuttered.

While poor shops are common, so are their wares; the items sold here are typically not unique, crafted without artistic appeal, and lack powerful enchantments. Though not suggestive of below-average quality, these items are serviceable, but nothing more. However, in most cases, poor shops offer a genuine personal touch, staffed by owners whose livelihood depends on making sales and garnering a positive reputation.

FAKES & FORGERIES

Sometimes it turns out not every store owner can be trusted to sell you quality goods, in fact some thrive on creating and selling forgeries. At the lowest tier, shady establishments will sometimes participate in predatory and unscrupulous business practices, selling items of subpar quality or altogether complete forgeries.

However harsh and disappointing for your players, these types of goods provide an excellent way to turn shop visits into something more than gold swaps. What are the chances of the seller trying to bestow you with bad wares? Will your players pick up on the signals? Will they be careful enough to suspect they need to be cautious?



Store Wealth Level	Chance of Bad Wares
Squalid	60%
Common	40%
Respectable	10%
Prosperous	5%
Mythical	1%

When your characters visit a poor establishment, consider rolling on the table below to trigger an event, story prompt, or provide you with ideas on how to describe the shop's particular atmosphere.

d20 Poor Establishment Effects

- 1 This shop's proprietor is not quick-witted, which is why a fiend has possessed him. Whilst controlling him, the fiend handles all accounting and legal matters.
- 2 Undercover guards pose as customers and target the adventurers for investigation.
- 3 The metal goods sold by this shop have a cheap, rusted appearance. Armor, in particular, has an unpleasant metallic squeal.
- 4 This shop uses weak illusion magic to disguise all its wares as a slightly different product. It's probably used to hide contraband.
- 5 The shop includes a free sample of its 'miracle tonic' with hefty purchases. The color is more or less unidentifiable and it has the consistency of runny cottage cheese.
- 6 All the items appear to be damaged in some way: clothes are torn, armor rusted, and in some cases, blood can be discerned to have rotted and stained the swords.
- 7 The building is ready to collapse: it appears that any sudden movement might just bring it down on your head.
- 8 Mangy dogs invade the shop, the shopkeeper jumps onto the table and shouts for you to throw him the bowl of meat that is laid on the side. Be quick.
- 9 If you spend more than 5 minutes in the shop, the shopkeeper will rush you out, if you fail to exit, you'll witness the store shrink into the palm of the shopkeeper's hand, and your items (if bought) will turn to sand.
- 10 If you buy a sword, it will work once and then shatter, if you buy clothes, they will rip and tear within a day, if you buy potions, or food, they make you sick.
- 11 The shopkeeper will break down into tears and ask for money if you don't buy anything.

- 12 You open the door to see a completely barren store, except for a rug in the center and the shopkeeper sitting on it. He has but three items: an apple, a flute, and a single arrow.
- 13 The shop is on the slope of a hill, you walk in and see that everything has fallen to one side of the store. It appears that over time, the foundations have given way.
- 14 The inside of the store is cast in a thick darkness that no light can pierce. The shopkeeper shouts that he has set up a rope-and-pulley system for you to traverse the store.
- 15 If you sell anything, the gold given will be fake. (An Investigation check can be made to discern it is fake.)
- 16 The shopkeepers' impoverished children enter into the room, they are shoeless and their shirts are torn. They look at you curiously.
- 17 Whilst browsing the shelves, a hole opens up in the ground, swallowing the shopkeeper.
- 18 Giant rats scurry through the back of the shop, and the shopkeeper asks you to help get rid of the vermin.
- 19 The shopkeeper is selling off children's items. You notice his wife in the back with blood-soaked bags. Investigation reveals they have killed their child and are giving its parts to a witch who haunts the woods nearby.
- 20 The shopkeeper asks you strange and intrusive questions. (A Perception check will reveal three men with journals hidden beneath the store floor. It turns out the shopkeeper is trying to retrieve information to sell.)



RICH ESTABLISHMENTS

Rich and mythical shops have acquired a level of wealth to offer items and services of higher quality, exclusive rarity, greater variety, and larger supply. Such knowledgeable and discerning proprietors are capable of providing the most elegant atmosphere and inarguably the most coveted of wares. Proprietors of such shops are often respected and well-known by authorities in the area. Sometimes they are even involved in politics, trade, and other important matters. By that same token, these businesses are frequented by patrons with discerning tastes, particular needs, and deep pockets. There's no limit to what the prosperous desire, and seemingly little these stores cannot offer.

With this high level of Wealth comes the ability to keep the public's interests with special presentations and events such as product demonstrations, festivals, or the patronage of other special events as a means of displaying their grandeur. A magical emporium might showcase its most interesting items, while an alchemist's shop can entertain onlookers with demonstrations of spectacular potion effects. Couturiers in the *City of Amaedan* are known to be the sole providers of the royal house's garments, and the annual *Parade of the Sun* secures months of work and income as nobles rush to mirror the current fashion.

MYTHICAL STORES

There is a measure of riches that goes even beyond the value of coin; an abstract quality that places an establishment into a breathtaking echelon of remarkability. Such shops are well beyond simple outlets of magical items and affluent aesthetic; they are as much a wonder of the world as a business. No common magical spectacle could compare to *The Time Pottery*, the deceptively humble-looking potter's business that exists simultaneously across all eras of history. Here, patrons can purchase pieces from the most famous masters and dynasties of history, all made to order. To be a mythical store is to be beyond 'special' and into the realm of the truly unique. Even master craftsmen would pause to marvel at its wares and masters of the arcane would be amazed at the magic on display and struggle to explain its mysteries.

d20 Wealthy Establishment Effects

- 1 The shopkeeper greets visitors with a small but valuable welcome gift.
- 2 This establishment marks their wares with their emblem. Competing merchants recognize this mark of quality while forgers attempt to fake it.
- 3 A customer fancies themselves an aficionado on whatever the adventurers are buying and seeks every opportunity to pester them with (incorrect) information or advice.
- 4 There are no shelves; products float gently by magic. A store employee summons products down for sale or examination.
- 5 A master thief poses as a nobleman visiting the store in need of assistance.
- 6 The shop owner pays handsomely for the city guard to protect their business.
- 7 Items purchased come with a warranty for replacement in case of damage.
- 8 The store's wares are protected by spells woven into the very fabric of the building.
- 9 All items bought here are superior to items bought elsewhere. (Potions are more potent, shields are stronger, and swords are sharper.)
- 10 There is a stream that flows through the store, the shopkeeper bottles and sells the water. It is said to endow one with greater strength and power.
- 11 You are given a complimentary drink upon entry.
- 12 Staff are befitted with diamond-encrusted robes.
- 13 There are rooms for you to try out spells and weapons the store has on sale.
- 14 The store offers free facilities for their customers; such as an alchemy station, and a book of enchantment.
- 15 A book at the desk is said to list all the wares of the store: ask and it will appear before you.
- 16 A giant ruby is encrusted into the wall; the shopkeeper tells you that if you look into it, you can see the reflection of your future self.
- 17 Strange flora sprouts from the floor; each bearing new and different fruit. Eating one reveals the answer to a single question.
- 18 Items are made to order, bearing your initials.
- 19 No item is unattainable. Through manipulation of the spatial plane, the store has access to items from anywhere, at a very steep price.
- 20 The store sits on a little-known, unused gold mine; for a price, you can mine some of it.

CURRENCIES

A young boy grips a flat, red-hot oval of electrum with heavy iron tongs, placing it gingerly on a bronze die that depict the symbols he knows so well. The smith places a second die with his own mold of symbols atop the first, sandwiching the glowing alloy. With a careful stroke of the hammer, the newly minted coin is stamped with meticulous skill and the smith's own desire for perfection. The die is removed, the apprentice quickly seizing the coin to be cooled. There's no time to lose; they will produce another twenty thousand before the sun sets.

Empires might be formed by the sword, but they live or die on the weight of a coin. Societies need coinage to act as a universal language of wealth, a constant that the economy uses to function. In most nations, precious metals make up various coin values in descending order, with platinum, gold, silver, and copper being widely used.

BARTERING

When coinage is scarce and product is everywhere, societies turn to barter. In rudimentary terms, exchanging goods of equal value can be a means of shifting inventory around or acquiring necessities. Once prevalent across the world in primitive societies, some regions still rely on barter for trade. For a shop owner, bartering goods is often a transaction of desire versus value; one side is almost certain to receive something of greater intrinsic value, but the other party chooses to do this because the item they're receiving is something they want. In times of scarcity, the essentials of life—food, water, and basic materials like wood and stone—can become more precious than gold. Gold coins don't fill bellies or heat a home in winter; sometimes wealth is being the one with a specific individual or community's needed commodity.

To keep growing, a shopkeeper usually wants to be on the positive end of bartering transactions. Their skill involves convincing customers that they need certain products and to make them want to give something (coin or an object of equal or greater value) in exchange. Plenty of shopkeepers are also frenzied collectors and can be convinced to trade something of lesser value for an item that appeals to them personally.

The adventurer's economy is an excellent one for bartering in this manner, as heroes of every stripe unearth ancient artifacts and extract trinkets from lost empires or hidden crypts. History, faith, myth, and legend are common ways to spark the personal interest of a potential buyer. Furthermore, bartering offers a scenario where a transaction is more than a mundane swap of coin for items. Precious materials call for precious currencies and the owner of a vital component may require an unconventional exchange in order to part with a particular item.

OTHER CURRENCIES

Across worlds of wonder and magic, there are places where certain objects are more precious than any gold or jewels. In the subterranean realm of *Dundamak*, light sources are an extravagant wonder—and just as coveted are the means to suppress them.

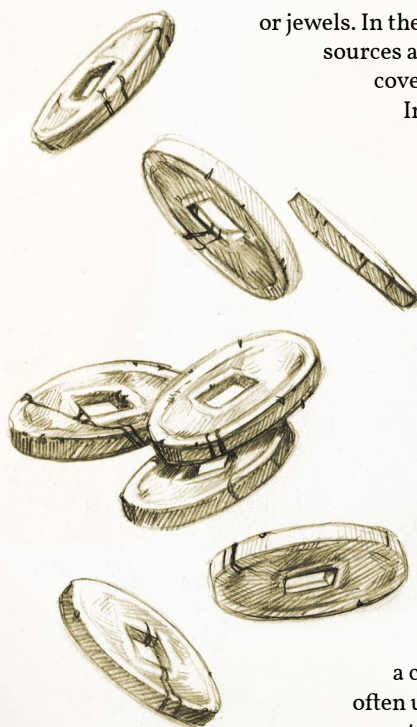
In the *Starless Sea* where communities float across vast oceans, buoyant baronies would trade their treasures for a measure of arable soil. Currency can appear in forms of marbles, cubes, disks, chits, beads, and bars, so long as there is a standardization of weight and markings that define them.

Consider a coinage based on precious stones; though it's harder to create standardized weights, shapes, and markings in these materials, it's also harder to damage these materials than metal coins. The gemstone dust created as a byproduct of creating the currency can itself be used as a currency or bartering item, as it is often used as a crafting material or magical component. Think about what a type of currency says about a society's traditions, technology, and values: for example, in the warrior-empire of Verraluk goods are bought and sold using the marked bones of slain foes, each etched with the name of the enemy, the date it was defeated, and the name of the warrior who defeated it.

Alternative Currencies Ideas: Roll on the table below to randomly choose alternative currencies ideas or hand-pick any concept you like. These can be fantastic ways to give a unique flavor to a location your characters are visiting.

d20 Alternative Currencies

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Animal pelts, furs |
| 2 | Flawless seashells, conchs |
| 3 | Stone or glass beads |
| 4 | Dried beetles or other insects |
| 5 | Cattle or other domesticated animals |



- 6 Slaves, thralls
- 7 Gems, other precious stones
- 8 Metal ingots
- 9 Crystal shards
- 10 Exotic spices, herbs
- 11 Luxurious fabrics
- 12 Rare chemicals (dyes, reagents, antidotes)
- 13 Imported materials (like ivory, porcelain)
- 14 Seeds of wondrous plants
- 15 Eggs or body parts of curious beasts
- 16 Bottled pure air or water
- 17 Plentiful relics of a lost civilization
- 18 Arcane ingredients
- 19 Skulls or bones
- 20 Imprisoned spirits or souls

SHOPKEEPER'S INFLUENCE

Shopkeepers, traders, and business moguls are respected figures in both small communities and bustling cities; they play a key role in local trade, economy, and politics.

A commanding authority on many levels frequently provides them chances to take up other positions of power as well in the local governance. Characters in such echelons are exceptionally influential and knowledgeable on the regional tidings, rumors, and governance. But even the humble local baker will know a thing or two about the latest happenings. Word on the street can prove an irresistible treat for many of the staff and commoners.

Establishing good relationships with shopkeepers simply to get better prices can be a lucrative short-term gain. Forging strong bonds and increased standings can create long-lasting alliances that open doors, presenting exceptional opportunities previously unimaginable to mere mortals. Perhaps the characters manage to impress a local trader, who in return, grants them a much-needed audience at the nobles' court. Conversely, if characters provoke the ire of those around them, they might just suffer the consequences: Items become unavailable, prices increase, or valuable opportunities vaporize altogether.

AUTHORITY LEVELS

As an optional gaming rule, each shop can have an Authority level on a scale from 1 to 5, indicating how far the shopkeeper's influence reaches:

Store Authority Level	Influence Reach
1 2 3 4 5	Local influence
1 2 3 4 5	Regional influence
1 2 3 4 5	Province-level influence
1 2 3 4 5	Worldwide influence
1 2 3 4 5	International influence, Planar influence

As a shop's *Authority level* increases, the scope of its influence widens. It is up to the GM's imagination how to roleplay this. Simple establishments likely have very little say in local matters, while some establishments have great control over commerce and politics, often extending beyond geographical borders or even planar boundaries. The *Authority level* of a shop can be dynamic over time, giving players the opportunity to consciously or unknowingly cause a shop's influence to increase dramatically or topple sickeningly. These actions can earn grateful friends and bitter antagonists alike.

Certain players love taking part in such geopolitics and it can provide marvelous adventures indeed, such as freeing a port to shift the tides in a bitter trade war or challenging the unrelenting and inhumane practices of a starry-eyed sultan in expanding its empire. The possibilities are interesting and endless.

GAINING THE STORE

OWNER'S FAVOR

Opportunities to improve characters' standing with a shop owner can be a great roleplaying moment for any level of play. See the Disposition section for ideas on how to roleplay gaining the favor of a shopkeeper.

Actions undertaken to influence one's standing with a shopkeeper is usually symbiotic, benefitting both the store and your character simultaneously.

The desired result for the shop is often monetary: loyal customers or gaining the exclusive patronage by a group of famous adventurers is good for business. Characters can work with shops to provide rare ingredients or



magnificent treasures that the shop owner can't procure themselves. Beyond the straightforward exchange of goods, characters can agree to perform services that improve a shop's authority level, such as advertising the source of their goods or proudly displaying a business maker's marks on weapons and armor.

On the less savory side, interesting roleplaying scenarios can come from a business asking characters to partake in actions against a rivalling store, thus indirectly affect a store's authority level. This can include sabotage, blackmail, and rumor-mongering which can have ongoing effects that resonate long after a change in a shop's authority level.

DISPOSITION

The heart of commerce beats strong by keeping good relations, having excellent wares and great customer service. Most shops need to work hard to keep a lively business and are glad to see any kind of customer cross their doorstep. Others are more selective regarding who may enter. Guilds often prohibit who can access their specialist services and better prices. The gnomish master clockmaker in Dahl'boon only sells to those passing a test of the pure soul upon entering his premises. Those failing the test are smitten by a violent burst of magical lightning bursting from a silver eye.

A prohibitive demeanor can materialize as a disposition towards certain races, heritage, or religion. Unassuming customers might be welcomed by a foul sneer from the shopkeeper or demanded to turn over their weapons upon entrance. Other times, prices suddenly multiply or goods suddenly go out of stock. Buying or entering may be prohibited altogether. Disregarding the delicate and often unspoken laws of Disposition risks running afoul with the store owner or local authority.

As an optional gaming rule, each shop can have a *Disposition* towards race, class, and religion, affecting many things such as prices, the availability of information and services or hospitality.

DISPOSITION LEVELS

Disposition is suggested to be measured in levels, ranging from *Intolerant*, to *Neutral* to *Favored*. Some

stores such as guilds are *Prohibitive*, meaning they have a non-violent policy to reject certain clientele.

NEUTRAL – If no disposition is specified, the shop is considered neutral and welcoming to all customers.

POSITIVE – Certain stores are naturally more kind hearted to certain folk. Or perhaps your characters have taken special effort to be on good terms with the shop's staff.

FAVORED – Characters can become favored through roleplaying, for example by saving the shopkeeper from a band of thugs raiding the store as you arrive.

UNWELCOMING – The trader is not particularly forthcoming, but won't deny access. A subtle to mild intolerance shows in relatively harmless ways such as charging higher prices and insults.

INTOLERANT – The shop openly ridicules and bullies those they do not fancy. Armed guards in the district or hired muscle at the door and even magical means prevent entrance. These establishments refuse to sell outright, often earning them a reputation.

ROLEPLAYING DISPOSITION

The implications brought on by *Disposition* provide a wealth of role-playing scenarios. Perhaps your adventuring group consisting of several dwarves has been tasked by the local lord to escort a merchant caravan into town, transporting valuable ore. If only *Lord Arbon the Third* knew the merchant bears a deep-rooted grudge against dwarves. More tragic is the case of a disgruntled elven bard who got banned from her guild and now sells cursed and insidiously ill-tuned, high-priced instruments to unsuspecting bards from her boutique in the city of *Markhad*.

In addition to being met with an unfriendly attitude or being denied entrance, a poor *Disposition* can also influence the availability of services or the willingness to interact truthfully. Depending on the severity of the intolerance, the effects vary from increasing prices and unfriendly scowls to threats and hostile removal from the premises. The reason for a shopkeeper to be unwelcoming toward certain customers provides an excellent way to add depth to your world and characters.

INFLUENCING DISPOSITION

Characters can work to improve the *Disposition* of shopkeepers and other staff



through a combination of intelligent roleplaying and various beneficial actions. Explaining away differences of opinion, smoothing over tensions, or flashing ample coin can turn a proprietor's sour mood into a more favorable one. Self-assured adventurers should beware, however, that a stumbled attempt at charm can sometimes be more damaging than not trying at all. The shopkeeper may not see the characters as belonging to a specific clientele who are worthy of special items or services. The shopkeeper's initial attitude towards the characters can vary widely.

If characters want to see the shop's special selection, it's up to them to find a way to convince the shopkeeper. The table below presents some ideas on how the characters can persuade the shopkeeper to see them as worthy of the special selection. Pick or randomize the optimal approach for this particular shopkeeper and let the players decide how to handle the situation. If your players enjoy roleplaying, this is a prime opportunity for it, instead of making mechanical persuasion rolls.

d10	Persuasion Strategy	Risk of Failure
1	Flattery	Low
2	Suggest a trade	Low
3	Asking for a favor	Low
4	Making insults	Medium
5	Feign disinterest	Medium
6	Dispute quality	Medium
7	Demand to speak a senior staff member	Medium
8	Bribery	High
9	Using magic	High
10	Making threats	High

BECOMING FAVORED

Shopkeepers don't just pick out characters to dislike, they can play favorites just as easily and do so just as often. Repeat customers and generous patrons build relationships over numerous visits, but the same biases and predilections that make some characters unwelcome may immediately ingratiate others. Becoming a favored patron can have many benefits, both subtle and significant. Roll a random result from the table below or pick one that suits the needs of your story.

d20 Positive Disposition Events

1	Lower prices for goods and services.
2	Your name is starting to become known around town.
3	Access to examine and preview new products.
4	Become a confidant. Access to inside rumors and valuable information. Invitations to special store events, such as product premiers or festivities.
5	Other regular patrons become potentially useful contacts.
6	Being regarded as an important person, patrons come to you for advice on many topics.
7	Being offered a place to hide and disappear when needed.
8	A guarantee of service; even at busy times, staff are redirected to see to your needs.
9	The shopkeeper introduces you to influential people around town, unlocking new opportunities.
10	The merchant invites you for dinner with his wife and family.
11	The sounds of bells ring from behind the shop. As you enter, you find that the shopkeeper has just been wed. He is in such a happy mood he gives you a discount.
12	You have grown close. The shopkeeper invites you to do cargo-runs for his illegal arms-dealing.
13	The merchant offers a free repair or replacement of a valued item.
14	The shopkeeper trusts you enough to tell you of a bag of gold he saw being buried in the churchyard.
15	Noticing a wagon being stolen from the shop, if you catch it, and return it, the shopkeeper will offer you a share in the day's profits.
16	You are considered a favorite among the town, so the shopkeeper is open to talk about local affairs with you there.
17	The shopkeeper considers you a friend, and gives you a key, allowing you to trade anything, at any time.
18	You are offered free supplies for your travels.
19	The shopkeeper divulges any information she knows about any item considered rare or even illegal.
20	The merchant suggests you take ownership of the store when the time comes to pass on the responsibilities.

BECOMING UNWANTED

Violent behavior, a poor haggling attempt, ill-considered flattery, or a bribe can have a negative outcome and lasting impact on the shopkeeper's disposition. The tables below list several roleplaying ideas to help you make your NPCs respond realistically when one or more of the players' characters are unwelcome.

d10 Negative Disposition Effects

- 1 The shopkeeper makes snide insults.
- 2 An item you buy may not work or be of poorer quality than expected.
- 3 A sign on the wall reads: *Humans Get Out.*
- 4 The store owner distrusts you and signals the armed guards to come closer.
- 5 The merchant holds a grudge against your kind because of a past deal gone wrong. He secretly wants to bury the past, but needs help doing so.
- 6 The store owner pays for your goods in forged coins.
- 7 The merchant calls out one of your characters and ridicules their lineage.
- 8 If you appear affluent, the shopkeeper attempts to rob you claiming business is slow.
- 9 Upon entering the shop, the shopkeeper insists that you eat one of her cookies. (The eater will be put to sleep for two minutes, and she will rob the characters of some valuables.)
- 10 The shopkeeper refuses to sell you any wares unless you pay double the price.



SECURITY

Brildur Grost was surprised. Pieces this rare and delicate, shouldn't be just sitting on an open shelf? The delicate crystal wand he was looking at, appeared to have no more protecting it than a sign that read 'PLEASE DO NOT TOUCH.' The shifty-eyed halfling two displays over, clearly had the same thought as he reached for the prized item. There was a screech and a burning smell as lightning arced from the ceiling into the would-be thief. The halfling was still twitching and smoking when staff threw him out the front door.

Shops are a meeting ground for those who otherwise may never meet. Whether they're warlocks of mystical origin or sage wizards on quests for truth, they're going to need a scroll eventually. It is here where the trouble begins. Brildur Grost started bringing protection with him to a store when he saw Dragner's Rare Wares get burned down by a group of bandits. At first, he thought, 'Why bother? It is but a shop,' but when he saw Dragner's little dwarf head ablaze, he figured it may be best to bring a few protection spells.

A store's products are valuable and require protection from a desperate beggar or cunning thieves guild. Most stores, from the countryside bakery to *Marakoon's Opus Hall*, have a measure of security in place to protect their wares. This can be measured in a **Security** level from 1 to 5. A low **Security** level means only minimal measures are in place to protect the store's goods, and the store is more vulnerable to theft and attacks. A wealthy shop with prized items can probably afford to have guards, magical security, and other precautions. These make the establishment a lot safer.

All shops have security levels: for every half hour or hour spent at a shop, roll a percentile die and check the table below to determine if anything will happen.

Store Security Level Chances of Event

♥ ♥ ♥ ♥ ♥	75% or higher
♥ ♥ ♥ ♥	50% or higher
♥ ♥ ♥ ♥	25% or higher
♥ ♥ ♥ ♥	15% or higher
♥ ♥ ♥ ♥	5% or higher

If an event occurs, pick one from the **Unfortunate Events** table below or manually pick a result that fits the situation. You can always invent something of your own imagining to move the action into interesting directions.

d20 Unfortunate Events

- 1 The shopkeeper takes a member of your party hostage, prompting you for ransom.
- 2 Two men with their faces covered stand on either side of you, then the shopkeeper asks you to hand over your money.
- 3 The doors of the shop are kicked in and men in the king's garments rush the store, mistaking you for the shop's staff.
- 4 There is a foul stench filling the air of the shop. (Perception check will reveal a body under the floorboards, if the shopkeeper is alerted, the occupants will turn on you.)
- 5 Whatever items you had on reserve or commissioned have been taken.
- 6 There is a 'Vagabonds Together' convention being held at the front of the shop. They are not pleased you should walk in on raiders of the night talking about their feelings.
- 7 Villains try to relieve you of all your clothes and sell you to a slaver nearby.
- 8 An additional 20% tax is charged on every item you purchase.
- 9 A robbery takes place while you are in the shop.
- 10 One of the local crime-lord's men mistakes you for another, prompting an attack.
- 11 The decrepit floor crumbles away under your feet.
- 12 The room falls to complete darkness, you hear footsteps and then the darkness lifts. Everyone is dead but your party.
- 13 A warlock, vexed at his item not being delivered, starts a blaze.
- 14 Shrieks and screams slice through the air. No one in the shop hears it but you.
- 15 A human and an orc enter the store and demand protection money from the shopkeeper.
- 16 The shopkeeper demands a deposit of each of your weapons.
- 17 A trapdoor flings open, a voice bellows, "Quick, they're coming!" The shopkeeper and all the occupants hide in terror.
- 18 Suddenly, you can no longer hear anything—from the patter of footsteps, to the squeaks of doors—all is quiet. Then a wizard enters, looking directly at the shopkeeper. His voice is the only thing you hear. "Tylar, it is time."
- 19 You overhear two men discussing a cargo shipment. They notice you listening in.
- 20 The shopkeeper falls black-out drunk. Everyone looks at one another and darts to the shelves.

AWARENESS

In some of these events, a Perception or Insight check may be able to give your heroes a head start on the thief entering the shop or a shopkeeper planning to defraud them. You can also use a Persuasion, Intimidation, or Deception check too. You could convince the henchman you really are here for a cargo delivery or simply attempt to dissuade the shopkeeper and his bandits from taking your money.

THE DRAW OF LOW SECURITY

Low security shops can be worth the risk of visiting as they allow for a unique experience law-abiding shops may not be able to offer. Certain peculiar wares may only be available in that rickety clandestine store in the back alley, or on the black market. Typically, all races and walks of life are indiscriminately welcome. Stores with low Security can be an unguarded shack in a city's back-alleys or a sanctum for those wishing to hide from the eyes of law; a freedom for those looking to escape the shackles of civilization. With a poorly secured shop, weapons can be carried freely and in plain sight, items dueled and bet for, and if the right people are charmed with a little coin, you can bargain for information. Haggling can be without regard for fragile egos or formalities which can offer a fantastic relief to certain characters of your group.

Here are some examples of how to roleplay such locations:

d10 Benefits of Low-Security Stores

- 1 Your haggling, bribery, or intimidation attempts are extra effective.
- 2 A rare item you have been searching for suddenly turns up.
- 3 Spell and poison components are available at half the normal price.
- 4 The shopkeeper offers to gamble on a pit fight for a high-priced item.
- 5 A merchant offers you a bounty to bring in a wanted outlaw.
- 6 You are offered a means to temporarily disappear from the authorities.
- 7 Assassination and other underworld contracts are now available in your guild.
- 8 Weapons can be carried openly.
- 9 Some unusual and exotic coinage turns out to be in demand at the shop.
- 10 A long-time ally offers you a new identity and a chance to start over.

DOOR POLICIES

Housing a wealth of valuable goods, stores are a prime target for bandits and other ill-mannered folk. Depending on the Security level, some shops enforce door policies that range from loose to extremely strict in order to protect their livelihood and ensure the peace.

Security Level	Door Policies
● ● ● ● ●	You enter untouched.
● ● ● ● ●	Your weapons must remain sheathed. If they do not, you will be kicked out of the store.
● ● ● ● ●	You are relieved of your weapons and then admitted into the shop. If you act suspicious, you will be kicked out.
● ● ● ● ●	Weapons are left with an attendant at the door and a guard accompanies you inside. If you do anything to prompt suspicion, the guard will attack.
● ● ● ● ●	Your weapons are taken, you are then frisked, and separated into groups of two. If they find anything suspicious on your person, you will not be admitted into the shop.



SUPPLY & DEMAND

"When the war started, business was booming! The army needed more arrowheads, more swords, more armor, and repairs every day! A few months later the business fell flat; the war cut off all the trade routes to the northern mountains, the mountains where all the smithies get their ore. The industry ground to a halt overnight! We had an army's worth of orders and no metal to fill'em."

-Otis Grindvil, dwarven blacksmith

No powerful metropolis survives solely on the goods and materials it produces locally. As a civilization grows, its largest cities produce less of its own raw goods even as demand for these goods increases. It reaches out to form new towns and colonies to find new sources of raw materials. Desire for these goods further increases as those new cities crave the same goods.

The cost of an item can be inflated by a high demand, but it is most directly impacted by the rarity and difficulty of supply. The level of difficulty in sourcing the item's materials or to transport it to the shop where it's currently being sold defines the supply.

When customers at *The Rusted Anvil* balk at the high price of Mullen Rembretter's dragonbone armor, Otis politely tells them that they're free to go acquire their own dragon bones. He'll even point them in the right direction, albeit with a knowing smirk.

THE CHALLENGES OF SUPPLY

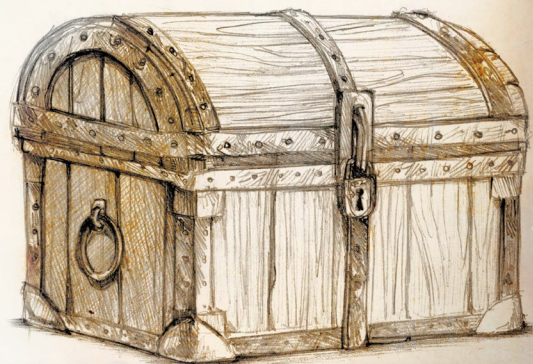
The consideration of supply doesn't have to be as dramatic as fighting a dragon. The simple changing of seasons can render many crops, game, and raw materials unavailable for the rest of the year, and long, arduous trade routes take the distance and hazards of travel into account when setting an item's price.

One of the greatest problems that a new business faces is sourcing their goods. Obviously, smaller stores tend to source locally: produce from nearby farms, ore from neighboring mountains, and leather and hide from native animals. For stores like these, acquiring the goods is of little concern as they're unlikely to be traveling more than a few miles. However, when stores grow larger and begin stocking a variety of goods, or specialize into exotic goods, they have to think about their resource routes.

TRADE ROADS. Roads are the most common method of transportation within a landmass. Provided the roads are well maintained, relatively direct, and patrolled by guards, they can be a real boon to businesses. The major threats to roads are animals that can cause massive damage to structures, such as giants and worms, roving bands of bandits and thugs who plunder caravans, and greedy governments imposing taxation of new roads and bridges.

TRADE WINDS. Trade winds are prevailing winds that constantly blow in certain directions throughout the world. These are used by ship captains to plot routes across the oceans allowing them to quickly and easily move large quantities of goods from one continent to another. Of course, stores in port towns and cities make the most of these trade winds and can employ ships to transport their cargo. Threats to ships using trade winds include marine monsters, vicious storms, and pirates.

RIVERS. Often used to transport heavier goods such as timber, ore, and quarried stone, rivers are one of the easiest ways to move large quantities of resources over land, especially down from mountains or hilly regions onto the plains below. The major threats to rivers are similar to those of the roads.



AFFECTING CIRCUMSTANCES

Life is rarely simple and the intricacies of supply and demand even less so. A number of uncommon factors can create short or long-term restrictions on supply and this rarity can increase or diminish demand as a result.

NATURAL DISASTERS. The inexplicable weeks of endless rain didn't just turn the Smallvor Fields to mud; they flooded the Blue Chasm mines and brought mithral sourcing to a halt. Droughts, storms, floods, fires, and earthquakes are just some of the disasters that can devastate regions and directly or indirectly halt local industries.

CONFLICT. Battalions and battle-lines are not friendly to trade routes and workers, nor can a city under siege be expected to continue producing goods at a normal rate. In such instances raw materials and the necessities of life—food and water—can become as precious as any artisan's meticulously wrought craft. War is far from the only source of conflict that can have this effect on a region; the red dragon, Furnyce, held the city of Turamis captive for almost two years and caused clean food and water in the city to be worth twice their weight in gold.

ARTIFICIAL SCARCITY. Issues of supply don't have to be tied to natural disasters or other events beyond the common person's control. In some cases, low supply is a conscious choice. People have been begging Martingale Pugger of Pugger's Puffy Pastries to share his secret recipes for the sole purpose of opening a second location. Martingale has always refused—as long as there's only one source for his delectable creations, he can charge as much as he likes for each one. Such monopolies can be accidental or intentional, but the result is usually a premium on price in either case.

CHARACTER QUESTS

Most of the time, characters expect to enter a store and hand over their gold for whatever item they wish to purchase. They might have to visit one shop for potions and another for weapons, but they definitely expect everything to be waiting for them on the shelves. That the items cost the same from week to week and from city to city is a given. However, thanks to issues with supply and demand, as detailed above, this might not always be the case. If you want to introduce the idea of supply and demand into your games, you can use the following tables to alter the cost of items and give characters side-quests to restore balance to their retail therapy.

d8	Event	Effect
1	A monster has attacked the area from which the item is usually supplied, preventing it from being produced or transported from the location. If the characters can kill the monster, the item production will return to normal.	The item is unavailable.
2	Orcs from the nearby mountains launched a raid on the river on which the items were transported. Although the orcs were repelled, many of the traders were killed and the supplies damaged. If the characters can find a skilled artisan nearby, the items could be repaired.	The items are available but damaged.
3	A group of bandits has overtaken the roads leading to the city and are levying a heavy tax against trade caravans moving through the area. If the characters can displace the bandits the regular quantity of product can come through.	There are only a few items remaining.
4	The resources required to produce the item are running out and the artisans have increased the price to make up for having to import new resources from further afield. If characters can locate new sources the prices return to normal.	The item is double the normal cost.
5	A benevolent faction has gifted a wealth of specific resources to the craftspersons producing the item for free. This allows them to reduce costs significantly. Characters who wish to restore the cost might have to negotiate with the creature.	The item is half the usual cost.
6	A new, competing producer of the item has cropped up and is selling at good prices. The merchants are now stocking different varieties of the item and eventually the superior one will outcompete the others. Characters who are invested in the producer of the item might want to investigate.	There are multiple varieties of the same item.
7	Hundreds of the item have accidentally been created by the magical experiments of a wizard. In a desperate attempt to empty their laboratory, they have been giving away the items for free to anyone who will accept them.	The item is being given away for free.
8	A magnificent, good-aligned creature was done a kindness by the shop owner and blessed their wares as a thankyou. Characters who can find the creature might be able to get a blessing of their own.	The item is enhanced in some way.

REMARKABLE WARES

"Customers from all walks of life shuffled past one another, and they moved to either side of me like I was a boat slicing through their stream. All one could hear was the gentle footfalls of people in no rush at all; it was peaceful as the patter of rain on a spring day. Then, a boom shook the ground; then another; and another. Looking around, I realized no one else looked shocked—had I gone mad? The coldness of something metal and dead brushed past me. I gasped, reaching for the nearest bookshelf. A lumbering automaton walked past, carrying at least fifty books. With that realization, I looked down to avoid the prying eyes of everyone staring at me. Putting the books down with a heavy thud, a hollow voice bellowed, 'Novices...the world of magic is falling into the hands of novices.' A moment later, the trundle of footfall began again, leaving me to my peace as the automaton left to haul more inventory."

- Sam Linden, first-time customer at Tymerian Tomes

Since the advent of commerce, shops have sprung up in all shapes and sizes across the realms of mortals. Boiled down to their bare essence, a shop is merely a building, or in some cases little more than a stretched tarpaulin overhead where folk can come to buy some variety of good. These goods range from the common gear of everyday folk, such as freshly-harvested crops and firewood to keep a hearth ablaze, to exotic goods of mythic origins such as saddles for Angharrion Boars and towering magitech bodyguard constructs.

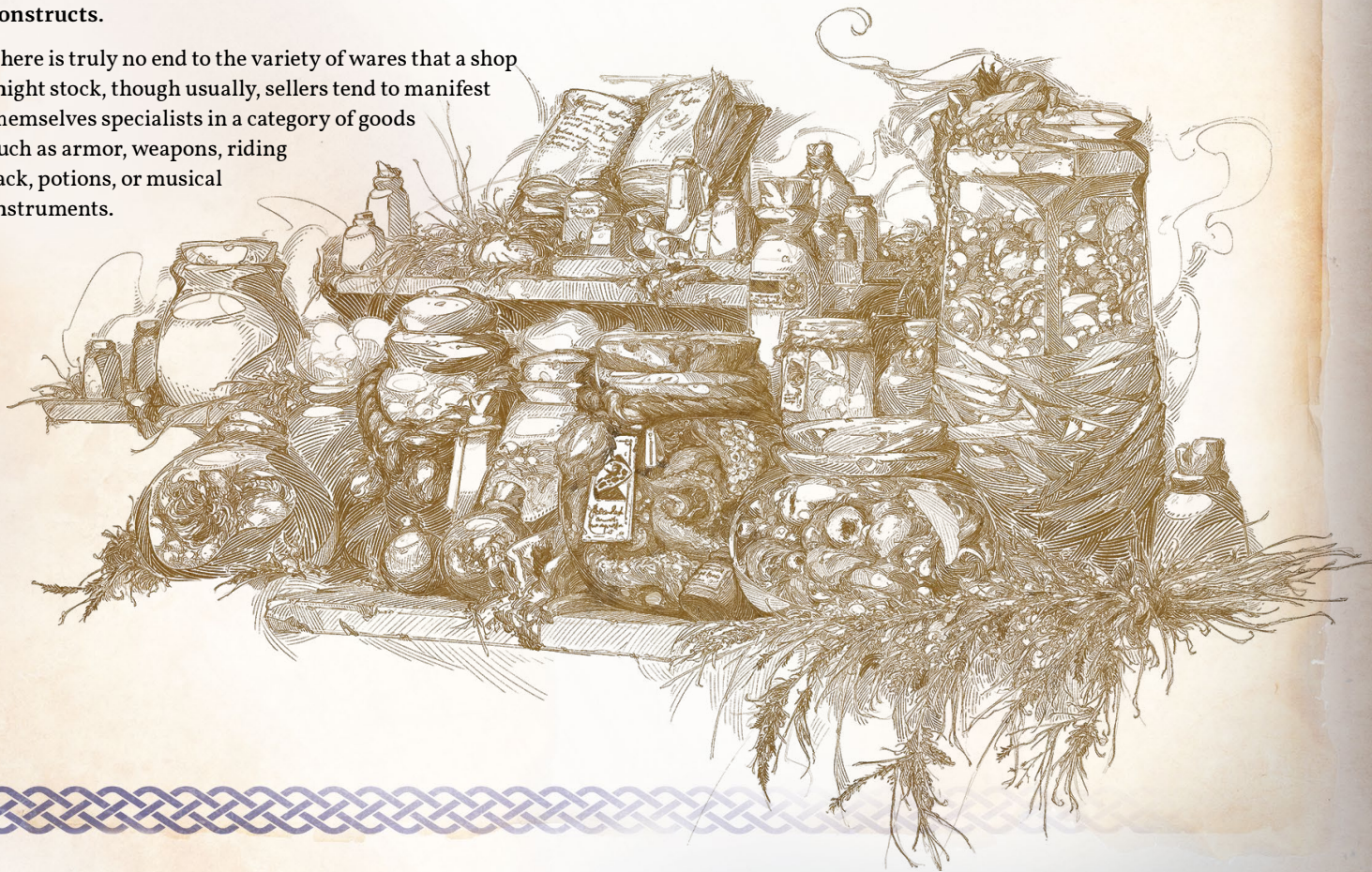
There is truly no end to the variety of wares that a shop might stock, though usually, sellers tend to manifest themselves specialists in a category of goods such as armor, weapons, riding tack, potions, or musical instruments.

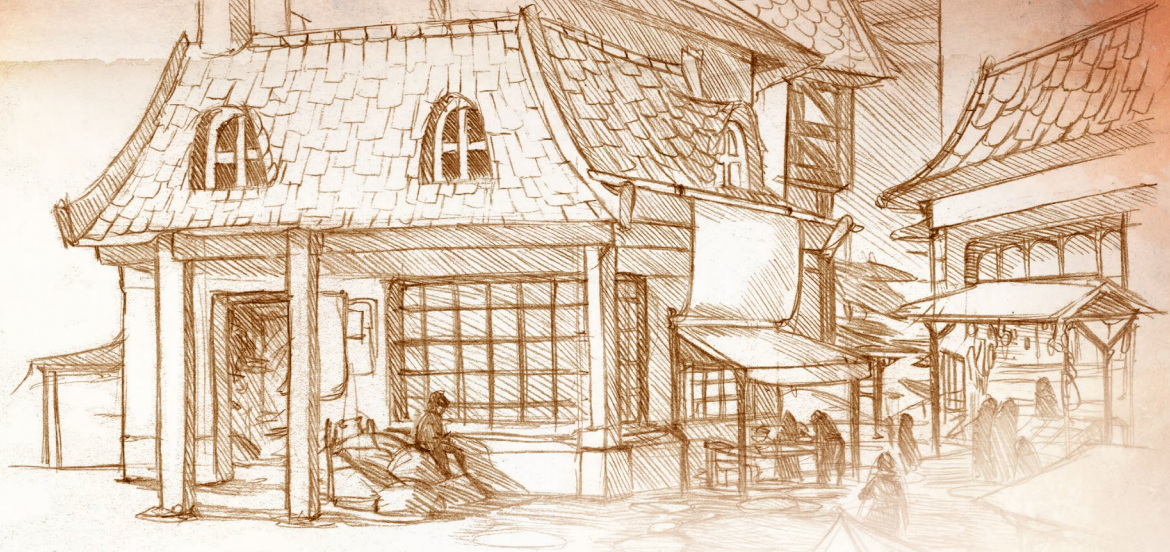
The following sections provide a wide variety of shop ideas and items to populate your fantasy world. From it, adventurers can purchase crucial supplies for their quests as well as purchases to showcase a character's personality in a way only certain wares can.

FANTASTICAL SHOPS

What is bought and sold in the world's endless storefronts and market stalls? The following tables contain suggested business types and the products they sell, from pikes to poultices. To introduce some depth, a touch of crime can provide interest; a store owner with flexible morals might partake in one or more of the suggested side businesses, utilizing their shop and skills to sell illicit goods or products useful to criminal elements.

The contents of this chapter contain a wealth of goods that might be sold in your own remarkable shops. They include more commonly found items, such as potions, to truly mythical options like a hydra steed. Of course, depending on the type of game you run, these options might not be available to your players, or perhaps require a higher cost in gold or a quest to unlock. What we present here are examples of inspiring items that should help you run a remarkable game in whatever way best suits you and your group. Feel free to adapt the tables and items within to better suit your needs.



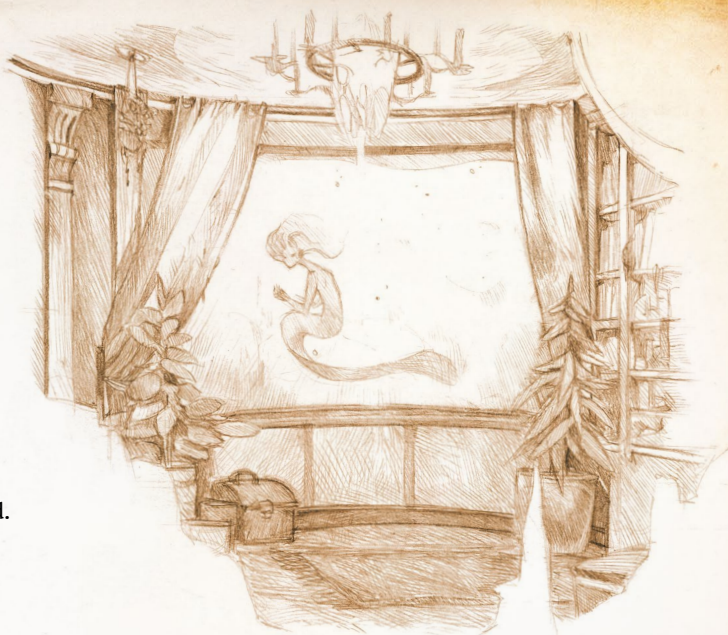


d20	Business	Goods	Potential side businesses
1	Alchemist	Potions, powders, salves, alchemical items	Forbidden items related to necromancy, demonology and the black arts
2	Librarian	Old books, scrolls, letters of famous persons	Lost pages of dangerous grimoires, spell scrolls, treasure maps
3	Armorer	Suits and pieces of armor, shields, horse barding	Used pieces of armor with a few scratches or dents, but otherwise servicable
4	Artificer	Mechanical constructions, clockwork machinery, music boxes, toys	Lockpicks, thieves' tools
5	Bakery	Bread, pastries, confectionery	Confectionery augmented with illicit substances
6	Butcher	Meat, carcasses, broths	Livestock trade, hunting
7	Enchanter	Enchantments, divination, curse removal, magic identification	Curses, control spells, illicit magic
8	Fletcher	Bow making, arrows, bolts	Special arrows, archery training
9	General store	Rations, adventuring gear, miscellaneous equipment	Low-grade goods sold as genuine merchandise
10	Adventuring gear	Adventuring gear, travel and camping equipment	Second-hand items like climbing gear that "has failed only once"
11	Apothecary	Herbs, healing, cures and antidotes	Poisons, venoms, surgery
12	Herbalist	Herbs, spices, potions, cures, antitoxins	Drugs, venoms, poisons, cure minor ails
13	Jeweler	Valuables bought, sold, identified, appraised	Stolen valuables bought and sold
14	Magic shop	Spell components, magic items, wands, spell books	Cursed items, excavated dangerous artifacts, fake items for careless buyers
15	Pawnbroker	Valuables, used items of various types	Stolen or illicit goods
16	Mounts, animals	Domestic and exotic animals, pets, mounts	Imps, demonic familiars, eggs or larvae of unknown creatures
17	Stable, messengers	Transportation, riding, grooming equipment	Covert operations, escort caravans, horse training, farrier
18	Tailor, clothier	Clothing, accessories	Disguises, cheap imitations of expensive wear
19	Weaponsmith	Blades, axes, polearms	Garrotes, poison daggers, cursed weaponry

SPECIAL SERVICES

Oftentimes, a shop that sells a particular variety of product will also offer related services. For example, a blacksmith selling new armor is also likely to be able to repair broken breastplates, or stitch the sleeve of a leather tunic back to the body. Some notable establishments might draw up designs for custom jewelry and weapons. A stables might sell mounts and riding equipment, but also offer to look after an adventurer's mount, cure it of diseases or maladies, or even breed the animal with appropriate stock.

The list of potential services is practically endless. The following table will provide you some ideas to get you started.



Service	Description
Bespoke Designs	Shops where items are created from scratch are able to work with a character to design a unique item that they desire. This includes blacksmiths, tinkers, leatherworkers, jewelers, and tailors. Such items typically cost more than the generic version, but might come with added benefits.
Lodging	Many general goods stores, food and drink merchants, or wholesale traders might have rooms where visitors can stay overnight. These places offer lodging of a lower standard than a typical inn, but good enough for visiting customers.
Messaging	Most shops have access to a messenger of some variety, be that an apprentice, a pigeon, an awakened rabbit, a clockwork postman, or simply a regular postal collection. Characters can use this service to get information across the world quickly and relatively safely.
Pawning	In cases where valuable items are to be sold, or the party is in urgent need of cash, many shops operate pawning services where they find buyers for the items, and ensure that a buy-back is possible within a limited time.
Repairs	The adventuring life is filled with close-calls which often results in equipment becoming damaged. In these instances, a character might want to save money by getting the item repaired rather than replaced. Such a service must be undertaken at the correct establishment (a tailor can't repair a broken vase), but is often cheaper than buying new.
Restoration	Like items, characters too can become damaged over the course of their adventures. Bones break, muscles tear, heads clang together. On particularly nasty occasions, characters might even succumb to diseases, be poisoned by foul monstrosities, or contract magical maladies and curses that persist for decades. Thankfully some shops, typically alchemists and potion-sellers, offer long-term restoration which can help characters recover from their wounds.
Spellcasting	The variety of magic in the world is far greater than the grains of sand on a beach or stars in the sky. Spellcasting services include divination, abjuration, restoration, necromancy, and a myriad of other magics. These services can be procured from anywhere that sells enchanted items.
Stabling	Stabling refers to keeping mounts, typically horses, safe for a period of time. However, this service can extend to mounts more exotic than horses, and also to pets, familiars, and animal companions if the right stable or kennel can be found. While in a stable, the animal is unlikely to come to any harm, and can recover from any injuries it might have sustained.
Storytelling	Adventurers who take quests in far-flung parts of the world might return home to discover that they're still just 'the blacksmith's child'. Storytellers, songwriters, poets, dancers, and other performers can listen to the tales of adventure that characters tell and turn them into works of art that capture the imagination of commoners and nobles alike. Before long, these stories spread and characters begin to gain serious renown, which comes with many benefits.

PECULIAR POTIONS



Bottles, vials, flasks, philters, tubes, potions, ointments, tinctures, liniments, unguents. There are thousands of words for potions, poisons, and alchemical creations. The reason is that there are thousands of different liquids that produce thousands of different effects. Perhaps the most common potions are potions of healing, but there are also potions that allow you to climb, fly, breathe fire, see the future, shrink in size, turn invisible, run at insane speeds, and even breathe water.

Potions encompass a wide variety of magical effects that are bestowed by drinking the fluid. Such fluids are typically stored in vials or flasks but could be found in any sort of container. Drinking the potion typically takes a turn, but the effects are normally instantaneous. Potions fall into the categories of Common, Uncommon, Rare, and Very Rare. The following table provides some example effects and prices for each rarity.

Rarity	Example Effects	Price
Common	Climbing, minor healing	50 gp
Uncommon	Animal friendship, single damage resistance, fire breath	100 gp
Rare	All damage resistance, growth, mind-reading, shrinking	250 gp
Very Rare	Flight, immense strength, invisibility	500 gp

In addition to the typical potions you find in your fantasy world, here are several unique ones to consider.

◆ POTION OF PERCUSSION - 50 GP (COMMON)

When you drink this potion, you gain the uncanny ability to maintain a tempo and are able to drum like a professional. The potion lasts for 1 hour.

◆ POTION OF WARDING - 250 GP (RARE)

When you drink this potion, you gain a measure of protection from death. The first time during the next hour that you would be killed, you instead are reduced to minimum health. The effect of the potion then ends.

◆ POTION OF THE SPIDER - 450 GP (VERY RARE)

When you drink this potion, the number of limbs you have becomes eight. If you previously had fewer limbs, more grow. If you previously had more limbs, some disappear. The new limbs might be arm or legs, determined randomly. If they are legs, you gain a bonus to speed and can climb any surface. If they are arms you gain extra attacks and can climb any surface. The potion lasts for 1 hour after which you return to your previous number of limbs.

◆ POTION OF EYE-POPPING - 100 GP (UNCOMMON)

When you drink this potion, your eyes fall out of your head and begin to levitate at eye-level. They circle your head slowly unless you command them to move to another location. You can still see through the eyes. The potion lasts 1 hour, after which your eyes return to their sockets.

◆ POTION OF POLYMORPH - 275 GP (UNCOMMON)

When you drink this potion, you are magically transformed into a frog or other small animal. The potion lasts 1 hour.

◆ POTION OF STONESKIN - 250 GP (UNCOMMON)

When you drink this potion, your skin turns hard as stone and gives you resistance to non-magical weapon damage. The potion lasts 1 hour.

◆ POTION OF THE PREDATOR - 90 GP (UNCOMMON)

When you drink this potion, you take on aspects of an apex predator. Your ability to detect and track creatures improves, claws sprout from your fingers and toes, and your teeth grow into sharp canines. The potion lasts 1 hour.

◆ POTION OF BLINKING - 450 GP (RARE)

When you drink this potion, you can teleport short distances once every few seconds. This does not increase your speed, but allows you to dodge incoming attacks and move through barriers. The potion lasts 1 hour.

◆ POTION OF WARMTH - 150 GP (UNCOMMON)

When you drink this potion, you begin to emanate heat. You gain resistance to cold damage and are immune to cold weather effects. Additionally, any creature that touches you takes fire damage. The potion lasts 1 hour.

◆ POTION OF THE STORM - 700 GP (VERY RARE)

When you drink this potion, lightning crackles around your body and your footsteps sound like thunder. This effect makes you incredibly intimidating and causes your weapon attacks to do additional thunder or lightning damage. The potion lasts 1 hour.





MOUNTS & FAMILIARS

When faced with an immense trek that could take weeks or months, adventurers often look to travel using a mount. In your remarkable world, these creatures could range from the mundane to the magical, and everything in between. Traditional steeds include draft ponies, riding horses, and warhorses. More exotic mounts include elephants, giant lizards, or giant spiders for the braver riders! But what if the adventurers are confronted with an entire ocean to cross? What if they have to ascend a snowy mountain at an urgent speed? How do they reach a cloud giant's castle high up the clouds? In such instances, characters might search out more spectacular establishments that cater to their traveling needs. Specialist shops offer mounts the characters may have only heard of in legends, such as hippogriffs, griffons, tamed Gnarrduk boars, magma trolls, sea serpents, or an entranced aboleth.

Traditional mounts can be bought almost anywhere in a stereotypical 'European' fantasy setting. Exotic mounts might require characters to travel further abroad to discover them, but sometimes come with advantages. Remarkable mounts always come with incredible bonuses but often require unique stabling, feed, and other arrangements. Mounts are always available at the GM's discretion, as some of the following might not exist in your setting or could be unavailable to adventurers. The following tables provide the prices for traditional, exotic, and remarkable mounts.

Mount	Rarity	Price
Aboleth	Remarkable	5,000
Camel	Common	50 gp
Donkey	Common	8 gp
Giant boar	Common	200 gp
Giant goat	Common	60 gp
Horse, draft	Common	50 gp
Horse, riding	Common	75 gp
Mastiff	Common	25 gp
Mule	Common	8 gp
Ox	Common	15 gp
Pony	Common	30 gp
Warhorse	Common	400 gp
Axebeak	Exotic	100 gp
Bear, grizzly	Exotic	250 gp
Bear, polar	Exotic	250 gp
Elephant	Exotic	400 gp
Dinosaur, ankylosaurus	Exotic	250 gp
Dinosaur, deinonychus	Exotic	450 gp
Dinosaur, hadrosaurus	Exotic	100 gp
Dinosaur, triceratops	Exotic	500 gp
Dire wolf	Exotic	200 gp
Giant bat	Exotic	350 gp
Giant crab	Exotic	200 gp
Giant eagle	Exotic	500 gp
Giant lizard	Exotic	100 gp
Giant owl	Exotic	500 gp
Giant vulture	Exotic	500 gp
Giant seahorse	Exotic	300 gp
Giant spider	Exotic	150 gp
Horse, clockwork	Exotic	250 gp
Mastiff, clockwork	Exotic	450 gp
Owlbear	Exotic	1,000 gp
Rhino	Exotic	200 gp
Skeleton Warhorse	Exotic	200 gp
Worg	Exotic	200 gp
Basilisk	Remarkable	900 gp
Bulette	Remarkable	2,000 gp
Griffon	Remarkable	1,000 gp
Hippogriff	Remarkable	1,000 gp

Manticore	Remarkable	750 gp
Nightmare	Remarkable	1,500 gp
Pegasus	Remarkable	1,000 gp
Sea serpent	Remarkable	1,000 gp
Wyvern	Remarkable	800 gp

MOUNT EQUIPMENT

Creatures serving as mounts require specialized equipment and care to properly ride, keep docile, and healthy.

While common mounts can be ridden briefly without a saddle by any skilled rider, typically mounts require at least a saddle. Exotic and remarkable mounts simply can't be ridden without the proper riding gear, which can add considerable cost to the purchase and upkeep. Such additional expenses include headpieces, armor, seasonal and climate-appropriate drapery, grooming kits, and the cost of feeding and stabling. In addition, some folks might not fancy trying to stick a saddle on an aboleth, so well-trained stable hands are often required.

The table below lists examples of equipment that a character might wish to acquire for their mount (or in some instances their familiar or pet).

Item	Price
Barding	x4
Bit and bridle	2 gp
Carriage	100 gp
Cart	15 gp
Chariot	250 gp
Feed (per day), common	5 cp
Feed (per day), exotic	5 sp
Feed (per day), remarkable	5 gp
Saddle, exotic	60 gp
Saddle, military	20 gp
Saddle, pack	5 gp
Saddle, riding	10 gp
Saddlebags	4 gp
Sled	20 gp
Stabling (per day), exotic	5 gp
Stabling (per day), traditional	5 sp

MAGICAL BARDING AND GEAR

One important piece of equipment for a mount is barding. Barding is armor designed to protect an animal's head, neck, chest, and body. Any type of armor can be purchased as barding. The cost is equivalent to four times the cost of armor made for humanoids, and

it weighs twice as much. Magical barding and items can also be created. These are much rarer, and cost a lot, but give supernatural abilities to a mount.

◆ ADAMANTINE BARDING - 500 GP (VERY RARE)

Adamantine is an incredibly hard metal with a green tinge that can be forged into plates, scale, or chain. Barding made of adamantite shield the mount wearing it from critical hits.

◆ BARDING, +1, +2, OR +3 (PRICE VARIES)

Magical enchantments on barding can come from a variety of sources. Examples include dwarven runes, elven song script, or celestial flames. This form of barding makes it harder for the mount to be hit by attacks.

◆ COLLAR OF THE ELEMENTS - 250 GP (UNCOMMON)

These thick collars tend to be adorned with an item from earth, sea, and sky. Examples include a precious gemstone, a piece of coral, and the feather of a giant eagle. A mount wearing such a collar can breathe normally in any environment, including underwater or in clouds of poisonous gas.

◆ ETHEREAL ANKLETS - 5,000 GP (VERY RARE)

These fine metal chains can be tied around the legs of a mount. They glitter with an ethereal luster. A mount equipped with these anklets can teleport short distances instead of traveling them on foot, or other means. This teleportation carries the rider, and prevents them from being hit by opportunity attacks.

◆ HORSESHOES OF A ZEPHYR - 5,000 GP (VERY RARE)

These silver horseshoes, when equipped, allow a mount to float a few inches above the ground and still move as usual, allowing them to travel harmlessly over water, lava, or any other material. Although typically found as horseshoes, they change to adapt to the mount as required.

◆ LIGHTNING HOOVES - 600 GP (RARE)

These horseshoes, often engraved with flames, allow a mount to move at twice its usual speed when worn. Although typically found as horseshoes, they change to adapt to the mount as required.

◆ CHANFRON OF INTELLECT - 500 GP (RARE)

This facial armor can be fitted to any mount and gives the creature the intelligence of an average humanoid. Provided the creature was previously friendly to the rider, it maintains its kinship. The mount now has a personality of its own and can help adventurers make decisions or overcome obstacles.

FAMILIARS & PETS

Some animals are unsuitable for use as mounts but still sought after by adventurers to be companions. Famous heroes have been known to be accompanied by wolves, panthers, and a myriad of other beasts. Wizards and witches often have a magical familiar by their side, such as toads, cats, and rats. Warriors, barbarians, and rangers might capture or tame a wild beast, or purchase a rare animal from an exclusive vendor. Examples of common, exotic, and remarkable familiars and pets can be found in the tables below.

FAMILIARS & PETS

Animal	Rarity	Price
Badger	Common	4 gp
Cat	Common	3 gp
Dog	Common	5 gp
Frog	Common	1 cp
Hawk	Common	2 gp
Lizard	Common	1 gp
Mouse	Common	1 cp
Rat	Common	2 cp
Raven	Common	1 gp
Toad	Common	2 cp
Ape	Exotic	150 gp
Bat	Exotic	50 gp
Lion	Exotic	500 gp
Owl	Exotic	50 gp
Panther	Exotic	350 gp
Scorpion	Exotic	50 gp
Snake, flying	Exotic	250 gp
Snake, poisonous	Exotic	150 gp
Tiger	Exotic	500 gp
Wolf	Exotic	350 gp
Cockatrice	Remarkable	500 gp
Hellhound	Remarkable	1,000 gp
Homunculus	Remarkable	500 gp
Pseudodragon	Remarkable	1,000 gp
Stirge	Remarkable	500 gp
Frost Wolf	Remarkable	1,000 gp



AMAZING ARMOR, OUTFITS & WEAPONS

Perhaps the most appealing items to adventurers are new magical weapons, armor, and outfits. Because adventurers always need to attack and defend themselves, these magical items help them take on deadlier foes and protect themselves from devastating attacks. Magical armor and outfits come in all shapes and sizes as they are often made for a specific individual. Luckily, the enchantments on these items allow them to resize and fit anyone who wears them, so a dwarven suit of plate mail will grow to the size of a giant should they put it on.

This section lists several remarkable items to discover in the myriad shops across the world and is meant to inspire your imagination. At higher levels, your heroes may start looking for something truly unbelievable.

CUSTOM ITEM CREATION - With deep pockets and a vision, it is also possible to have customized wares crafted. See [Appendix I: Custom Item Creation](#) for ideas on how to let your players order magnificent custom-made items.

◆ INFERNAL CHAIN - 10,000 GP (MYTHICAL)

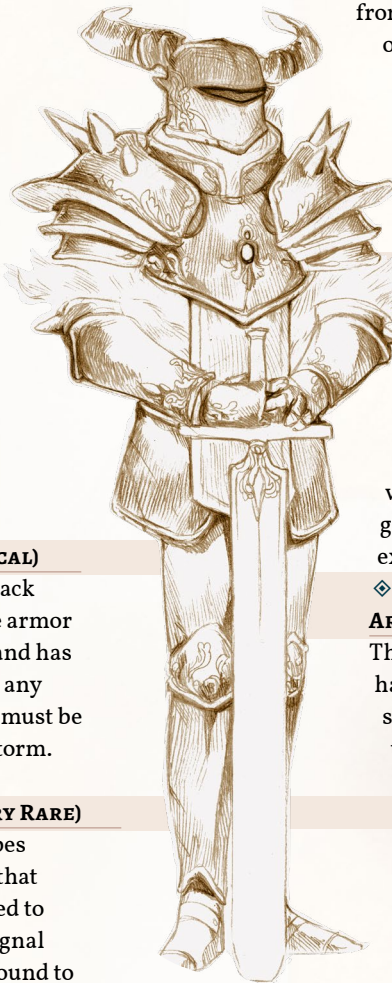
Flaming scripture ripples across this black iron chain mail. A creature wearing the armor can understand the language of fiends and has resistance to fire damage. Additionally, any deal made with the owner of this chain must be kept or the defaulter is caught in a firestorm.

◆ SMOKESCREEN ROBES - 2,500 GP (VERY RARE)

The tattered edges of these charcoal robes constantly smoke, creating dark wisps that outline the wearer. The robes can be used to produce a massive plume of smoke to signal allies from a distance or can be spun around to produce a cloud of smoke to obscure the wearer.

◆ CHITINOUS PLATE - 500 GP (RARE)

Forged from the cured exoskeletons of giant beetles, this plate mail armor is a green iridescent color. It is much lighter than metal plate armor, and is especially adept at deflecting missiles thanks to its curved surfaces.



◆ PENNILESS PONTIFICALS - 500 GP (RARE)

These religious robes have certainly seen better days. The embroidery is pulling out and the elbows and shoulders have worn thin. Once per day, when the wearer of the robes puts their hand in the pockets, they discover a gold piece.

◆ BARKSCALE ARMOR - 5,000 GP (VERY RARE)

Created using small flakes of bark from Irontrunk stumps, this scale armor is extremely hefty, but provides the wearer with resistance to damage from piercing and slashing weapons.

◆ WAYFINDER'S TUNIC - 500 GP (UNCOMMON)

This leather tunic is studded with adamantite and made from the hide of an abominable yeti. The wearer of this armor always knows which way is north and can, once per day, detail or name a location they wish to travel to. When they do so, a path of waving turquoise lights illuminate the fastest safe route to the destination. These lights last for one hour.

◆ WYVERN-FANG PAULDRONS - 75 GP (COMMON)

These bone shoulder pads are covered with wyvern fangs that spear outward, away from the wearer. The fangs remain deadly sharp just as they were in the maw of the wyvern. Whenever the wearer shoves or grapples a creature, or is grappled themselves, that creature takes extra piercing damage from the spikes.

◆ WORG LEATHER ARMOUR - 50 GP (COMMON)

This incredibly tough leather is made from hairy worg hide. It is magically enchanted so the wearer gains the sharp senses of the worg, as well as a bonus to armor.

◆ DOOMHAMMER- 25,000 GP (MYTHICAL)

This immense warhammer has grimacing dwarven faces on either side of its iron head. The shaft is made of dragonsteel, and glows with orange magic. A creature struck by the Doomhammer is filled with visions of its death, causing fear in even the most stoic of warriors. A critical strike with the Doomhammer allows the wielder to crush the target's leg or arm, rendering it useless.

◆ BURNING BRAND- 6,000 GP (VERY RARE)

Flames leap from this deadly shortsword lighting the area around it and dealing additional fire damage to any target hit by it. Burning Brand can also be used to shoot streaks of flame toward targets, igniting on impact.

◆ **PLANEREND - 50,000 GP (MYTHICAL)**

Planerend is a thin, razor-sharp rapier whose tip has been dipped in molten star-metal from meteorites, causing it to glisten with purple radiance. A creature can use Planerend to slice through the fabric of reality, opening portals into different planes of existence. These portals are unstable, and last for 10 minutes before collapsing in on themselves.

◆ **VENOMCOIL - 45,000 GP (MYTHICAL)**

Lashing around of its own accord, this vicious whip is sometimes called snake tail because of its striped green and black coloration. It can secrete a toxin that affects any creature struck by the whip. The poison causes paralysis after 24 hours and death occurs after another 24 hours if left untreated.

◆ **HEARTSTRING CROSSBOW - 3,500 GP (RARE)**

The string of this crossbow is made from the heart sinews of a storm giant. Any bolt fired from it becomes charged with the power of lightning. Upon a hit, the bolt deals extra lightning damage and, once per day, the bolt can emit a crash of thunder that can knock the target off their feet.

◆ **GLAIVE OF DISPATCHING - 25,000 GP (MYTHICAL)**

The blade of this glaive is made of an alloy of metals that seem to swirl of their own accord. Dealing a critical hit with this ultra-sharp blade allows the wielder to chop a limb from the target. This could cause the target to fall prone, drop a weapon or shield, or bleed to death.

OUTFITS & CLOTHING

Not all heroes choose to wear armor. Some pride themselves in wearing capes, cloaks, robes, or even a pair of fancy trousers. In some cases, magical clothing can be just as special and powerful as an elaborate suit of armor. The following section provides some unique inspiration for wonderful outfitting.

◆ **DRAGONBONE BOOTS - 500 GP (RARE)**

In order to wear these boots, you must have killed a dragon and harvested its bones. While wearing the boots, your speed increases and you can fly in short bursts. The boots are sabatons made of bone, engraved with draconic runes.

◆ **CLANDESTINE CLOAK - 250 GP (UNCOMMON)**

Only characters who are proficient in pickpocketing can wear this cloak. It is a deep purple-black and swirling shadows cascade down to the wearer's ankles. The cloak is outfitted with dozens of secret pockets that can only be detected and opened by the wearer.



◆ **YETI HIDE TUNIC - 450 GP (RARE)**

This enormous hide tunic weighs a huge amount, but is superb at protecting its wearer from both the cold and incoming attacks. Trying to wear such a coat in a warm environment is a terrible idea. While wearing the tunic, you are resistant to extremely cold temperatures and cold damage.

◆ **HYDRASCALE CHAPS - 200 GP (UNCOMMON)**

These riding chaps are made from the scales and hide of a hydra and can only be worn by characters who have a Riding-related skill. While wearing them, you have a bonus to checks made to avoid danger while mounted.

◆ **WINTER WOLF HAT - 50 GP (COMMON)**

This circular, hairy hat is an icy blue-white color and has earflaps to protect the wearer from the biting cold. Only characters with proficiency in Survival can wear the hat. While wearing the hat, you have a bonus to finding footprints in soft, natural surfaces such as snow, mud, and sand.

◆ **CHARLATAN'S ROBE - 600 GP (RARE)**

This brightly colored and striped robe seems to flutter in a wind that doesn't exist, framing its wearer in a silhouette of grandeur. Only characters with proficiency in Deception can wear this robe. While wearing it, you have resistance to piercing and poison damage.

◆ **ALCHEMIST'S GLOVES - 100 GP (COMMON)**

These black leather gloves have copper knuckle-protection and a plate on the top of the hand. Only characters with an Alchemy-related skill may wear them. While wearing them, you have a bonus to ability checks made to create potions.

◆ **CAPE OF THE BEETLE - 450 GP (UNCOMMON)**

Only characters with proficiency in the Nature skill can wear this cape, which is made from the flattened carapace and wings of a giant beetle. While wearing this cape, you have a bonus to your armor, and gain the ability to burrow a short distance.

◆ **BLESSED ROBES - 750 GP (RARE)**

Made of cloth-of-gold, these vestments can only be worn by divine spellcasters of a specific faith. While wearing them, your divine attacks deal extra radiant damage. Often they bear symbols of a pantheon, reflecting the nature of the wearer's beliefs.

TANTALIZING TOMES

During their many adventures, characters enter the libraries of long-forgotten temples, delve into necromantic monasteries, or visit local shops. Stacked on dusty shelves are hundreds if not thousands of books, folios, volumes, and tomes. These range from the mundane to magical tomes and fantastic works that can only be understood by those with certain skills. What knowledge is contained within the myriad of pages and phrases?

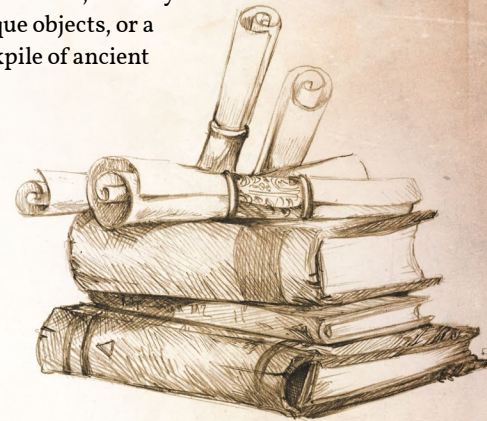
Books can be found in almost any location such as a bookshop, library, monastery, or temple. They make an excellent source of new knowledge, insight, lore and roleplaying opportunities. A wizard may be traveling the lands to unearth a powerful magical tome, while your bard may be trying to decipher a cryptic message hidden in an ancient poem. Some tomes are specific to each class and contain a vast amount of instruction to help members of the class excel in their roles. There are only a few of each of these books in existence and they are typically held by individuals who want to keep them. Sometimes they end up on black markets after being stolen, where they can sell for thousands of gold pieces.

STUDYING A BOOK

The following tables provide a title for each book, any optional requirements for understanding and applying the knowledge of the book, and a result of studying it.

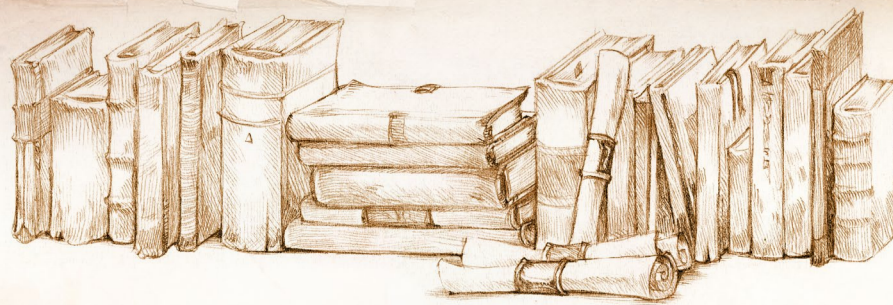
LEARNING - Reading a book typically takes 5 to 25 days of downtime. Common and Uncommon books can be found in typical stores. Characters might find rare books in the possession of talented individuals, wealthy merchants collecting unique objects, or a sage librarian with a stockpile of ancient folios.

PRICES - Unless it's common, a special book is typically worth a minimum of 50-100 gp and might sell for even more depending on the vendor's attitude to parting with the tome.



Book Rarity	Price
Common	50-100 gp
Uncommon	100-400 gp
Rare	400-1,000 gp
Very Rare	1,000 - 10,000 gp
Mythical	10,000 - 50,000 gp

Fantastic Folios	Requirements	Result
Canticles Vol III	Proficient in singing or faith	Permanent +2 bonus to performing songs
Desperate Measures	Proficient in poison use	Resistance to poison damage
Field Surgery: Silver Edition	Proficient healer or herbalist	Permanent +2 bonus to stabilizing creatures
Heard of this Herb?	Proficient in survival or herbology	Permanent +2 bonus to identifying plants
Illusiorum Magifactorum	Spellcasting ability	Gives disadvantage to targets of illusion spells
The Mounted Khan	Proficient in horse riding	Reroll a missed mounted attack once per Short Rest
Relentless	Able to use exotic weapons	Reroll a roll of 1 on damage once per turn
Tales of Remarkable Courage	High constitution or wisdom	Permanent +2 bonus on saving throws against fear effects
The Talented Derren Deftfingers	Proficient with lockpicks or thieves' tools	Permanent +2 bonus to picking locks
Tickled Pink	Proficient in performance arts	Permanent +2 bonus to charisma



Common Books

Description

Aquatic Verses	From the sea elf <i>Fylson Omaynore</i> , this songbook written on dried, bleached seaweed contains a hundred songs about the seas.
From Angels to Zombies	Bound in scaly skin, this book details celestials and undead encountered by the priesthood and contains useful information for defeating the foes. Written by <i>Mother Uma</i> .
Cards of Creation	This thin novella, written by <i>Galen Nimblefoot</i> , is about a love affair between royalty and a slick gambler and charlatan named Mercenaire.
Empathy	This dog-eared book, written by the druid <i>Hawthorn Earthbound</i> , contains stories of communicating with the natural world. It is curiously bound in bark.
Every Journey	Weatherbeaten and broken-spined, this heavy tome contains a wealth of information on wilderness survival and equipment suggestions for different terrain.
It Cannot Be!	Filled with maddened scrawlings, these sheets of parchment are held together with string, and contain diagrams and descriptions of 'things from beyond'.
Half-Formed Threats	A work of fiction by the famous storyteller <i>Fiona 'Silvertongue'</i> about a spy. Bound with floral-motif fabric.
History of Naval Tradition, Vol I	Written by <i>Admiral Ostentarch</i> , this thick, leather-bound tome is filled with information about warships and naval military tactics.
Hit or Die	This autobiography of <i>Captain Harrin Rathe</i> details their early life, becoming Captain of the Guard, and their following betrayal of the Royal Family.
Journaling the Divide	From the noteworthy orc emissary <i>Grantuk Brokk</i> , this thin folio contains his accounts of the treatment of half-orcs in major cities around the world.
Long-Lost Years	A tale of a dwarf who cannot remember the past two centuries, and is haunted by the events that eventually catch up with him.
Of Age and Agenda	This book contains musings on the changing outlook of individuals as they age, comparing long-lived elves to those of humans. Written by <i>Lianthorn Perralei</i> .
On World Order	This pompous tome, written by <i>Empress Ho-Xin</i> , details the proper ruling of an empire under the Ho-Xin regime, and is bound in luxurious velvet.
Pay with Wit	Filled with humorous anecdotes and advice for budding storytellers and bards, this book is written by the <i>Queen's jester, Rollingford</i> .
Peddler's Tales	This work of fiction tells tales of crooks getting away with crimes. The front page has been stamped in red ink with the word EXPURGATE.
Tea: A Stirring Story	An account of the popular drink tea, detailing its discovery, cultivation, and rise in high society. The latter half of the pages have been burned in a fire.
To Be a Pickpocket	This handmade folio contains notes about how to get away with minor theft, specifically pickpocketing. Several pages have been torn out.
Folio Vulgaris	A rather vulgar satire, poking fun at the noble class of a nearby city. It has clearly been read many times. The author is unknown.
Wayward - A Pocket Guide	A basic instructional manual detailing the basics of tracking in the wilderness. The pages are crinkled and blurred with water damage.
Mages of Our Time	Written by the arcane chronicler <i>Jarnillio</i> , this book is bound in purple leather and contains accounts of wizards from the last century.

Visionary Tomes	Class	Result
Bring Low the Mountains	Barbarian	Your wild/rage attacks deal more damage.
Ten Thousand Tales: A Collection of Stories and Songs	Bard	You can better inspire other members of your party.
Apotheosis	Cleric	You can channel the power of your deity to cast spells.
The Ebb and Flow	Druid	Instead of casting high-level spells, you can transform into beasts.
Baelen Nord: An Autobiography	Fighter	You learn new fighting styles.
Mind over Matter	Monk	Your vital Ki increases.
Honor the Path	Paladin	Your attacks are filled with divine wrath and deal extra damage.
Primal Atlas, the Collected Volumes	Ranger	Attacks against enemies who you are used to tracking are more likely to hit.
Traps, Treasure, and Treachery	Rogue	You gain a bonus to dodging trap effects.
Channeling the Magic Within	Sorcerer	Your sorcery skills improve, allowing you to cast an extra spell each day.
Premium Pacts for Wise Warlocks	Warlock	You gain more boons from your patron.
Spellbook of Sarvidar the Sagacious	Wizard	You can learn and memorize spells faster than before.

CURSED CHRONICLES

Books are the perfect place to conceal traps, tricks, and curses which blight over-curious adventurers. The following table provides twenty sample curses that you may use whenever characters come across a book of dubious creation. Depending on the severity of the curse, you can choose to have the effects wear off after a few hours, days, weeks, years, or until removed by magical means.

d20 Random Curse

1	Food and drink turn to ash in your mouth. You cannot gain the benefits of eating or drinking.	8	You give off a strange, musky stench that draws animals from miles around and makes them aggressive toward you.
2	Your age changes randomly. Roll a d20, on an even roll, your age decreases by the number rolled, on an odd roll, your age increases by the number rolled.	9	Your skin becomes translucent. You gain vulnerability to slashing damage.
3	Your eyelids droop down and seal with the skin beneath your eyes. You are blinded.	10	Dozens of tiny fungal growths erupt from your ears. You are deafened.
4	Your limbs wither and turn an ashen gray color. Your movement speed is halved, and you have disadvantage on Athletics and Acrobatics checks.	11	You shrink to half your usual size.
5	Your features become contorted, making you terrifying. You have disadvantage on Persuasion and Performance checks.	12	You turn into a vermin-like animal: toad, rat, bat, beetle, worm, or larvae.
6	Pus-filled blisters break out over your tongue. You cannot speak.	13	A bright light flashes, leaving you stunned for a few hours.
7	Your skin begins to seep a thin, yellow oil. Open flames within five feet of you cause you to ignite.	14	Your dreams are haunted by a lingering, malignant presence. You cannot complete a long rest.
		15	Your gender is changed permanently.
		16	Your feet become tentacles temporarily. You can't walk.
		17	The touch of sunlight causes black spores to burst from your body. You gain Sunlight Sensitivity.
		18	Non-magical metal you touch instantly begins to rust. Any non-magic metal object you touch or wear is destroyed.
		19	Long spikes erupt from your body. You cannot fit through small spaces such as tunnels and doorways.
		20	A raven follows you wherever you go, and distracts you from the task at hand. You have disadvantage on ability checks.

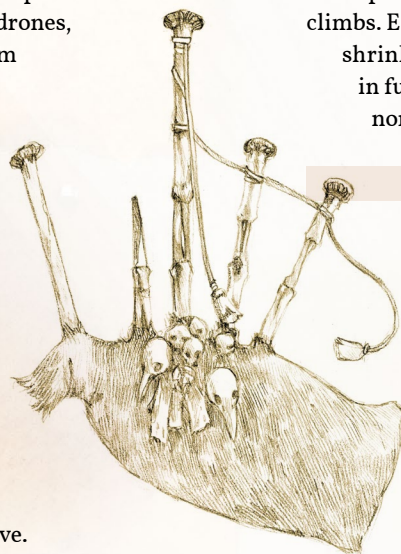
INTOXICATING INSTRUMENTS

Unlike magical swords and spellbooks, musical instruments offer a different kind of fantastical item, sought after by bards and entertainers alike. In the hands of a gifted performer, magical instruments can have the power to move hearts, mountains, and heavens. A magical instrument is far more than its mundane counterpart, it is as powerful in the hands of a trained musician as an enchanted longsword is in the hands of a champion, or a sorcerous staff in the hands of a spellcaster.

If a character, especially a bard, becomes particularly attached to a certain instrument, they might begin looking for magical variations of the instrument to improve their skills while out adventuring. Such magic items exist and are often the focus of religious orders, cults, or are used by nefarious villains to devastating effect. Examples of such items can be found below.

◆ PIPES OF THE DEAD - 750 GP (RARE)

These bagpipes are made from a thick pale leather of unknown origin, and the drones, blowpipe, and chanter are made from bones. The sound it produces is deep and mournful, seeming to echo and reverberate even in open spaces. Sewn into the bag itself are fangs and teeth from a range of animals. Once per day, a character playing the drum can summon the spirits of the recently departed for conversation and questioning. Spirits who do not wish to be questioned can be compelled to appear by playing an altered tune, which requires them to make a Wisdom save.



◆ DRAGON'S BREATH WHISTLE - 7,500 GP (MYTHICAL)

This steel whistle is shaped like a dragon in flight and is around six inches long. The metal has been beautifully worked to depict every fold of scaly skin. Both the spines along the dragon's back and its eyes are made of cut rubies. The whistle's mouthpiece is built into the tail, and the open mouth of the beast serves as the foot. The whistle serves as a normal musical whistle, having a wonderfully clear tone, but is also magically enchanted. You can change the tone from a light pipe to a formidable dragon's roar which inspires fear in those who hear it, or cause it to belch a cone of searing flames.

◆ PEARLY SHELL DRUM - 4,500 GP (VERY RARE)

Covered in opalescent mother-of-pearl and carefully cleaned to perfection, this drum is shaped like two saucers pushed together. Although ornamented with pearls, the drum itself is steel and produces a variety of tones determined by the hand position when struck. The drum can be set into a stand that is adorned with four wooden legs, a head, and a tail, making the fixture resemble a glistening tortoise. Once per day, this drum can be used to summon a celestial spirit which takes the form of a giant tortoise capable of carrying up to four medium-sized creatures on its back. The tortoise remains for eight hours after it has been summoned, or until it takes damage.

◆ DULCIMER OF GROWTH - 3,000 GP (RARE)

This wooden stringed instrument is inlaid with green gemstones that twinkle with light, especially in full daylight. The wood is engraved with foliage motifs that spiral around in concentric circles. It was created by the woodland gnomes, but resizes to fit its player. The dulcimer allows the character playing it to cast spells of growth, including ones that enlarge their allies, cause grasping plants to grow around their enemies, or cause plants to sprout allowing them to ascend sheer climbs. Each time a growth spell is cast, the instrument shrinks a little, until it becomes unplayable. If bathed in full sunshine, the dulcimer grows back to its normal size, a process that takes several hours.

◆ FLUTE OF FLIGHT - 300 GP (UNCOMMON)

This thin metal tube is marked with holes for the fingers and mouth. Small etchings of windswept clouds can be made out along its surface. The flute is always cold and plays melodies of its own when held in a strong wind. A character can use the flute, once per day, to allow themselves and four allies to fly at a speed equal to their walking speed. The flight can last no longer than one hour, and the flautist must continue to play for the entire duration, or the spell ends early.

◆ HAMMERTONE LUTE - 650 GP (RARE)

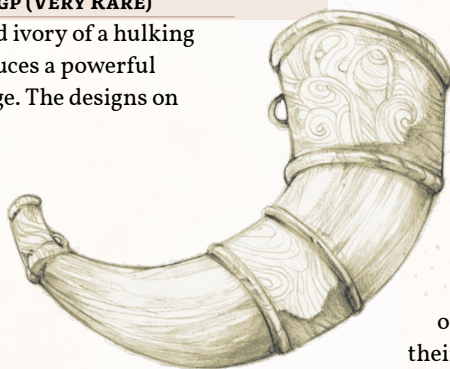
This battered oak lute is reinforced with thick bands of iron around the body, neck, and head. The strings are made of steel. As well as being a perfectly delightful musical instrument, the lute can be used as a greatclub provided the wielder is proficient. On each strike, the lute emits a harmonious chord. When a bard hits a creature with a melee weapon attack using the lute, they can expend one spell slot to deal thunder damage to the target, in addition to the lute's damage. The extra damage is 2d8 for a 1st-level spell slot, plus 1d8 for each spell level higher than first, to a maximum of 5d8.

◆ **CHROMATIC LYRE - 500 GP (RARE)**

This lyre and accompanying pick are made from crystal, though are unusually resilient for such a typically fragile material. Each chord strummed on the instrument causes the crystal to glow with a different pattern of chromatic light. When played, the lyre emits bright light in a 30-foot radius, and dim light for an additional 30 feet. In addition, the lyre can be used to cast the spells Chromatic Orb and Hypnotic Pattern once per day each.

◆ **HORN OF PLENTY - 5,000 GP (VERY RARE)**

Made from the scrimshawed ivory of a hulking mastodon, this olifant produces a powerful timbre and remarkable range. The designs on its surface depict a panoply of beasts, elk, deer, eagle, goose, boar, cattle, and dozens of others. The horn smells faintly of roasted meat and vegetables. The horn has two command tunes, each of which can be played once per day. After playing the tune, the horn must be tilted. The first tune causes five pints of fine mead to pour forth from the horn. The second tune causes roasted meats and vegetables to fall out of the horn - the equivalent of five rations.



MINOR MAGIC ITEMS



Every shop needs some enchanted trinkets tucked into the back of a drawer, or displayed with pride on the counter. No matter the shop, it's likely that they will have come into possession of some minor magical items that adventurers might like to buy and at which locals love to marvel. These items do not possess world-shaping powers, but a charm that is irresistible to the right buyer.

Here are some minor magical items for your players to discover on their journeys. If you are in need of inspiration to create your own unusual item ideas, consider the *Dungeon Discoveries* card decks to draw endless random creative prompts.

◆ **TINY ENCHANTED COPPER RING**

This ring is barely large enough to fit on your smallest finger, though as you attempt to wear it, it resizes to fit. The arrow-etched ring must have belonged to some far smaller creature before you discovered it. Wearing the ring

gives you a bonus to ranged attacks using a shortbow, and allows you to fire up to twice the weapon's usual range. The ring belonged to *Grubby the Goblin*, a keenly accurate archer who took delight in testing his skills whenever possible. That is until one fateful day when Grubby's ring slipped from his finger, causing him miss the bear that was charging towards him.

◆ **LONGHORN SERRATED DAGGER**

The elven druids of Longhorn Wood swore centuries ago never to wield or wear metal. Their ancestors fought tooth and nail against greedy dwarves who sought to build voracious mines within their borders. This battle lasted for decades until the dwarves were pushed back to their mountain halls. The Longhorn elves still remain in the forest, living in harmony with nature they fought to protect. These elves continue to make weapons and armor from fallen trees. The curved daggers are six inches in length and serrated. Despite being made of wood, they are deadly sharp. Painted upon their surfaces are beautiful vines and foliage.

◆ **FINE IVORY POCKET HOURGLASS**

This ivory hourglass is enchanted with magical wings that allow it to hover beside its user while they measure the time. The ivory has been worked into swirling motifs that twist around the glass bulbs, delicately forming an outer shell. The hourglass is small enough to fit in a jacket pocket. Once per day, its owner can use the hourglass to cast a spell allowing them to travel at extraordinary speed.

◆ **STAR-STREWN TIN CHALICE**

Any liquid poured into this tin goblet immediately takes on the appearance of a clear night sky. The chalice was created for an astronomer who wished to track the stars even during the day and made a pact with a genie for his wish to be true. The item is simple in construction - a tin goblet with stars, moons, and celestial bodies engraved into its exterior.

◆ **SUNLIGHT-ABSORBING HEADBAND**

This obsidian headband features a grotesque, sickly glowing eye. Created by a tribe of orcs called the Nightcleavers, shamans would perform rituals to blot out the sun right before a raid. The war chief of the tribe ordered for a headband to be made with the same power: to suck all sunlight from the surrounding area, putting fear into the hearts of their enemies and gaining the upper hand in combat.





CHAPTER 3

PLAYER OPERATED STORES



PLAYER OPERATED STORES

THE PROSPECT OF WEALTH

Running a shop is a welcome distraction for many adventurers who are tired of endless goblin-cleaving. During the early days of one's adventuring life, parties typically scour dank dungeons and rid the world of evil. At higher levels, characters may begin to gain an interest in pursuing other goals and investing their hard-earned gold into something more tangible, perhaps a long-term plan for security. For your players, operating their own store can be an incredibly fun activity that can sprout many new roleplaying opportunities and quests. It is a fantastic way to let your players and characters utilize skills that don't get spotlighted in a typical action-heavy game session, such as social interactions, local politics, regional affairs, or gaining renown.

There are endless reasons why a character might be enticed by the prospect of starting their own business. Perhaps the adventurers have become owners of a building as a reward from the king and are left wondering what to do with it. A familiar NPC might ask your players to watch over her emporium as she leaves to attend an important matter, suddenly putting the characters in the middle of running a commercial enterprise. Or, characters may have amassed a wealth of valuable and curious treasure during their adventuring life and wish to turn it into a profit.

ROLEPLAYING A PLAYER OPERATED STORE

When one of your players has expressed the desire to run their own store, it can be a challenge for the GM to make it a practical reality in your game. Some groups like to keep it a simple affair, using downtime to let their players manage their store and see if they make a profit. Success is measured simply by a few lucky die rolls. If you like to add more depth and fun, this chapter provides an optional framework to turn building and operating a store into a more meaningful and long-form roleplaying experience in your world. This in-depth approach makes planning, building, and operating a store, part of your game's narrative that lets your characters add any relevant skill or ability bonus to increase the chances of success.

The following phases will help you guide the players in their ambitions, each involving their own costs, lead times, and roleplaying opportunities.

Planning – First, you need to determine the kind of store you'd like to own. Once you've got an idea for this, you also need to decide how big you want your store to be.

Building – Second, the construction of a shop must be paid for. This can take place over the course of several months or with one up-front payment. Depending on the location of your store, the cost of construction might change. Various quests and events may occur during the building process.

Operating – Finally, you will need to outfit the store with staff and goods, which are encompassed under **Operating Costs**. Once this process is complete, you're ready to start making a profit.



FROM BUILDING TO PROFIT

During the Planning and Building phases, the players choose the type of building, staff, and wares to hire and use, and the GM notes down the cost. At the end of each month of operation, the players will make a d20 roll, called the *Profit Roll*, to see if they've been successful. The *Profit Roll* is modified by various factors, such as relevant character skill bonuses and the quality of staff and goods. The result of this role indicates the percentage of profit the store makes, based on the original buildings cost. For example, if the result is 24, the store makes 24% of the building costs in gross profit. After this, the characters must pay for their staff and goods, taking anything leftover for themselves.

PLANNING PHASE

The first step in owning a store is deciding what store you'd like to create. Are you going to start a general goods store, sourcing local produce? Are you going to open a specialized weapon smithy that caters to high-end clientele? Many times, the decision to start a certain shop is born out of passion and the ability to capitalize on demand. The possibilities are endless.

There are no requirements for opening a specific kind of store. If the adventurers have the gold to build one, they can, although when it comes to making a profit, it helps when your character has a certain skill with that type of ware. If you and your group prefer the simplified process, the GM simply takes the gold and lets you know when the store is ready for business. In the detailed approach outlined in this chapter, the building process takes up to several months and can result in a range of exciting sidequests, setbacks, lucky breaks, varying costs, and more.

Example: A character with the blacksmith background wishes to build a smithy. Having various relevant skills, the GM can allow the character to add these bonuses to the dice roll to determine success and profits. However, a character with no knowledge of smithing can buy the same store, provided they hire enough skilled workers to keep it in operation. Thus, all stores are available to all characters.



TYPICAL STORE TYPES

The following table provides an idea of the building cost of different establishments. These are typical, and can change based on the chosen location and players' preferences (see later in this chapter). The buying cost of an establishment is considered to be the same as the building costs, although the location of a store can influence the price.

Store (Typical)	Building Costs
Alchemist	10,000 gp
Artificer	8,000 gp
Baker	5,000 gp
Barber	6,000 gp
Blacksmith	8,000 gp
Brewery	5,000 gp
Butcher	4,000 gp
Carpenter	5,000 gp
Cobbler	5,000 gp
Enchanter	15,000 gp
Fletcher	6,000 gp
General Store	5,000 gp
Grocer	4,000 gp
Healer	7,000 gp
Herbalist	5,000 gp
Jeweler	12,000 gp
Library	15,000 gp
Stables	8,000 gp
Tailor	6,000 gp
Tavern	10,000 gp

SIZE MATTERS!

Once you have settled on the type of store you want to build, you must choose its size. Shop sizes can range from Tiny to Huge. The bigger the store, the higher the initial building cost, but also a greater potential for profit. Bigger shops also have higher monthly *Operating Costs* to pay for staff and goods. In this fashion, a huge store with top quality goods at a prime location can have a tremendous chance for high profits, but only after an equally hefty initial investment.

The store size table shows the potential store sizes and how the size of the store changes the building costs. See the next page for some ideas on store types, sizes, and their building cost.

Store Size	Store Examples	Building Cost Modifier
Tiny	Carts, wagons, market stalls	Minus 25%
Small	Single room stores, individual workshops	Minus 10%
Medium	House-sized stores, several market stalls, traveling caravans	Neutral
Large	Multi-room workshops and stores	Plus 10%
Huge	Multi-floored workshops and stores, chains of small stores, fleets of merchant caravans	Plus 25%

Example: Let's open a small General Store called *Bits & Bobs*, the total construction would cost us 4,500 gp. (5,000 gp for a general store, minus 10% (500 gp) for a small size, for a total of 4,500 gp). If we disregard Location as an influencing factor on cost and profit, we can move on to the Building phase.

STORE LOCATION

Bilz Fizzlenozzle, a great gnome proprietor, once said: "The most important thing in business is 'location, location, location!'" Indeed, a shop's location can have a significant impact on its expected type of business, clientele, and frequency of business. Is the shop tucked away in a bustling city district, or placed prominently on the main street? Some shops are found in the wilderness, erected deep in a fetid swamp or clinging precariously to a mountainside. Some shops are found in places even stranger...

In addition to the size of your store, its location can have an impact on the initial building cost as well as its chances for turning a profit. Provided you can afford a desirable location, it can make a big difference in both appeal and success. Throughout history, rivers, trade routes, ports, cities, and other key locations have played a crucial role in driving economies, innovation, and migration.

The following tables provide examples of ways in which the location of a store might impact the *Building Costs*.

These localities and influencing factors are entirely optional and can be ignored for the sake of simplicity. Location may not always be a choice. For example, you may acquire a piece of land in a local village as a reward and are left to decide to capitalize on it or not.

Locality	Building Cost/Profit Modifier
Rural	Minus 25%
Village or Town	Neutral
City	Plus 25%
Metropolis	Plus 40%

In addition, there can be more influential factors such as political sentiments, theological or racial dispositions, geographical features, or more, that affect the cost and potential commercial success of a store.

Influencing Factor	Building Cost/Profit Modifier
Diverse Population	Plus 10%
Famous Site	Plus 15%
Local Resources	Building minus 5%, profit plus 5%
Poor Area	Minus 15%
Port/Harbor	Building minus 10%, profit plus 10%
Prosperous Area	Plus 15%
River	Building minus 5%, profit plus 5%
Stronghold	Plus 10%
Trade Route	Plus 5%
War Zone	Minus 20%



Diverse Population. A diverse population means that more of your goods are likely to be bought. When a business is built in a place with a wide range of clientele, they are more likely to find buyers for their range of stock.

Famous Site. If you manage to bag a hot site for your business next to a popular or famous place, the increased customer presence will help you sell much more than you otherwise might. Such famous sites include majestic temples, awe-inspiring rock formations, and the skeletons of dead monstrosities.

Local Resources. One major cost of a business is finding and transporting resources to make the product you intend to sell. If you're a blacksmith and you set up right next door to an iron mine, you significantly decrease the costs of your enterprise.

Poor Area. Unfortunately, poor folks don't have as much to spend. The cost of setting up shop or buying a business in poor areas is lower, but the likelihood of you making much profit also decreases.

Port. Hubs of trade and wealth, ports supply businesses with easier access to the base materials they might require and often come with cheap labor to boot. Because of this, buying property port-side is more expensive, but the chances are you'll make it back quickly.

Rich Area. Wealthy districts are typically booming with commerce. Businesses in rich areas tend to flourish, however, land prices, taxes, and other factors here cost much more than they otherwise would.

River. Similar to a port, a river provides access to goods that would otherwise be difficult to transport. For example, if a carpenter can't build close to woodland, the next best thing is to build downstream from one.

Stronghold. Death is never far away. A nearby stronghold means that folks are typically safer from marauding orcs and the devastating raids of *Hrangah Tribes*. Because of this safety, the property is more expensive, but there are more clientele around to make up for it.

Trade Route. Building on a trade route is similar to building on a river. You have easier access to goods passing along the route, meaning you're better able to make a profit.

War Zone. When armies clash, there is always fallout. Economically, war is superb and terrible. For those waging war, the profits can be excellent as the armies steal from enemy lands. For those trapped in these zones, wealth quickly diminishes and property prices fall.

TOTAL BUILDING COST

Now that you have chosen your store type, size, and location, you can adjust for the final *Building Costs*. It is important to take note of this number as you will need it later to determine the profits and losses of your shop.

Let's return to the example of Bits & Bobs, our small general store. The Building Costs of Bits & Bobs was 4,500 gp for a Small General Store. We've decided to set up shop in a poor district of a metropolis. This changes the Building Costs of Bits & Bobs to 5,750 gp (building in a metropolis costs adds 40%, 2000 gp. Building in a poor area reduces the cost by 15%, 750 gp. The value and modifiers: $5,000 - 500 + 2,000 - 750$ brings us to 5,750 gp).

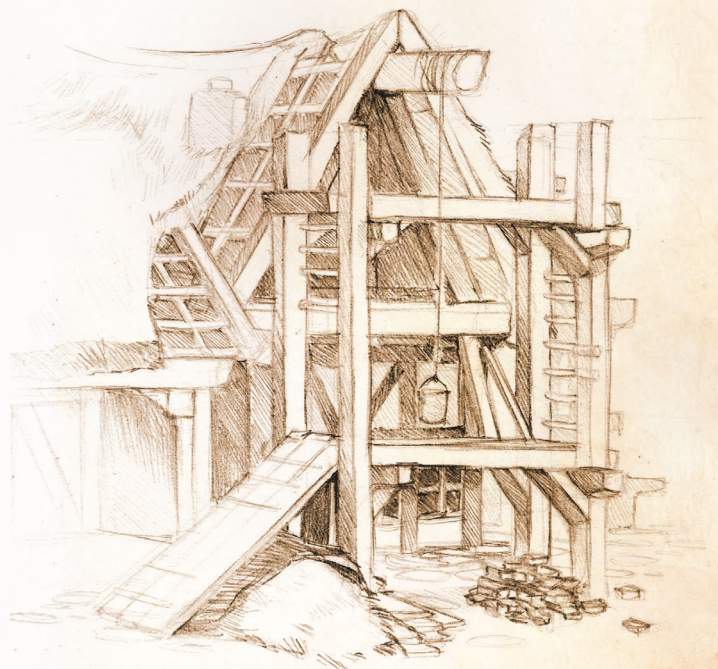
BUILDING PHASE



Once all of the planning is finished, building can start immediately.

Players have a choice to pay the total sum upfront and skip roleplaying the building process, or pay in monthly installments. The latter option offers a great roleplaying experience that interweaves into the narrative of the campaign and adds a risk/reward factor that potentially lowers building costs.

Unless the player chooses to pay the entire sum up front, the GM rolls on the *Building Events* table for every month of construction. The results have a positive or negative effect on building time or costs. Building always takes a minimum of one month and progresses at monthly intervals per 1,000 gp of *Building Costs*. For example, Bits & Bobs has *Building Costs* of 5,175 gp. This means it takes 6 months to build. We can either pay the 5,175 upfront and take no risk, or spread the cost over the months and see what happens.



CONSTRUCTION EVENTS

Every month during the building phase, the GM rolls on the table below. The table contains events that happen between payments. These events might cause one-off reductions, increased costs, or change the time it takes to build the store. The effects lists can always be mitigated by your actions if the GM allows.

d12	Building Event	Effect
1	The forest gnomes supplying you with timber were attacked by a hydra, and are demanding compensation.	Characters must pay a 100 gp fee.
2	A nasty disease spreads through the workforce, forcing them to take an extended rest to recover.	Building time increased by one month.
3	A spiteful warlock curses the nearby stone, causing it to be brittle and chalky. You are forced to import from further afield.	Characters must pay a 250 gp fee.
4	The building site has to be evacuated for a period as an undead horde swarm across the place.	Building time increased by 2 months.
5	A black dragon moves into the area, causing the ground around to become swampy. Additional foundations must be built.	Characters must pay a 500 gp fee.
6	A dark constellation comes into alignment, causing half the workforce to become temporarily mad and undo the work they had done in the days before.	Building time increased by 3 months.
7	A recent dragon attack has flattened a nearby forest, giving you a wealth of free lumber.	Building costs reduced by 100 gp.
8	There has been an influx of local workers from a war-torn country, giving you extra pairs of hands.	Building time reduced by one month.
9	Local dwarven mining operations accidentally caused an enormous landslide, unearthing raw diamonds.	Building costs reduced by 250 gp.

10	A pair of gnomish engineers let you test their construction equipment.	Building time reduced by two months.
11	A nearby ogre encampment is destroyed by heroes and the resources are shared with the local community.	Building costs reduced by 500 gp.
12	A local wizard takes pity on the tired workers by giving them assistance with a levitate spell.	Building time reduced by three months.

OPERATING YOUR STORE

The construction is finished. The furnishings are finally in place. That convenient portal that links the first and second floors finally stopped doing that thing where it randomly detours unlucky customers to the *Plane of Endless Torment*. The wares are pristine and arranged exactly as they should be. Outside, the waiting throng of curious onlookers suddenly seems as daunting as an army of slaving fiends. Taking a deep breath, you approach the doors, preparing to welcome in the growing crowd for the grand opening.

Even now that the store is finished and ready to open, making a profit does not magically happen. A lot of factors influence how successful a store is going to be. The quality of goods on offer and the expertise and friendliness of the hired staff will have a big impact. Each store should have, at minimum, one skilled staff member, so that the establishment can run itself with no input from the characters. This allows them to go off adventuring, only returning from time to time to reap the rewards of a (hopefully) successful business. However, if the characters desire, they can help out at the store, hopefully boosting its chance of success. See *Working at the store yourself*.

STAFF, GOODS & OPERATING COSTS

When the construction of the shop is finished, it's time to get it running. Stores require staff and goods to be bought and sold. For the purposes of running a business, we combine these into a general *Staff/Goods Quality*. The higher the quality of the goods and staff in your store, the higher the *Operating Costs*, which are paid at the end of each month. However, having higher quality staff and goods also means you are more likely to sell and make a profit, so they add a modifier to your *Profit Roll* at the end of each month.

The tables below show the levels of staff and goods quality, the **Profit Roll** modifier they confer, and the amount it costs each month to maintain that quality. These tables are broken up by shop size because bigger shops require more staff and goods.

TINY STORES

Staff/Goods Quality	Profit Roll Modifier	Operating Costs (per month)
Poor	-3	1 gp
Normal	+0	5 gp
High	+3	10 gp

SMALL STORES

Staff/Goods Quality	Profit Roll Modifier	Operating Costs (per month)
Poor	-4	10 gp
Normal	+0	25 gp
High	+4	50 gp

MEDIUM STORES

Staff/Goods Quality	Profit Roll Modifier	Operating Costs (per month)
Poor	-5	50 gp
Normal	+0	100 gp
High	+5	250 gp

LARGE STORES

Staff/Goods Quality	Profit Roll Modifier	Operating Costs (per month)
Poor	-6	250 gp
Normal	+0	500 gp
High	+6	750 gp

HUGE STORES

Staff/Goods Quality	Profit Roll Modifier	Operating Costs (per month)
Poor	-5	750 gp
Normal	+0	1,000 gp
High	+7	2,000 gp

Example: Bits & Bobs decides they want a high Staff/Goods Quality. Because Bits & Bobs is a small store, we must pay 50 gp a month in Operating Costs to pay staff and buy stock.

WORKING AT THE STORE YOURSELF

At the end of each month, you roll to determine your profit. If any of the characters have spent downtime days working at the store, roll a d10 and add this number of days to the **Profit Roll** result. Days spent working at the store positively affect your chances to profit. Characters can also add any relevant skill they have to the **Profit Roll**, such as proficiency with smith's tools if running a smithy.

MAKING A PROFIT

Once the store is open, you can begin reaping the rewards of your investment. The way that you earn money from the store is simple. At the end of each month of operation, you make a **Profit Roll**. This roll is modified by factors that are explained below. The result of this roll equals a percentage of the **Building Costs** that you receive from your business. You simply need to deduct the **Operating Costs** from this total to work out how much gold ends up in your purse! If you want this to be more interesting, you can roll on the **Operating Events** table to see if anything helps or hinders the store that month. Each event has a modifier to the Profit Roll.

OPERATING EVENTS

If the GM wants to make owning a store a better roleplaying opportunity, they can use **Operating Events** to come up with something that impacts the running of the store during the month. Each of these events has an effect on the **Profit Roll** if they are allowed to occur, but the effects can be mitigated by the actions of the characters.

d20	Operating Event	Profit Roll Modifier
1	Business Rival. A rival business opens up just across the street and begins to steal customers from your own store.	-3
2	Crime. A crime occurs in the store. This could be arson, burglary, or even murder.	-5
3	Earthquake. A catastrophic earthquake damages or levels the store.	-5
4	Extra Taxes. The greedy authorities sting you with harsh taxation on your sales.	-1
5	Fire or Flood. Depending upon location or store type, fire or flood damages the building or even destroys it.	-3
6	Health & Safety. The authorities crack down on your staff for being a little sloppy with their activities.	-1

- | | | |
|----|---|----|
| 7 | Monster Attack. A hideous monster attacks the store, destroying goods, harming customers and staff, and causing damage to the building. | -5 |
| 8 | Resource Shortage. For an unknown reason, one of the resources your shop needs to operate dries up. | -1 |
| 9 | Riot. A riot in the nearby city spills out into the streets. Angry mobs of civilians loot shops and smash windows and doors. | -3 |
| 10 | Strike. The staff is unhappy, either with their pay for the month, the quality of the store, or some other reason. | -1 |
| 11 | Angel Investor. A vastly wealthy merchant, perhaps a creature from another plane, makes an investment in your store to help you out. | +5 |
| 12 | Boosted Morale. The morale of the staff is boosted, improving their performance. Perhaps they were motivated by you, a celebrity shopper, or a festival. | +1 |
| 13 | Divine Blessings. A deity blessed your business or staff, leading to an increased chance of profit. It might be a deity of wealth, luck, or industry, or the patron of a party member. | +5 |
| 14 | Hidden Treasure. You or a staff member come across some treasure, either during a quest or in a shipment of resources, that can be sold for a high price. | +3 |
| 15 | Increased Supplies. The local miners, woodcutters, hunters, etc. have had a good season, and have produced a larger than usual shipment of goods. | +1 |
| 16 | Masterpiece. You or one of your staff members creates an absolute masterpiece, the likes of which have not been seen before. The work sells for an enormous price. | +5 |
| 17 | New Fashion. A new fashion spread across the realm. Thankfully, it's a style your store can capitalize on. You start producing the new fashion quickly, increasing profits. | +1 |
| 18 | Rival Closure. A rival business or trader nearby is forced to close their store (perhaps because of a catastrophe). Their customers now shop with you. | +3 |

- | | | |
|----|---|----|
| 19 | Tax Break. The beneficent rulers of the realm decide to lift the taxes on your business for one reason or another. | +1 |
| 20 | Wealthy Clients. Your store becomes popular with the nobility thanks to good marketing. These clients are far wealthier than your usual patrons. | +3 |

THE PROFIT ROLL

To determine if your shop has done well in business or not, you make a **Profit Roll** (d20) at the end of each month and note the resulting number. Next, add your **Staff/Goods** modifier to the roll. If a character has used their downtime to work in the shop, divide the number of days they worked by 10 (rounding down), and add this as a bonus to the **Profit Roll**. Additionally, if the character has any relevant skill modifier, add this to the roll as well. If you're using **Operating Events**, make sure to add or subtract the bonus from the event.

The final result equals a percentage of the **Building Costs** (determined in the planning and building of your store). The final modified number is the total amount of revenue your business has made.

Example: We spent 10 days working at Bits & Bobs, our small, general store, built in a poor district of a city, stocking high-quality staff and goods. We also have a +3 Bartering skill. At the end of our first month of operation, we roll a d20 and get a 12. We add our Staff/Goods Modifier (+5 for High Quality), the number of days worked (10 divided by 10 is +1), and our relevant skills (+3 Bartering). The total of the Profit Roll for that month is 21 (+9 overall). The Building Costs of Bits & Bobs was 5,750 gp. The modified Profit Roll of 21 equals 21% of 5,750 = 1,207 gp (rounded down to the nearest gold piece). This means that Bits & Bobs made 1,207 gp that month.

DEDUCTING YOUR OPERATING COSTS

Revenue made does not equal profit. To determine your actual profit result, deduct your monthly **Operating Costs** to pay staff, bills, taxes, maintaining your building, and so on.



Example: Bits & Bobs have Operating Costs of 50 gp per month (for High Staff/Goods Quality). Once deducted from the result of the Profit Roll, this means the store makes 1,157 gp.

TAKING LOSSES

If you roll a natural 1 on your d20 *Profit Roll*, you make a loss no matter your modifiers. Continue to work out the percentage as usual, but instead of making that much money, your store loses that much instead. For example, if Bits & Bobs rolled a natural 1 on the *Profit Roll*, our final, adjusted roll would be 10 (+9 from *Staff/Goods Quality*, downtime work, and relevant skills in the previous paragraph).

Example: This means that Bits & Bobs loses money equal to 10% of our *Building Costs* (which is 5,750 gp). This month, Bits & Bobs loses 575 gp (rounded down to the nearest gold piece). Additionally, we must pay the *Operating Costs* (50 gp for High Staff/Goods Quality), so the total loss is 625 gp.

This same logic applies for negative results on the *Profit Roll*. If, because of *Operating Events* or *Poor Staff/Goods Quality*, the result of the *Profit Roll* falls below 0, it becomes negative and therefore represents a loss of money by the store. For example, if a store's adjusted *Profit Roll* is -2, they lose gold equal to 2% of the store's *Building Costs*.

If for whatever reason, you can't pay these losses, the GM has the final say in what happens. Perhaps you're able to take out a business loan from some shady faction, get pardoned by local law enforcement for your services to the realm, or the store has to pay off its debts in the following months. If the store consistently loses money and can't pay its debts, maybe the town guards capture and sell it, or demolishes the place for building materials.

MAKING MORE MONEY

Making more money is an ambition of many, but comes at the risk of potentially bigger losses. The best ways to improve the chance of higher profits at a store is by spending more time there in person, training in relevant skills, and improving the *Staff/Goods Quality*. Over time, businesses might also expand, open second locations, or improve in other ways that boost traffic or income. Reward your players that take exceptional efforts to make their store a success, by potentially generating more profit.

MAKING STORE IMPROVEMENTS

Characters may wish to improve their shop in a million different ways. They might want to buy magical anvils instead of mundane ones, purchase wyvern hide instead

of cow, brew with water from holy springs, or even simply increase the size of their store. As a general rule, making improvements such as these come at a cost. This cost should be determined by the GM, but must be at least 100 gp to make an impact on income. For every 100 gp or more invested into the store, increase the *Building Costs* by the same amount. As explained earlier, the *Profit Roll* at the end of each month relies on the *Building Costs* to determine the amount of profit, so higher *Building Costs* mean any profits made will be larger.

SUCCESS OR FAILURE

With so many factors for the players and GM to take into account, either mechanically or narratively, the story of running a shop becomes a series of successes, failures, benefits, and challenges. A business enjoying considerable success can experience not just monetary compensation, but also any of the added benefits of popularity, influence, and access that a similar NPC-owned business does.

On the other side of the coin is the risk of failure. Overwhelming costs and mismanaged crises can send a shop's supply, customer base, popularity, and other factors plunging into the dirt. Stores along the entire sliding scale of accomplishment face different types of challenges, with bankruptcy the ultimate end of the journey.

FAILING IN BUSINESS

For any number of reasons, a store could be unsuccessful. The most common reasons being diminishing profits and increasing losses. If the dwindling success has a different reason, it's encouraged that the GM has woven this into the campaign's narrative in a plausible manner. This offers the player plenty of opportunity and time in advance to try and get his business to flourish. If for any reason the business fails, for example when it continues to cost more than it earns, a player may decide to close doors, or the local authorities may deliver a letter that demands foreclosure.

A failing store may leave a player in a worse spot financially than when they started. Perhaps with one more shattered dream, or perhaps a little wiser. The failure of a player operated store opens up plenty of roleplaying opportunities.

CREATING YOUR OWN SHOP

The adventurers in your party have been tasked with great quests; defeating ancient demons from the underworld, reclaiming lost castles from hordes of beastmen, even destroying the phylactery of a lich! This is all well and good, but all adventurers, no matter their level or the quest, need equipment. You can't make a trek without boots or kill an orc without a weapon (most of the time). Creating a shop helps you give the adventurers what they need in your own interesting and remarkable way.

This section of the book includes everything you need to create your own unique shop, including themes, locations, staff, and memorable features. You can pick and choose from the various tables, or roll for a random result.

Once you've finished generating the shop, find a unique name for the establishment and place it in the path of your adventurers for their next shopping trip.

The tables list a range of suggested business types, products and services to sell, as well as structure, appearance and locations. Lastly, there's an appendix full of inspiration to create your own remarkable shopkeeper and staff.

STRUCTURE & LOCATION

Use the following tables to roll (or choose) what materials your building is made of and where it is located. Naturally, you are not bound to the ideas presented here. In fact, some of the most memorable stores in existence are those with an unusual twist, appearance, or location.

d10	Building material	Location
1	Wooden logs	Forest, swamp, tundra
2	Lime mortar	Desert, savanna
3	Wattle & daub	Small town, hovel
4	Snow, ice	Mountains, arctic
5	Baked bricks	City, large towns
6	Hewn bricks	City, canyons
7	Marble, granite	Mountains, underground
8	Sandstone	City, oasis, riverside
9	Glass	Towns, city, metropolis
10	Crystal	Magical, planar

UNUSUAL LOCATIONS

While not every store needs to be a spectacle, a particularly unique location for a store can become a talking point that attracts customers and inspires songs and tales. A renowned library in the depths of the sea is the stuff of legends. Populate your world with amazing destinations, and your players will surely visit them on their next stop in the area.

d10	Unusual locations
1	Treetops: Built on tree branches hidden by the canopy.
2	Mountainside: For customers with the dedication for the climb.
3	Oasis: In a desert location or Fata Morgana.
4	Underground: In a cave, dungeon, or burrow.
5	Skies: On an airship or a giant balloon, built on a cloud or a floating island.
6	Underwater: In an air-filled bubble, freely floating with currents, built on the seafloor.
7	Planar vortex: In the unstable crossroads of alien dimensions.
8	Between moments: Accessible only when the passage of time is halted.
9	Dreamlands: Reachable only when dreaming.
10	Netherworld: In the realm of the dead, access requires (temporary) death.



FANTASY BUSINESS

What is bought and sold out of your storefront? The following table contains a list of suggested business types and the products they sell, from pikes to poultices. There's always room for a bit of crime, as well; a store owner with flexible morals might partake in one or more of the suggested side businesses, utilizing their shop and skills to sell illicit goods or products useful to criminal elements.

Note that the following table can also be found in the *Remarkable Wares* section.

d20	Business	Goods	Potential side businesses
1	Alchemist	Potions, powders, salves, other alchemical items	Forbidden items related to necromancy, demonology, and the black arts
2	Antiquarian, librarian	Old books, scrolls, letters of famous persons	Lost pages of dangerous grimoires, spell scrolls, treasure maps
3	Armorer	Suits and pieces of armor, shields, horse barding	Used pieces of armor with a few scratches or dents, but otherwise servicable
4	Artificer	Mechanical constructions, clockwork machinery, music boxes, toys	Lockpicks, thieves' tools
5	Bakery	Bread, pastries, confectionery	Confectionery augmented with illicit substances
6	Butcher	Meat, carcasses, broths	Livestock trade, hunting
7	Enchanter	Enchantments, divination, curse removal, magic identification	Curses, control spells, illicit magic
8	Fletcher	Bow making, arrows, bolts	Special arrows, archery training
9	General store	Rations, adventuring gear, miscellaneous equipment	Low-grade goods sold as genuine merchandise
10	Adventuring gear	Adventuring gear, travel and camping equipment	Second-hand items such as climbing gear from less fortunate adventurers
11	Healer, apothecary	Herbs, healing, cures, antidotes	Poisons, venoms, surgery
12	Herbalist	Herbs, spices, potions, cures, antitoxins	Drugs, venoms, poisons, cure minor ails
13	Jeweler	Valuables bought, sold, identified, appraised	Stolen valuables bought and sold
14	Magic shop	Spell components, magic items, wands, spell books	Cursed items, excavated dangerous artifacts, fake items for careless buyers
15	Pawnbroker	Valuables, used items of various types	Stolen or illicit goods
16	Mounts, animals	Domestic and exotic animals, pets, mounts	Imps, demonic familiars, eggs or larvae of unknown creatures
17	Stable, couriers, messengers	Transportation, riding, animal care equipment	Covert operations, escort caravans, horse training, farrier
18	Tailor, clothier	Clothing, accessories	Disguises, cheap imitations of expensive wear
19	Weaponsmith	Blades, axes, polearms	Garrotes, poison daggers, cursed weaponry
20	Wheeler shop	Construction work, wagon wheels, repairs	Underworld contracts, political affairs

MILIEU

The location of the shop has a major effect on what kind of wares and services the establishment is able to offer and what kind of customers it can attract. The table below gives typical examples, but exceptional results can be the most interesting – especially if you come up with a good explanation for the strangeness.

d10	Milieu	Example shop
1	Wilderness	A trapper who also sells wilderness gear as a side business in his cabin.
2	Borderlands	A tiny hut located by a keep, selling rations and travel gear.
3	Roadside	A stable swapping tired horses for well-rested steeds.
4	Trade routes	A booth selling refreshments, local maps, and replacement equipment.
5	Countryside	A merchant's tent, open only during festivals and market days.
6	Tiny hamlet	The hamlet's only shop, selling everything needed by the community.
7	Small village	A modest shop selling everyday goods, like tools or basic clothing.
8	Mid-sized town	A hardware store selling all manner of general tools and equipment.
9	Large city	A musical instrument maker crafting stringed instruments.
10	Metropolis	An alchemist selling the results of his esoteric experiments.



CITY DISTRICTS

For urban businesses, the district where the shop is located has a big impact on the opportunities and challenges of running a business. The following table lists some typical tactics that shops in various districts often adopt to be able to operate successfully.

d10	District	Activity	Wares & Services
1	Slum	Destitute customers, plenty of crime.	Poor quality wares and limited availability.
2	Harbor or roadside	Exotic goods and lively hustle and bustle of traders.	Wares from all over the world, warehouses, tax office.
3	Residential neighborhood	Everyday customers and playing kids, loose animals.	Common goods, bakeries, butchers, clothier.
4	Artisan quarters	Performers of all kinds show their talent, intoxicated crowd.	Portrait painting, fortune telling, toys, delicious food.
5	Market	Vibrant activity with visitors of all walks of life, pickpockets.	Food and other local produce, trinkets, crafts.
6	Commercial district	Plenty of customers, expensive rent.	Plenty of competition, the shop must have a specialty.
7	Midtown	High profile customers.	Stylish shops with discrete operations.
8	Administrative area	Plenty of official business, tax offices.	Couriers, money changers, notary, scribe.
9	Wealthy enclave	Highest-quality goods at even higher prices, high profile premises.	Well-guarded shop, most security measures are invisible, not everyone is welcome.
10	Outskirts	People arriving at or leaving the settlement.	Stocks "last chance" type equipment, sells maps & guidance.

ALTERNATIVE SHOP TYPES

d10	Shop Types	Description
1	Traveling merchant	Travelers carrying the goods their back.
2	Roadside blanket	A temporary point of sale.
3	Wagon	A traveling merchant with a wagonload of goods.
5	Cart	A pushcart with a shop sign and a loud merchant.
5	Stall	A temporary market stall that is opened for market days.
6	Clandestine establishment	A shop hidden from view in a back alley.
7	Basement operation	A cheap, partly underground business.
8	Street-level shop	Easily accessible, advertises to passers by.
9	Emporium	A separate building with multiple floors.
10	Chain store	Multiple locations in the same city or nearby cities.

SHOP NAME

Roll a random shop name when you need it, or pick and choose to create something to fit your world. You can consider combining entries from both random tables into a single, elaborate store name. For example: *The Last Noble, Quality Clothing*. If you are struggling to come up with fresh shop ideas to break the mold, these tables can help spark your imagination.



d20 Shop Name Generator

1	The Golden	Tome
2	The Horned	Sun
3	The Singing	Dragon
4	The Last	Noble
5	The Blazing	Mare
6	The Radiant	Flame
7	The Ghostly	King
8	The Towering	Ox
9	The Warrior's	Rest
10	The Gallant	Knight
11	The Moonlight	Minstrel
12	The Smiling	Queen
13	The One	Jester
14	The Three	Sisters
15	The Dancing	Blades
16	The Five	Elements
17	The Traveling	Maiden
18	The Shining	Star
19	The Crescent	Moon
20	The Howling	Wolf

d20	Beginning	Middle	End
1	Arcane	Articles	Agency
2	Bargain	Bric-a-brac	Auction
3	Brand New	Commodities	Bazaar
4	Custom	Curio	Boutique
5	Discount	Gimmick	Broker
6	Exotic	Goods	Depot
7	Expert	Equipment	Emporium
8	Finest	Items	Exchange
9	First-rate	Memento	Fair
10	Fresh	Novelties	House
11	Import	Oddities	Market
12	Latest	Paraphernalia	Palace
13	Original	Clothing	Plaza
14	Quality	Secrets	Purveyor
15	Secondhand	Service	Shop
16	Specialty	Weapons	Showroom
17	State-of-the-Art	Treasures	Store
18	Trusted	Trinket	Trade
19	Wholesale	Wares	Vendor
20	Worthy	Produce	Warehouse

DECORATING YOUR SHOP

To make each shop visit exciting and unique, use some of the ideas presented in this section to create a memorable look and atmosphere for your shop. Typically, players remember only a few clearly defined characteristics, so one or two can work wonders.

ATMOSPHERE

d10	Soundscape	Smell
1	Sounds are muffled	Putrid smell
2	Liquid splashing	Pungent tang
3	Chattering voices	Musty odor
4	Tiny footsteps	Dust in the air
5	Rattle in the walls	Fresh ink smell
6	Almost inaudible hum	Burned grease
7	Clanging tools	Spicy food aroma
8	Distant music	Floral scent
9	Sharp, loud echoes	Ethereal aroma
10	Otherworldly sounds	Metallic taste in the air

SHOP CONDITION

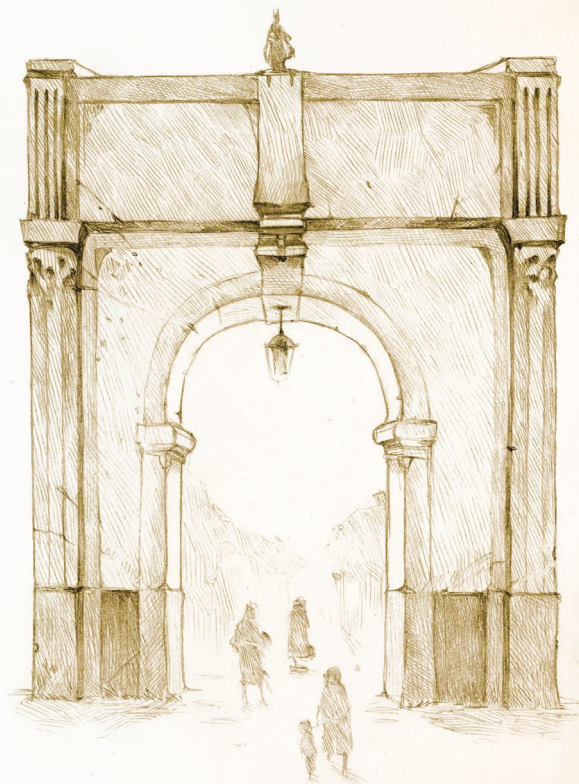
d10	Business success
1	The business has dried up, shop closure is imminent.
2	At this rate, the shop will not stay in business for long.
3	The shopkeeper has taken a big loan to be able to continue.
4	The shop needs to resort to discounts to attract customers.
5	Some months are profitable, some aren't.
6	A bunch of regular customers helps to keep the shop afloat.
7	The shop can sustain the owner's family, but not much else.
8	The number of customers is growing and profits are increasing.
9	The business is good and the prices are high.
10	The business has been a major success and made the owner rich.

d10 Personnel present on premises

- 1 The shop is deserted (for example due to forgetfulness or an emergency).
- 2 The shop appears deserted but is under surveillance.
- 3 A lone shopkeeper is present.
- 4 Shopkeeper with one or more assistants.
- 5 A married couple working as shopkeepers.
- 6 The shop is co-owned by several shopkeepers.
- 7 Several assistants, but the shopkeeper is away.
- 8 A lone assistant without the shopkeeper.
- 9 Shopkeeper with a supernatural creature (for example homunculus, golem, automaton, or genie).
- 10 A supernatural creature (like a ghost or a spirit) oversees the shop alone.

d10 Furnishings

- 1 **Filthy:** grimy, garbage-filled environment.
- 2 **Shabby:** broken-down furnishings in a ramshackle room.
- 3 **Bohemian:** messy and littered, mish-mash style.



- 4 **Industrial:** crude interiors with a warehouse look
- 5 **Functional:** decorated with what works, no attention paid to looks.
- 6 **Traditional:** typical, clichéd decorations for the line of business.
- 7 **Cosy:** home-like decoration and atmosphere.
- 8 **Minimalist:** only the essential decor, plenty of empty space.
- 9 **Antique:** outdated furnishings from past generations.
- 10 **Flashy:** bright and shiny colors, attention-grabbing details.

d10 Shop Additions

- 1 **Display:** glass windows may be rare, but shops may use open windows or even their walls to display their inventory.
- 2 **Cart:** a cart filled with goods in front of the establishment is a good way to attract customers (and thieves).
- 3 **Crier:** a loud person (possibly armed with a bell), delivering personalized sales pitches to potential customers.
- 4 **Barker:** an aggressive marketer drawing people into the store, maybe even with a bit of force, "just for their own good".
- 5 **Free samples:** small doses of consumable goods can be tested.
- 6 **Exhibition:** display cases for rare items and exotic curiosities.
- 7 **Extra services:** niceties that make shopping more convenient (cloakroom, playpen for children, etc.).
- 8 **Home delivery:** a courier for delivering bought goods at a suitable time.
- 9 **Shopping assistant:** an appointment can be reserved with a specialist on duty, helping to make just the right choice.
- 10 **Events:** every now and then the shop arranges events (like fashion shows, workshops, etc.).

MEMORABLE FEATURES

What will make your store truly memorable? Even a single, carefully chosen feature can set it apart and become welded in the minds of your players.

Use the following table to discover 100 memorable features for your shop.

d100 Memorable features

- 1 The shop is filled with flowers and greenery of every kind.
- 2 Inside the store, it is always night, regardless of the time.
- 3 Beneath the store lie tunnels that span across the town. The shopkeeper offers anyone passage, for a price.
- 4 Every item in the store screams for your attention upon entry.
- 5 You see that inside the store, the ceiling ascends into the heavens; on every floor a host beckons you in.
- 6 Music can be heard playing inside your head. The same tune you notice the shopkeeper whistles.
- 7 Two guards stand either side of a plant in the store, it is sealed in a bell jar. The flower seems to follow your movements about the room.
- 8 Three swords are hung in the armory. The shopkeeper tells you the swords ensnare those whose skin it pierces.
- 9 A gaunt, eyeless man wanders the aisles. He walks as though he can see and he tells you that he was once a king.
- 10 Out the back door, you notice the tangled boughs of a great tree. The shopkeeper tells you it's his personal garden in a pocket-realm.
- 11 When you look at the scimitar hung high on the wall, you swear you can see a child looking out. Her mouth locked in the agonized shape of a violent (but silent) scream.
- 12 Everything except for the shopkeeper and items is transparent, it appears as though the walls are but air, and the wares are afloat.
- 13 Every day at noon, the shopkeeper performs a play (in the hopes to advertise their store). They cast you as the talking bag of manure.
- 14 A lattice of metal bars separates the customers from the merchandise.
- 15 Whenever you enter the tailor's, you notice that all the robes take on the look of whatever you are wearing.
- 16 All the staff talk in a garbled form of common tongue. (If you listen closely, they are speaking backwards.)
- 17 Cocoons of blood-red sacks hang from the ceiling. Inside them, you see humanoid shapes moving and pressing against the skin. Each one of them drips a blue liquid from a hole into a chalice beneath it, and below each chalice reads: '*Essence of Life*'.
- 18 The shopkeeper has several pets in the store.
- 19 There is a door in the shop that transports you anywhere and any place, for a price.

- 20 The shopkeeper's private collection of trinkets is on display.
- 21 There's a mirror that reveals to you what you desire most in the store.
- 22 The walls are covered in paintings of the shopkeeper; he will attempt to sell them to you whenever you enter.
- 23 All you can hear are screams and the sounds of something being stabbed, but everyone in the store ignores it.
- 24 The local baron has a donation pot placed in the shop's front; if you don't donate, the pot begins to scream.
- 25 It is freezing inside the store. Apparently, a disgruntled witch cast a curse.
- 26 Horses used to pull the wagons are stored inside the shop: the shopkeeper hates to see them in the cold stable.
- 27 A bewitched gnome will follow you around asking repeatedly if you need any help selecting anything. They will not leave.
- 28 You walk into the store to see only a chest, a piece of parchment, and a quill in the center. The parchment reads: 'Write what you need. Not what you want.'
- 29 The store has items all in disorder. The books are cast in steel, axes forged from parchment, jewels cooked like bread.
- 30 No one can stay as long as two minutes in the store, on account of the sun beating in relentlessly.
- 31 Granted life from a spilled elixir, a group of weeds runs the local apothecary.
- 32 Whenever you pick up an item, the shopkeeper will begin to sweat profusely and he will try not to meet your gaze.
- 33 You open the door to see a dwarf sat in the corner facing the wall. He shouts for you to take what you like, and leave the money on the side.
- 34 If you go to grab an item and it disappears, you needn't worry, it's just the wraiths playing tricks.
- 35 The store has attendants with shackles around their wrists and ankles. The shopkeeper assures that they are thieves and killers.
- 36 You enter the store with a sign on the wall reading only: "Quiet." A baby dragon sleeps in a basket on the wall, with a frail and frightened old man beside it.
- 37 Because of the shop's unfortunate placement, time is bent and misshapen. If you enter only to leave two weeks earlier, don't be alarmed.
- 38 Whenever you enter, the magician who concocts the potions, will try to pinch a bit of your hair.
- 39 Half of the store is in another dimension. The shopkeeper often has to enter the other side prepared with weapons and armor. He always comes back exhausted and covered in blue liquid.
- 40 The shop has sunken into the bog around it, you have to sail through the aisles to get what you need.
- 41 There are duplicates of every item. The shopkeeper is a mischievous old trickster and will not tell you which is the real one. (If you pick the wrong one, you could pay dearly).
- 42 A ghost floats in every five minutes, shocking unsuspecting visitors.
- 43 Stones often rain within the store. No wonder the attendants wear their helmets inside.
- 44 In the center of the shop, a hole (that leads to the center of the world the shopkeeper assures) is surrounded by a one-brick-high wall. When you walk past, you hear the screams of whomever you love dearest.
- 45 The general store has a 'Grow Your Own Food' section out back. It seems the whole town is growing their own barley, wheat, fruit and veg.
- 46 A witch sits in the corner watching your every move. You see her lips move furtively with what you imagine to be small, malicious incantations.
- 47 The store is rested on the back of a giant. The shopkeeper insists you strap yourself into the torso-braces dangling from the ceiling.
- 48 A spirit, known by some as *The Collector*, will follow you around insisting that he positively must have your garments.
- 49 Whatever you need, crows will bring them to you, before you even tell the shopkeeper.
- 50 Some of the merchandise is hanging from lines of rope crisscrossing the room.
- 51 The floors have been coated in a permanent grease. You will slip if you walk too fast, and stick if you walk too slow.
- 52 You hear the roar of waves crashing on the beach whenever you're inside the shop.
- 53 The local magician, *Michel Foko*, tries to sell you 'Souls in a Shell.' He claims that a voice inside will tell you what you desire most and where to find it.
- 54 The store hangs in the air after a tragic accident involving a warlock, some chickens, and a dimensional rift.
- 55 If you purchase anything from the store, it will gain consciousness and claim you as its god.
- 56 The shop is lit with rows and rows of candles on the tops of the shelves.
- 57 You come across a store made entirely out of metal, and inside, they sell every kind of wood you know.

- 58 Shelves move on their own accord. It is often hard for even the shopkeeper to know what wares they have.
- 59 While inside the store, everyone swaps bodies. It is a confusing affair.
- 60 If you wish to buy an item, you must court it. Often, a well written sonnet will do the trick.
- 61 There is no floor in this store. The paranoid shopkeeper instead decided to have everything resting on stilts or hanging from the ceiling.
- 62 Whenever you pay for your items, a group of minstrels barges out from a trap door to sing your praises.
- 63 The store is run entirely by children.
- 64 All manner of animals roam through the shop. Some like to be petted, some not so much.
- 65 Floating balls of light that talk with the voices of men seem to occupy the store.
- 66 A giant stone blocks a room in the back. Every now and then it is moved, men go in, and come out with sacks wet with blood.
- 67 Merchants from all over the realm come and sell their wares in the local store.
- 68 The shelves routinely empty themselves on the floor.
- 69 A small cloud pours rain as the shopkeeper follows you around the store.
- 70 The shopkeeper claims to be able to predict the future and will always offer his service for a price.
- 71 Each piece of parchment used for spells is said to have been made from human skin.
- 72 Energies unknown to mortals flow through the shop. Everyone is terrified to enter, and yet, once inside, they find it hard to leave.
- 73 Old (possibly illegal) artifacts are sold beneath the counter. Some belong to outlawed mages, and tyrannical, bloodthirsty warlocks.
- 74 There is a lonesome man who often haunts the aisles of the store, but if you ask the shopkeeper about him, he will deny its existence.
- 75 Flakes of gold seem to flutter about the shop.
- 76 A parliament of owls hoot whenever you move about the room.
- 77 The store sits upon a cavern. There is a thriving community beneath.
- 78 The shopkeeper sings so beautifully that one might consider never leaving.
- 79 If you stand too long in one place, the shopkeeper warns, you may sink into the ground.
- 80 Beggars often come into the shop and ask you to buy things for them.
- 81 The shop is full of taxidermied people.
- 82 A fox with a sack on its back handles the deliveries of the store.
- 83 There is a giant stained-glass display behind the shopkeeper. It depicts a running man, wearing feathered-boots and a feathered-helmet.
- 84 An old merchant accompanies you around the store, detailing the history of everything in there.
- 85 A dog stands on its hind legs and barks at you as you enter. A man explains to you that the dog is the new shopkeeper. His father left the estate to the dog, and not to him.
- 86 Whenever anyone buys anything the sound of smashing glass echoes through the shop.
- 87 The shopkeeper speaks to himself.
- 88 The walls of the shop enclose around you until you purchase something.
- 89 Everyone inside the store speaks in riddles.
- 90 When you look through the windows of the store, the world is in flames.
- 91 You notice the merchants and sellers all speak in some sort of code.
- 92 The shop is run by a group of deranged cultists who believe that helping the community will bring about *The Great Schism*.
- 93 A reptilian race previously thought dead live beneath the foundations of the store.
- 94 The previous *Archmage of the Magicea Collegium* now runs the store. He will tell stories of his scholarly exploits whenever you purchase anything.
- 95 Loan sharks hang about the store hoping for someone to want an item they cannot afford.
- 96 The deposed king of the southlands hides in the store. He often donates items from his reign to pay for lodging.
- 97 A green fluid drips from the ceiling. No one asks any questions.
- 98 The shopkeeper often mistakes you for an illusion and not a real person.
- 99 A stench so foul that your eyes water wafts through the floorboards every time you enter.
- 100 Vines hang from the walls and can be seen tapping on visitors of the store when they're not looking.

APPENDIX 1: CREATING CUSTOM STAFF

No two shops are alike, no matter how similar their selection of wares. Charm, presentation, or great customer service are valuable tools that make a shop

successful, but the shop's staff are what give it a true personality and make it memorable at the table. Personalities, uniforms, odd habits, all of these things can stick in the memory long after coins and goods change hands. When your heroes enter through a shop's doors, they are eager to know what they find inside. The following tables will help you quickly set the scene, in addition to hundreds of ideas for creating interesting shopkeepers and staff members.

THE SHOPKEEPER

APPEARANCE

Creating interesting and varied NPCs on the spot is challenging. The following tables will help you spark ideas to always have a unique character ready, complete with appearance, mannerisms, traits, secrets, and more.

d20 General likeness

- 1 Disproportionate body, unpleasant face
- 2 Scarred, burned, or otherwise damaged features
- 3 Obese, rotund mountain of flesh
- 4 Big-boned body with a sharp, angular face
- 5 Narrow face, rat-like demeanor
- 6 Wide face with a bulbous nose
- 7 Bulbous eyes, bad skin
- 8 Deep-set eyes in a fleshy face
- 9 Crooked face with a wry smile
- 10 Bland-looking person without distinctive marks
- 11 Soft, plump babyface
- 12 Rough, rugged looks

- 13 Narrow face with a sharp nose
- 14 Thin and frail body, spidery limbs
- 15 Thoughtful face with a high forehead
- 16 Bony face with high cheekbones
- 17 Round, friendly face with an easy smile
- 18 Angular jaw and full lips, healthy looks
- 19 Strong-jawed, muscular body
- 20 Charmer with natural good looks

APPAREL

A shopkeeper's outfit can be a first giveaway as to the nature of the character, or their current situation.

d20 Attire and adornments

- 1 **Filthy:** dirt-spattered, messy clothes
- 2 **Worn out:** frayed, holes, ripped seams
- 3 **Modest:** unremarkable attire with no adornments
- 4 **Outdated:** old-fashioned apparel from an earlier time period
- 5 **Eccentric:** a curious combination of unmatching clothes
- 6 **Rebel:** aggressive style, such as a member of a criminal gang
- 7 **Dark:** mainly black and other dark shades
- 8 **Muted:** subdued colors, simple patterns
- 9 **Comfortable:** simple, loose, soft clothes
- 10 **Casual:** non-remarkable, ordinary clothing
- 11 **Light:** mainly white and other light shades
- 12 **Exotic:** clothing from a foreign culture
- 13 **Arty:** style with free-spirited, individual expression
- 14 **Ornate:** lavish, baroque decorations
- 15 **Gaudy:** loud, excessive, tasteless
- 16 **Showy:** clothes that stand out with colorful details
- 17 **Flashy:** attention-grabbing garments, plenty of jewelry
- 18 **Sophisticated:** simple but stylish quality clothing
- 19 **Fashionable:** chic attire after the latest trends
- 20 **Luxurious:** first-class materials, excessive attention to finish



MANNERISM

You can use certain mannerisms to make the character more recognizable. Immediately noticeable quirks like these work best if only some NPCs have them.

d20 Shopkeeper's mannerism

- 1 **Odious habits:** openly spits on the floor, belches, or farts.
- 2 **Speech disorder:** stutters, lisps, or mispronounces words.
- 3 **Interrupter:** talks over others without letting them finish.
- 4 **Howler:** laughs loudly and often without apparent reason.
- 5 **Loud:** can be heard from far away.
- 6 **Unclear speaker:** speaks quietly, mumbles or slurs words.
- 7 **Irritating routine:** constantly sniffs, sighs, hums, smacks lips, or clears throat.
- 8 **Nailbiter:** bites or tears their fingernails or the skin around them.
- 9 **Pointer:** points or taps their finger at others.
- 10 **Close talker:** does not give others enough personal space.
- 11 **Shy observer:** avoids eye contact or constantly flutters their eyelids.
- 12 **Answers with questions:** not one to give direct answers.
- 13 **Slow communicator:** speaks slowly or pauses a lot.
- 14 **Heavy breather:** deep breather through nose or mouth.
- 15 **Enunciator:** pronounces every word carefully.
- 16 **Nibbler:** continuously chews or eats something.
- 17 **Finger gymnast:** constantly flexes their fingers.
- 18 **Fidgeter:** constantly toys with objects.
- 19 **Groomer:** compulsively runs fingers through their hair or scratches themselves.
- 20 **Gesticulator:** gestures wildly when talking.

PERSONALITY

In addition to specific mannerisms, the shopkeeper could have a unique personality that determines interactions with this character. A particular personality is a fantastic way to drive roleplaying and social interactions.

d20 Shopkeeper's personality

- 1 **Deceptive:** willing to make a quick coin even if it requires lying or forgery.
- 2 **Tyrant:** sees themselves as a dignitary who others must treat accordingly.
- 3 **Insecure:** does not want to take any risks.
- 4 **Possessive:** finds it difficult to give up their best merchandise.
- 5 **Confrontational:** even imaginary insults cannot be tolerated.
- 6 **Forgetful:** keeps forgetting deals, promises, and appointments.
- 7 **Disorganized:** keeps losing track of their wares, deliveries, and finances.
- 8 **Paranoid:** suspects that others are conspiring against them.
- 9 **Irritable:** is easily annoyed even by insignificant matters.
- 10 **Tongue-tied:** barely speaks at all.
- 11 **Moody:** their mood changes unpredictably.
- 12 **Joker:** cannot resist telling puns or bad jokes.
- 13 **Enthusiast:** eagerly follows any new fads and stocks accordingly.
- 14 **Overachiever:** everything in the shop must be just perfect.
- 15 **Innovator:** wants to find new ways of doing business.
- 16 **Guru:** a quirky expert with obscure knowledge and strange habits.
- 17 **Trusting:** believes others to be trustworthy by default.
- 18 **Sleuth:** sees every customer's needs as a conundrum that needs to be solved.
- 19 **Pillar of community:** practices charity to help the less fortunate.
- 20 **Saint:** unselfishly helps others even when it harms their own wellbeing.



BACKGROUND

A great way to add life and interest to an NPC is to provide them with a background story. Perhaps one of the most wealthy merchants in the city has a past of poverty and crime. Or the local librarian is a former priest of a dark brotherhood. These backstories can provide great starting points for quests and social roleplaying.

d10 Shopkeeper's previous life

- 1 **Pariah:** is of a generally despised ethnicity, nationality, religion, social class, or has some other scorned background.
- 2 **Prisoner:** when freed, came upon some money and set up the shop, but has little knowledge of how to run a legal business.
- 3 **Gambler:** won the business in a game of chance, makes amateur mistakes.
- 4 **Religious fanatic:** does not trade with infidels - at least not honestly.
- 5 **Failed student:** did not find academic success, but has contacts in scholarly circles.
- 6 **Prospector:** managed to make enough money to set up a shop, takes nothing for granted.
- 7 **Innkeeper:** knows plenty of local rumors and travelers' tales.
- 8 **Entertainer:** knows how to attract customers and market their wares.
- 9 **Hobbyist:** turned their passion into business, may have unrealistic goals.
- 10 **Inheritor:** inherited the family business that they have been familiar with since childhood.
- 11 **Self-made entrepreneur:** remembers their modest origins and is willing to help others with similar backgrounds.
- 12 **Military:** has served as a soldier and still knows how to defend themselves and their trade.
- 13 **Bounty hunter:** extremely knowledgeable of the underworld and hunts wanted criminals.
- 14 **Traveling merchant:** used to travel around the countryside, still has good regional contacts.
- 15 **Foreigner:** may not be familiar with all local customs and regulations.
- 16 **Mariner:** has sailed far and wide, knows some exotic wares and customs.
- 17 **Artisan:** plenty of practical experience, but little theoretical knowledge.

- 18 **Scholar:** has expert knowledge on a very specific topic, but little practical skills.

- 19 **Adventurer:** likes to reminisce about their exploits, may have some useful information.

- 20 **Exiled noble:** had to restart their life from scratch, has high-ranking connections to their homeland.

d20 Shopkeeper life motivations

- 1 **Greed:** the shop is a good way to get rich quick.
- 2 **Revenge:** the business will provide means to avenge an injustice.
- 3 **Shame:** a previous failure still haunts the owner, this enterprise cannot fail.
- 4 **Regret:** they did not utilize a previous opportunity, this is a second chance.
- 5 **Guilt:** their loved ones have sacrificed a lot for the shop.
- 6 **Survival:** failure would mean that everything was lost.
- 7 **Debt:** they must make enough to be able to pay a debt.
- 8 **Security:** the business will be a nest egg in coming hardships.
- 9 **Peer pressure:** friends or relatives have successful businesses.
- 10 **Acceptance:** making the shop into a success proves their worth.
- 11 **Fame:** with a successful shop, everyone will know their name.
- 12 **Redemption:** compensate for an earlier failure.
- 13 **Honor:** they must uphold the tradition.
- 14 **Sense of responsibility:** someone must take care of the shop.
- 15 **Being the best:** wants to achieve the market leader position in their trade.
- 16 **Curiosity:** will they be able to make the shop into a success?
- 17 **Creativity:** express themselves by creating a unique establishment.
- 18 **Creating order out of chaos:** the shop is something the people can trust.
- 19 **Love:** keeping the shop running is a silent way of showing affection.
- 20 **Community:** the shop must help people to achieve a better life.

SECRETS

d20 Mundane secret

- 1 **Serial killer:** has purposefully killed multiple persons and is addicted to the thrill of the kill.
- 2 **Murderer:** has killed someone either purposefully or by accident, cannot get over their guilt or memories.
- 3 **Abuser:** mistreats their own family, children, or animals, but upholds a righteous facade.
- 4 **Shady dealer:** sells stolen or otherwise illicit goods under the counter.
- 5 **Partner in crime:** runs a legal business that also benefits criminals. For example, selling tools of the trade for known felons.
- 6 **Smuggler:** some of the merchandise has been illicitly imported with no taxes or import fees paid.
- 7 **Drug addict:** uses an addictive substance that they simply must acquire in order to stay functional.
- 8 **Unstable:** has mental problems that are getting worse, such as hallucinations or irrational fears.
- 9 **Snitch:** acts as a clandestine informant either for the criminal underworld or the law enforcement.
- 10 **Double life:** leads two different lives, perhaps with different families unaware of the existence of the other.
- 11 **Illegitimate offspring:** has an unacknowledged child that they still feel responsible for – but no one must know!
- 12 **Blackmailed:** has been coerced to commit crimes, or something bad would happen to their reputation, business, or loved ones.
- 13 **Innocent convict:** took the blame and punishment for a serious crime that a loved one committed.
- 14 **False identity:** is on the run, hiding from an organization that has threatened their life, family, or business.
- 15 **Secret flame:** is deeply in love with someone who they can never acknowledge (like a friend's spouse, a relative, or a despised person).
- 16 **Embarrassing pastime:** has a hobby that they don't want to reveal to others. For example: collecting toys, crossdressing, or playing games of imagination.
- 17 **Secret society member:** is a member of a secretive organization that seems to have benevolent goals to improve society.

- 18 **Former adventurer:** nowadays keeps a low profile, but knows the tricks of adventuring life from personal experience. Has some surprising contacts.

- 19 **Covertly rich:** has managed to acquire a fortune that they keep well hidden. Still, the risk of being robbed is a cause of constant stress.

- 20 **Secret benefactor:** helps the community anonymously (for example by leaving unsigned gifts for the needy).

d20 Unusual secret

- 1 **Undead:** the cadaver of a dead person cursed to continue their mortal existence in a decaying body. The smell of blood may trigger uncontrollable ferocity.
- 2 **Lycanthrope:** full moon (or some other condition) turns the person into a bloodthirsty beast. May not be fully aware of their bestial memories.
- 3 **Changeling:** a fairy or other humanoid creature in (demi-)human form. May have a telling clue of their true origin (such as a small tail or strange eyes).
- 4 **Polymorphed:** a monster, animal, plant, or object, magically turned into a (demi-)human. May still demonstrate some traits of their original form.
- 5 **Possessed:** an evil spirit (or several) dominates their body. Averse to holy symbols. Subject to seizures and blasphemous actions.
- 6 **Mind controlled:** remotely observed and controlled by a villain with magical or psionic abilities.
- 7 **Clone:** a doppelgänger who has taken the place of the original person.
- 8 **Cursed:** has been jinxed (for example to be unable of being totally honest, telling a lie, or being happy).
- 9 **Enemy agent:** secretly works for an enemy nation or a villainous organization, gathering information, recruiting members, or sabotaging resources.
- 10 **Cultist:** is a member of a religious cult that has nefarious aims.
- 11 **Parasite host:** carries an aggressive parasitic life form inside them.
- 12 **Plague carrier:** immune to a disease that they carry, but spreads to people with whom they come into contact.

- 13 **Conspirator:** is part of a major conspiracy.
- 14 **Resurrected:** brought back from the dead by a miracle. This experience may have deeply changed their worldviews.
- 15 **Protector of evil:** for their own reasons, protects a great evil from being uncovered.
- 16 **Villains' relative:** is a blood relative of a notable evildoer. May not agree with their wicked plans, but feels obligated to help.
- 17 **Reformed criminal:** has a long history of serious crimes, but now tries to live as a law-abiding citizen.
- 18 **Crime fighter:** secretly operates as a masked avenger fighting crime in the community.
- 19 **Strange powers:** has developed minor supernatural powers (like mind reading or telekinesis), but has not dared to tell anyone about them.
- 20 **Supernatural sentinel:** sent by a supernatural being (such as a demon or a deity) to oversee the local population in secret.

TECHNIQUE

Shopkeepers can use various sales techniques to turn browsers into customers. Combining the merchant's favorite sales technique with other details of their character can create great role-playing opportunities.

d20 Sales technique

- 1 **Crook:** may sell faulty or used merchandise as new.
- 2 **Liar:** willing to tell outright lies just to get the sale.
- 3 **Misrepresents:** does not technically lie, but gives an untruthfully positive impression of the merchandise.
- 4 **Bait & switcher:** advertises an excellent deal, which just happens to be sold out - but here's a much better alternative, with just a bit higher price tag.
- 5 **Badmouther:** spreads false rumors about competitors and their wares.
- 6 **Fearmonger:** presents any alternatives as risky choices that can cause untold harm for the careless buyer.
- 7 **Pressurizer:** sets a special price or bonus that is only valid for an immediate purchase.

- 8 **Conditioner:** willing to sell at a lower price if the buyer agrees to extra conditions (like a subscription service or a loan arrangement).
- 9 **Benefactor:** presents themselves as an altruistic dogooder giving a unique deal just this once - 'only for you, my friend'.
- 10 **User:** as it happens, the merchant uses a similar item and can vouch for its value.
- 11 **Upseller:** increases the total price by offering a more expensive variant, extra accessories or options.
- 12 **Cross-seller:** tries to sell other related items to supplement the purchase.
- 13 **Extravagant:** paints an exclusive, luxury image about the merchandise to justify the price.
- 14 **Price matcher:** promises to refund the difference if similar merchandise is available for a cheaper price somewhere else in town - but there may be conditions.
- 15 **Haggler:** enjoys slowly haggling the price down with each customer - initial prices are purposefully high.
- 16 **Loss-leader:** even willing to sell an item at a loss if the customer purchases expensive accessories.
- 17 **Price slasher:** willing to sell the merchandise seemingly at big discounts to make the sale.
- 18 **Expert:** wants to impress the customer with their personal knowledge that the customer cannot hope to match.
- 19 **Educator:** lectures the customer about the benefits of the merchandise and how to best utilize it.
- 20 **Problem solver:** inquires about all the customer's needs, then eagerly suggests multiple alternative options.

STORE ASSISTANTS

Assistants are shop staff who help the shopkeeper to run their business. They may be relatives working for free, apprentices who dream that someday they will be running the shop, hired help, or even slaves.



STAFF ROLE

d20 Assistant type

- 1 **Bully:** wants to achieve recognition by making others feel miserable.
- 2 **Disputant:** enjoys conflict and actively tries to challenge others.
- 3 **Abused:** a submissive employee who has been treated badly. Afraid of making the slightest error.
- 4 **Greenhorn:** a fresh trainee. Does not know much about anything.
- 5 **Idler:** always willing to find new ways to avoid working.
- 6 **Apathetic:** just working here, does not care much about anything.
- 7 **Cynic:** has seen a lot, and is not impressed by anything any more.
- 8 **Bootlicker:** tries to benefit by flattering their superiors.
- 9 **Optimizer:** wants to achieve satisfactory results with the minimum amount of work.
- 10 **Creative:** Tries to find new methods for anything just for the sake of change.
- 11 **Consultant:** eager to advise others, but not so keen on working themselves.
- 12 **Careerist:** desperately wants to prove themselves to gain a promotion.
- 13 **Star:** has some knowledge on the trade and expects to be treated as a luminary for it.
- 14 **Savant:** a bright person who does not want to shine. Prefers doing things brilliantly on their own, but not sharing their ideas.
- 15 **Expert:** a skillful specialist who believes they would have earned a promotion already a long time ago.
- 16 **Senior:** an elderly person, possibly the former shopkeeper. Knows a lot about the history of the trade, but may be bitter about the younger generation.
- 17 **Idealist:** a naive enthusiast who believes that their actions can make a difference.
- 18 **Intermediator:** acts as a neutral buffer between conflicting parties.
- 19 **Kind soul:** a genuinely kind person who wants to help each customer to find the best solution for their needs.
- 20 **Caregiver:** looks after the shop and the staff as if they were family.

STAFF TASK

What's the staff doing when the adventurers enter the store? Select from mundane or unusual activities based on the shop and the situation.

d20 Assistants' mundane activities

- 1 Discreetly stealing from the inventory.
- 2 Taking a nap.
- 3 Hiding to avoid work.
- 4 Idling (resting, chatting, daydreaming)
- 5 Reorganizing the stock.
- 6 Unloading a new shipment.
- 7 Stocking the store.
- 8 Serving (or waiting for) a customer.
- 9 Handling a customer complaint.
- 10 Cleaning the premises.
- 11 Studying a new product.
- 12 Removing old stock.
- 13 Adjusting prices
- 14 Looking for misplaced merchandise.
- 15 Inventorying the stock.
- 16 Preparing a new order.
- 17 Doing paperwork required by the authorities.
- 18 Counting the cash.
- 19 Adjusting an alarm device.
- 20 Beating up a shoplifter.

d20 Assistants' unusual activities

- 1 Tied up in the backroom after a robbery.
- 2 Roughed up by criminals demanding 'protection' money.
- 3 Planning an 'inside job' crime (like hiding valuable merchandise).
- 4 Setting up a fire to avenge bad treatment.
- 5 Slowly shape changing as a victim of a curse.
- 6 Accidentally locked in a storeroom.
- 7 Cleaning up the remains of a wrecked shop.
- 8 Trying to repair water damage caused by a leaking roof or window.
- 9 Trying to smuggle a bed roll and a pillow into a storage room.

- 10 Desperately trying to find an error in bookkeeping.
- 11 Running after an escaped shoplifter.
- 12 Chasing a rampaging animal.
- 13 Climbing up to a top shelf to recover a seldom needed article.
- 14 Fixing defective merchandise to look pristine.
- 15 Remodeling the shop to adopt a new look, needs ideas.
- 16 Trying to convince the owner to support their idea.
- 17 Testing new anti-theft measures (like snares) on themselves.
- 18 Testing a new marketing ploy (like paid membership) on random customers.
- 19 Casting a protection or surveillance spell.
- 20 Studying a mysteriously appeared interdimensional gateway.

STAFF ATTITUDE

Create realism and variety in how the staff of the shop act towards the adventurers entering the establishment. Perhaps, while the shopkeeper is a kindhearted man, his assistants are dishonest and go behind his back.

d10 Assistants' attitude

- 1 **Dishonest:** tries to charge extra.
- 2 **Rude:** no respect for customers.
- 3 **Cold:** keeps customer contact at a minimum.
- 4 **Calculating:** aims for maximum benefit.
- 5 **Distant:** withdrawn and remote.
- 6 **Eccentric:** has some strange habits.
- 7 **Talkative:** the friendly chatting just goes on and on.
- 8 **Polite:** always uses kind and well-mannered.
- 9 **Helpful:** actively offers their help to customers.
- 10 **Friendly:** gives useful advice that is meant to do more than just drive business.

STORE CUSTOMERS

To truly bring the store to life, you can describe certain NPC customers that are out and about, perusing the various goods on display. From commoners and shoplifters to wealthy merchants trying to haggle down a prized item, a fantastical store is a wonderful place to introduce new characters to your world.

CUSTOMER TYPE

To help paint NPCs in broad strokes that don't demand a lot of detail, here are several ideas for common customer types. As always, these concepts are just to get you started. It can be fun to subvert expectations, such as a shoplifter turning out to be the rogue child of a famous local aristocrat.

d20 Customer type

- 1 **Shoplifter:** attempting to get a 100 % discount.
- 2 **Troublemaker:** aggressive type who is looking for trouble.
- 3 **Haggler:** refuses to pay full price, requests discounts for imaginative reasons.
- 4 **Nitpicker:** impossible to please, always finds some fault in the merchandise.
- 5 **Nuisance:** does not intend to buy anything, but wants to twiddle anything on display.
- 6 **Inquirer:** wants to know every possible detail before making their decision.
- 7 **Creep:** a strange, asocial person that tends to make other people nervous.
- 8 **Bargain hunter:** a price-conscious buyer after the deepest price cuts.
- 9 **Browser:** rarely buys anything, but spends a lot of time comparing products and asking questions.
- 10 **Indecisive:** endlessly compares products but cannot make up their mind.
- 11 **Price encyclopedia:** knows exactly what similar goods cost at competitors' stores.
- 12 **Comedian:** funny remarks and witty banter galore, or so they imagine.
- 13 **Snob:** has a very specific taste and substitutes just won't do.
- 14 **Know-it-all:** thinks they understand the merchandise better than the staff. Enjoys making difficult questions, and answering them.
- 15 **Budgeteer:** has a strict budget for the transaction, tries to stretch every penny.
- 16 **Busybee:** knows what they want, does not waste time for anything else.
- 17 **Priority customer:** demands special treatment (like to be served before everyone else), wants special discounts or flexible payment options.
- 18 **Regular:** an almost everyday visitor who feels right at home.

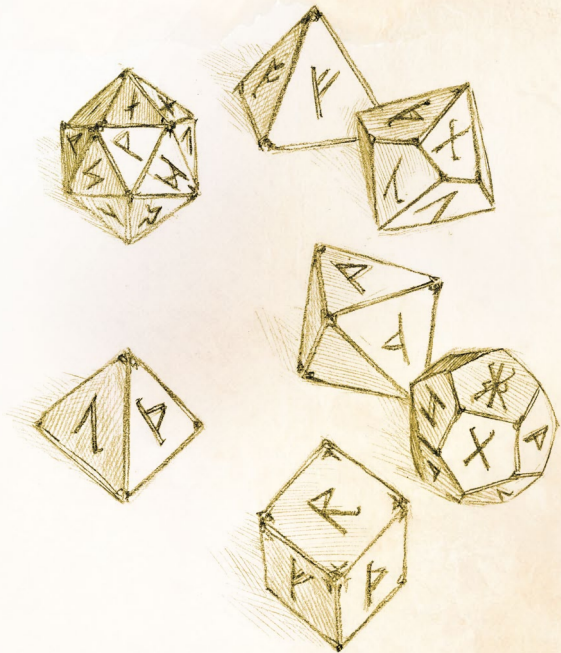
- 19 **Collector:** buys out of habit more than for actual need. Needs to have complete sets and to acquire all possible variations.
- 20 **Big spender:** does not care about costs, wants to make sure that everyone notices their prosperity. Expects to be treated royally.

QUIRKY TWISTS

Providing your broadly envisioned NPCs with a memorable feature can help them stand out from the crowd and be recognized by your players. Listed are (somewhat quirky) ideas to make your NPCs unique:

d20 Customer's quirky feature

- 1 **Under the influence:** drunk or otherwise intoxicated.
- 2 **Disabled:** a physical handicap causes difficulties with movement, talking, seeing, or hearing. Assistance may be required.
- 3 **Insane:** delusions, paranoia, phobia, or other type of mental issues.
- 4 **Infiltrator:** hired by a competitor or a criminal mob to investigate the shop.
- 5 **Language barrier:** speaks the local language only on a basic level. Limited vocabulary and cultural differences cause misunderstandings.
- 6 **Senile:** keeps forgetting important details, stops mid-sentence to rethink their statement.
- 7 **Overstressed:** under too much pressure. May explode for the smallest reason.
- 8 **Compulsive liar:** prone to telling constant lies, even though they produce no benefit.
- 9 **Potty mouth:** uses vulgar language out of habit, which often gets them in trouble.
- 10 **Last-minute shopper:** is in an extreme hurry, requires immediate action.
- 11 **Busybody:** interferes with the affairs of both staff and customers.
- 12 **Prankster:** likes to pull practical jokes on strangers.
- 13 **Lost something:** dropped something important somewhere, it must be found!
- 14 **Change of heart:** cannot make up their mind.
- 15 **In disguise:** someone else than they initially appear (maybe a government official or a fugitive).
- 16 **On a mission:** has a clandestine task to perform in the shop (such as planting evidence or locating a hidden cache).
- 17 **With a pet:** their adorable pet must be allowed to follow them everywhere, even though they are unable to control it. (Could be for example a dog, lizard, bird, or an insect.)
- 18 **Secret crush:** is secretly infatuated with a staff member.
- 19 **Famous:** a local royal or luminary recognized by other customers.
- 20 **Outsider:** visitor from a far off realm, unfamiliar with local realities.



APPENDIX 2: CREATING CUSTOM ITEMS

Heroes love to find magic items in dungeons and treasure hoards of powerful dragons, but sometimes they can't find the exact item they desire. In order to get such an item, they're likely to visit a shop to get a custom magic item created. Most often, these items are armor, outfits, or weapons, though they could, theoretically, be almost anything physical and obtainable. Alternatively, if you are a GM and like to create unique items for your players to discover on their adventures, this chapter will give you plenty of ideas.

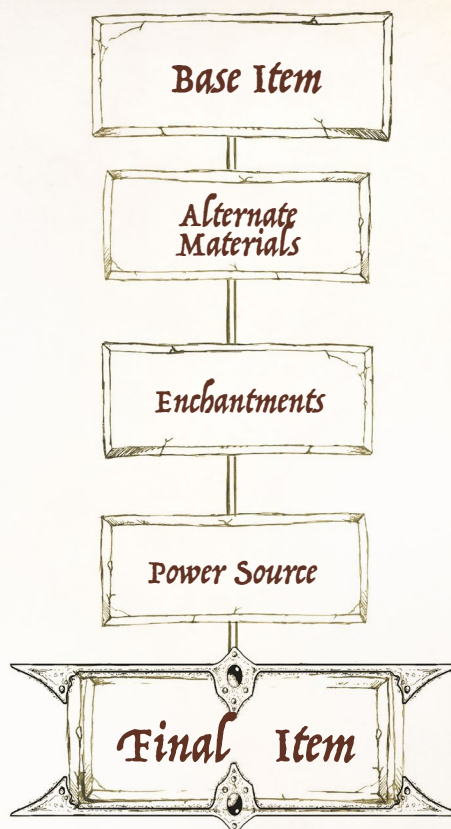
The following section provides rules to create custom items and gives a rough guideline for the amount of time it takes to produce. Additionally, it will help you calculate the amount of gold a custom item requires for materials and work. Some examples are listed below to give you an idea of the type of item that a character might request.

CREATING CUSTOM ITEMS

The flowchart details the process from start to finish of creating a custom magic item. It is a simple, linear process with only three essential steps; pick an item, pick a major enchantment, and calculate the cost and time required in the final item stage. The other steps, alternate materials, and minor enchantments can be used by characters looking for something incredibly specific.

BASE ITEMS

Initially, a character must pick a base item they wish to use. This item could be created from scratch or could be an existing non-magical item they have in their possession. Typical base items include weapons, armor, robes, shields, and the like. Depending on the item, it might require specific locations to create (such as a forge for a suit of plate mail), specific skills (such as smithing skills), and certain tools (such as smith's tools). Provided the character or the shop owner has access to all the requirements, the item can be created. Otherwise, the character has to find another individual to create the item for them. If a character has these skills or tools themselves, they can assist in making the item.



KEEPING NOTES- At this stage, take note of the cost of the base item (for example, plate mail might cost 1,500 gp). Record this somewhere, as you will need to refer back to it later. Also, take note of the weight of the item, especially if the character is likely to change the material the item is made from.

ALTERNATE MATERIALS

Characters might wish, at this stage, to change the material their base item is typically made with for an alternative material. If this is the case, they need to have access to this material in plentiful supply or know someone who can get it for them. Sometimes the choice of materials will have a significant impact on the item creation. For example, making plate mail from dragonbone requires a specialist craftsman. Exotic materials, such as adamantite or mithral, usually impact the item significantly (adamantine plate mail protects against critical hits). Some materials are not appropriate for some objects. For example you can't make plate armor from silk.

The following table presents a variety of different materials and the additional cost of creating an item out of them. This process is unnecessary if the characters already have enough of the material to create the item. In that case, do not alter the base cost.

Material	Cost
Adamantine	500 gp
Bone	50 gp
Canvas	5 gp
Copper	5 sp
Coral	500 gp
Cotton	10 gp
Gemstones	3,500 gp
Gold	500 gp
Iron	1 gp
Ivory	500 gp
Linen	50 gp
Mithral	350 gp
Platinum	5,000 gp
Silk	100 gp
Silver	50 gp
Steel	10 gp
Stone	1 gp
Wood	5 sp

MAJOR & MINOR ENCHANTMENTS

Enchantments on items can vary widely depending on the item and the intended purpose. A major enchantment typically allows the item to do something that impacts the game system, such as bonuses to damage rolls, hit rolls, armor classes, saving throws, skill checks, ability scores, hit points, or the like. Depending on your system, you'll have to determine what category the enchantment falls into out of common, uncommon, rare, very rare, or legendary. Remember that an item might be single-use, which makes it less rare than a version that has infinite uses. In order for an item to be enchanted, it must be created by an individual that can cast spells.

There might be other requirements for major enchantments that the players request. If they want their armor to emanate a freezing aura that deals damage to foes and slows them, you might first send them on a quest to a frozen layer of the hells to bring back a sheet of ice or to enslave an ice devil and force them to create the enchantment.

Once you've decided what level of rarity the enchantment is, consult the table below for the cost of the enchantment. The ranges provided allow you to cater to the power of the enchantment, rather than giving one number to fit all situations.

Enchantment rarity	Cost
Common	50-100 gp
Uncommon	101-500 gp
Rare	501-5,000 gp
Very rare	5,001-15,000 gp
Mythical	15,001 gp and higher

MINOR ENCHANTMENTS

An item can have up to three minor enchantments. These tend to be the type of magic that has either no effect or only a minor effect on the game system, such as perks and quirks. These enchantments can include sensory effects such as giving off smoke, being warm to the touch, smelling of roses, singing a dwarven mining chorus, or being silent when used. Also included are small advantages, such as looking more intimidating while wearing the item, being more charming while wielding the item, gaining better eyesight while using the item, or having a minor boost. Such a boost could increase hit points, or more specific advantages such as checks made to determine whether documents have been forged.

These enchantments cost anything from 0 gp to 50 gp depending on their impact on the game, and the difficulty involved in creating them. They might also require special ingredients that the characters need to collect. An item that smokes eternally might need to be made with ash from an elemental plane of fire for example.

The following table presents some examples of minor enchantments:

d20 Minor enchantment

- 1 **Beautiful:** a pleasant shape, exquisite ornamentation, or extra adornments
- 2 **Color changing:** temporarily changes color during use
- 3 **Floating:** does not sink in water
- 4 **Sticky:** clings in place, hard to accidentally drop



- 5 **Light:** weighs about half the normal weight
- 6 **Secret compartment:** something small can be hidden inside the item
- 7 **Lockable:** can be locked to prevent unauthorized use
- 8 **Smoking:** gives off puffs of smoke when used
- 9 **Magnetic:** when used, the item pulls small metal items towards itself
- 10 **Sound:** emanates a weird, noticeable sound when used (humming, crackling, whistling)
- 11 **Cold:** feels cold to the touch
- 12 **Hot:** feels hot to the touch
- 13 **Electrifying:** the user's hair stands on end
- 14 **Sponge:** soaks up moisture, making its environs dry
- 15 **Telescopic:** some parts are telescopic and can be adjusted to suitable length
- 16 **Collapsible:** the item can be folded to take up less space
- 17 **Simplified:** usage requires only half of the normal time
- 18 **Self-repairing:** repairs ordinary damage overnight
- 19 **Bright:** gives off light when used
- 20 **Shadowbound:** becomes invisible when completely in shadow

POWER SOURCES

Automatons, clockwork gear, magic items, artifacts, and other wondrous items could be powered by something more exotic than just plain 'magic'. This optional step allows for customization of the source of an item's magic.

If the item derives its energy from nearby people, activity, or other items, those will lose some of their own power in the process.

For example, spells might not function as efficiently as normal, or people may not heal as quickly when the item is present. Some would say that items powered like this are in fact cursed.

TIP: The source powering the item may not be known, which could lead to some interesting experiments.



d50 Power source

- 1 **Alchemical** ingredients, the item must be fed rare essences
- 2 **Aromas**, the operation requires pleasant fragrances
- 3 **Auras** of persons in good health that touch the item
- 4 **Astral currents**, whose power changes randomly
- 5 **Beauty**, makes the user uglier
- 6 **Blood** that must be regularly fed to the item
- 7 **Burning water** from the beginning of time
- 8 **Charges** from nearby magical items
- 9 **Creative forces** of people, inspiration cannot be used with the item near
- 10 **Dark light** from another universe
- 11 **Demons** bound to eternal servitude
- 12 **Destiny**, the user becomes driven towards a wrong fate
- 13 **Dreams**, replacing sleep with daytime hallucinations
- 14 **Earth tremors**, requires an earthquake to charge
- 15 **Emotions**, the user becomes cold and expressionless
- 16 **Ether**, from the spirit realm
- 17 **Fortune**, causing the user to experience bad luck
- 18 **Ghostly presences**, works best in graveyards
- 19 **Glyphs** forbidden by the gods, no divine favors are bestowed on the owner of the item
- 20 **Good**, is charged by good deeds being done
- 21 **Health** and healing of people in the proximity
- 22 **Last wish** of a saint
- 23 **Ley energy** siphoned from the earth itself
- 24 **Lifeforce**, using the item causes damage
- 25 **Lightning** captured in a bottle
- 26 **Lodestone** inserted in the item
- 27 **Magical power** of spells cast in the vicinity
- 28 **Memories**, the user permanently forgets something
- 29 **Mental energies** from anyone close by
- 30 **Mesmeric power** gained from anyone looking directly at the item
- 31 **Moonbeams** eternally traveling between two mirrors

- 32 *Movement of heavens*, must be charged under the sky
- 33 *Numen*, or the will of the gods
- 34 *Pneuma*, the breath of life itself
- 35 *Portal* to the plane of astral energies
- 36 *Prayers* that must be renewed every night
- 37 *Psionic energy*, requiring psi talent from the user
- 38 *Quintessence*, the alchemical fifth element
- 39 *Radiance* produced by an ancient machine of unknown origins
- 40 *Shadows* touching the item permanently cuts away a piece of your shadow
- 41 *Souls* bargained in devilish contracts
- 42 *Spirits* subjugated by a magical command
- 43 *Starlight*-charged prisms
- 44 *Sun*, needs daylight to operate
- 45 *Time*, slightly ages the user
- 46 *Touch*, needs to be rubbed for a while before use
- 47 *Vital spark* of a dying deity
- 48 *Warmth*, makes the surroundings noticeably colder
- 49 *Water of life* from an expedition to remote lands
- 50 *Willpower*, needs constant concentration, the user becomes exhausted

THE FINISHED ITEM

At this stage, get your players to describe exactly what the item looks like, its effects and enchantments, both major and minor. Make sure they include plenty of detail so that the character feels the item is truly a custom piece made for them alone and is one of a kind. The character might also wish to name their item at this stage. In addition, you should now total the cost of the item and ensure that any requirements (such as unusual materials, specific tools, the ability to cast spells, etc.) are met.

FINAL COST OF CREATION

Provided that all the requirements are met, take the total cost of the item and divide it by 5. This is the number of workdays required to create the item. If multiple individuals are working on a single item, divide the number again by the number of individuals. All individuals must meet the skill requirements to create the item. Once a character pays the cost of the item, the craftspeople can begin working on the item and deliver it once the number of workdays has elapsed.

OPTIONAL ITEM DETAILS

If you're looking to personalize your item and turn it into a unique, individual creation, you might want to use the following optional item details as inspiration. These details can change an otherwise mundane flaming sword into the one and only *Sacred Blade of the Righteous*. These details include flaws, history, material properties, and other interesting features.

FLAWS

While players look to magical items for their incredible powers, it can be interesting to give items a drawback to balance them or make them feel more unique.

d20	Flaw
1	<i>Tarnished</i> : dirty, extremely hard to clean
2	<i>Badly worn</i> : extreme wear and tear
3	<i>Dirt magnet</i> : will look dirty again soon after cleaning
4	<i>Smelly</i> : has an unpleasant odor
5	<i>Impossible to repair</i> : if the item breaks, it cannot be fixed
6	<i>Loud</i> : causes much more noise than expected
7	<i>Heavy</i> : weighs double the expected encumbrance
8	<i>Slippery</i> : easy to drop without noticing
9	<i>Complicated</i> : takes double the normal time to use
10	<i>Unwieldy</i> : increased failure chance
11	<i>Limited usability</i> : does not work on all expected targets
12	<i>Fragile</i> : breaks easily
13	<i>Repaired</i> : was broken but is now fixed, more or less
14	<i>Tool requirements</i> : needs additional special tools
15	<i>Side effect</i> : produces a harmful side effect
16	<i>Power requirements</i> : usage requires extra power (a sacrifice, mana, lightning)
17	<i>Unpredictable</i> : does not always produce the same result



- 18 **Transmutation:** in prolonged use, the user's appearance slowly changes
- 19 **Unhealthy:** prolonged use may cause attribute loss (constitution, strength, intelligence)
- 20 **Unholy:** prone to bringing divine wrath upon the user

ORIGIN & PAST EVENTS

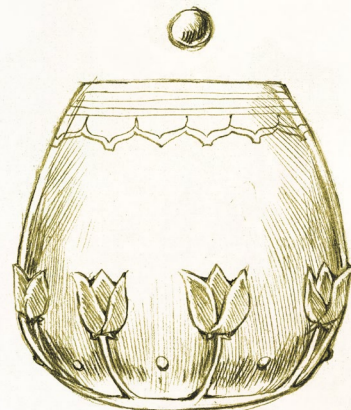
Magical items usually have a long and fascinating origin and history. Who was the original creator? How did it get lost to the ages and unearthed again? Providing a little bit of backstory to an item can spark great interest and perhaps even be a new quest hook.

d20 The item was originally...

- 1 Created in a secluded monastery where outsiders are not allowed to enter.
- 2 Received by a noble as a wedding gift from a stranger.
- 3 Created at the request of a coven of witches.
- 4 Manufactured by a master crafter while sleepwalking.
- 5 The result of a failed experiment.
- 6 Created from the remains of an infamous monster.
- 7 Found inside a magic circle in an abandoned tower.
- 8 Recovered from the deepest level of a dungeon.
- 9 Robbed from the tomb of a saint.
- 10 Revealed its hiding place to a sage in their dream.
- 11 Found buried when a villager tilled the field.
- 12 Found from the innards of a gigantic beast.
- 13 Stolen from an ancient dragon's hoard.
- 14 Brought back by a dead person who returned alive, with no recollection of what had happened.
- 15 Found intact inside a rock that was cracked open.
- 16 Found on the ocean coast, washed ashore on its own.
- 17 Found with an erupting geyser boiling water.
- 18 Created by an ancient, lost civilization.
- 19 Brought from another plane of existence by a dimensional explorer.
- 20 Seen descending from heavens - at least that's what the legend claims.

d20 In its past, the item...

- 1 Indirectly caused the death of a past hero.
- 2 Was used to deliver deadly poison to a past ruler.
- 3 Was used in a cult's sacrificial rituals.
- 4 Survived a cataclysmic event.
- 5 Was once worshipped as a holy item by savages.
- 6 Once belonged to a monster's treasure hoard.
- 7 Spoils of war recovered from enemy forces.
- 8 Was one of the stolen items in an infamous heist.
- 9 Was saved from a catastrophic shipwreck.
- 10 Was found among the items of a dead mage.
- 11 Belonged to the collection of a famous scholar.
- 12 Was a key item in a feud between powerful factions.
- 13 Was used on a famous expedition.
- 14 Was once blessed by a high priest.
- 15 Was once owned by a famous adventurer.
- 16 Was a family heirloom of a perished noble lineage.
- 17 Was a prize given to a champion.
- 18 Was once gifted to a member of royalty.
- 19 Was instrumental in vanquishing a major threat.
- 20 Was once animated and accompanied a wizard on an adventure.



MATERIALS

Items manufactured from rare materials can be a thousand times more expensive than ordinary ones - even if they offer no other benefits than the fame that befalls the owner of such incredible gear.

d10 Armor variants

- 1 *Furs* and hides from animals surviving in the glacial wastes
- 2 *Horns* of exotic beasts
- 3 *Monstrous bones* from vanquished horrors
- 4 *Petrified wood* dug from the depths of the earth
- 5 *Volcanic stone* excavated from a fiery eruption
- 6 *Seashells* from enormous clams on the bottom of the ocean
- 7 *Skulls* of ferocious beasts
- 8 *Turtle shells* from a faraway island
- 9 *Tusks* of mythical behemoths
- 10 *Carapaces* from giant insects in the far South

d10 Cloth variants

- 1 *Exotic plant* fibers from foreign herbs and grasses
- 2 *Wool* from lambs, goats, dogs, or other furry animals
- 3 *Bundles of straw* bound together
- 4 *Spider silk* from the far East
- 5 *Flexible strands* of thin metal wire
- 6 *Human hair* woven into fabric
- 7 *Metal rings* fastened to cloth or leather straps
- 8 *Bird feathers* fastened to a layer of cloth
- 9 *Flower petals* carefully sewn together
- 10 *Gold thread* spun into fabric



d10 Leather and skin variants

- 1 *Thick pelts* of savage beasts
- 2 *Lizard skins* sewn together
- 3 *Fish scales* carefully prepared by foreign artisans.
- 4 *Snakeskin* from giant jungle serpents
- 5 *Scaly hides* of reptilian carnivores
- 6 *Extra fine* uterine vellum from unborn animal skins
- 7 *Dragonhide* with fire-resistant properties
- 8 *Sea monster hide* from the depths of the ocean
- 9 *Demonic skin* stripped from an infernal fiend
- 10 *Celestial skin* flain from an angelic being

d10 Metal variants

- 1 *Adamantine*, of diamond hardness
- 2 *Cold iron*, burns the fae folk
- 3 *Layered steel* for superior durability
- 4 *Dwarven copper* from their secret mines
- 5 *Elven steel* made by immortal hands
- 6 *Hard mercury*, alchemists' solid quicksilver
- 7 *Infernal brass* fetched from the Abyss
- 8 *Meteoric iron*, fallen from the sky
- 9 *Moonsilver* from the starry reaches beyond the sky
- 10 *Orichalcum* from a lost continent

d10 Stone variants

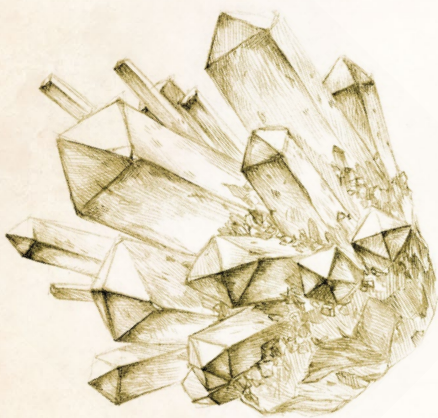
- 1 *Alabaster*: soft, finely grained stone of purest white
- 2 *Crystal*: a transparent shard that can capture magical energies
- 3 *Fossil stone* with imprints of curious creatures
- 4 *Hell stone*: sulphuric rock from the infernal pits
- 5 *Living stone* that slowly grows bigger
- 6 *Lodestone* that aligns to North by itself
- 7 *Morphstone* that glows in the dark, causes mutations
- 8 *Obsidian*: black, sharp-edged glass from a volcano
- 9 *Feystone* containing captured magical essence
- 10 *Sentient stone* that projects its memories to dreams

d10 Wood variants

- 1 *Softwood* from coniferous trees
- 2 *Hardwood timber* from flowering trees
- 3 *Bog-wood* recovered from treacherous swamps
- 4 *Ebony*: black, hard timber from Southern jungles
- 5 *Boneyard wood* from trees that grew on old graves
- 6 *Fairy forest twigs* stolen from underhill lands
- 7 *Ironwood* from dwarven gardens
- 8 *Dryad wood*: the remains of a perished tree spirit
- 9 *Tentacled branches* from a carnivorous tree
- 10 *World-tree bark* from the nexus of worlds

d10 Exotic material variants

- 1 *Terracotta*: porous, hardened clay
- 2 *Porcelain*: delicate ceramic imported by merchant caravans
- 3 *Glass*: intricate and fragile glasswork
- 4 *Concentrated clay*: strong, moldable material that clings together
- 5 *Steel crystal*: transparent, hard and durable material
- 6 *Liquid metal*: hard alien substance that flows like water
- 7 *Perpetual ice*: never-thawing, solid ice from a frigid otherworld
- 8 *Solid smoke*: animated, circulating smoke that is corporeal
- 9 *Frozen flames*: solid, unmoving fire that still shines brightly
- 10 *Mental matter*: substance exists only when the user fully concentrates on it (prevents all other actions)



ADORNMENTS

Even if an item is ordinary at the core, extravagant ornamentation can make it stand out as a rare specimen of exquisite workmanship. The surface of solid, hard items can be decorated using various beautiful techniques.

d10 Decoration technique

- 1 *Carving*: pattern scraped on the surface
- 2 *Engraving*: incised pattern made with cutting grooves
- 3 *Etching*: incised surface pattern burned with acid
- 4 *Filigree*: jewelry metalwork of gold/silver
- 5 *Gilding*: thin coatings of gold applied to the surface of the item
- 6 *Inlay*: decorative materials (like gems) inserted in the item
- 7 *Lacquering*: patterns made by applying dyed lacquer to the surface
- 8 *Marquetry*: patterns made with pieces of veneer attached to the item's surface
- 9 *Painting*: relatively cheap way to apply colors and imagery to the surface
- 10 *Relief*: raised sculpture on a flat surface

d50 Gemstone

- 1 *Agate*: multi-colored, banded stone
- 2 *Amber*: golden, crystallized resin
- 3 *Amethyst*: violet stone that is said to prevent drunkenness
- 4 *Aquamarine*: blue/cyan crystal
- 5 *Azurite*: deep blue mineral
- 6 *Bloodstone*: dark green stone with crimson spots
- 7 *Carnelian*: brownish-red semi-precious gem
- 8 *Cat's eye*: translucent, yellow crystal with a luminous streak
- 9 *Chalcedony*: cloudy, white crystal
- 10 *Chrysoberyl*: translucent, yellowish-green crystal
- 11 *Chrysoprase*: green crystal
- 12 *Citrine*: yellow crystal
- 13 *Coral*: matte, red marine animal shell
- 14 *Diamond*: hard, colorless gem
- 15 *Emerald*: brittle, green gemstone

- 16 **Fire agate:** iridescent, rainbow-colored semi-precious gem
- 17 **Garnet:** orange/purple/pink gem
- 18 **Golden beryl:** brilliant, deep yellow gem
- 19 **Heliodor:** greenish-yellow gem
- 20 **Hematite:** shiny black/silver/red crystal
- 21 **Hyacinth:** dull, yellow/orange/red mineral
- 22 **Ivory:** polished tusks of behemoth beasts
- 23 **Jacinth:** transparent, orange-red gemstone
- 24 **Jade:** dull, greenstone
- 25 **Jasper:** opaque red/yellow/greenstone
- 26 **Jet:** dull, black petrified wood
- 27 **Lapis lazuli:** deep blue semi-precious stone
- 28 **Malachite:** opaque mineral with green bands
- 29 **Milky quartz:** opaque, white crystal
- 30 **Moonstone:** translucent, silvery gem
- 31 **Mother of pearl:** a creamy white substance with iridescent colors
- 32 **Onyx:** colored gem with parallel black bands
- 33 **Opal:** iridescent, prismatic crystal
- 34 **Pearl:** glistening, silvery ball
- 35 **Rock crystal:** colorless crystal
- 36 **Rose quartz:** transparent, pink crystal
- 37 **Ruby:** blood-red gemstone
- 38 **Sapphire:** precious blue gemstone
- 39 **Sardonyx:** colored gem with parallel red bands
- 40 **Selenite:** a white crystal that wanes and waxes with the moon
- 41 **Serpentine:** greenish/brownish, spotted decorative stone
- 42 **Smoky quartz:** translucent, gray crystal
- 43 **Soapstone:** soft, white stone
- 44 **Spinel:** red/blue/green crystal
- 45 **Sunstone:** translucent blue, copper, green, red, or yellow
- 46 **Tiger's eye:** silky, red-brown gem with undulating color bands
- 47 **Topaz:** hard, golden/yellow gem
- 48 **Tourmaline:** yellow/red/black, crystalline semi-precious stone
- 49 **Turquoise:** opaque, blue-green ornamental stone
- 50 **Zircon:** dull, golden/blue/green mineral



SHOP FLOORPLANS



THUNDERSPIRE FORGE



BAZAAR OF MARKOON

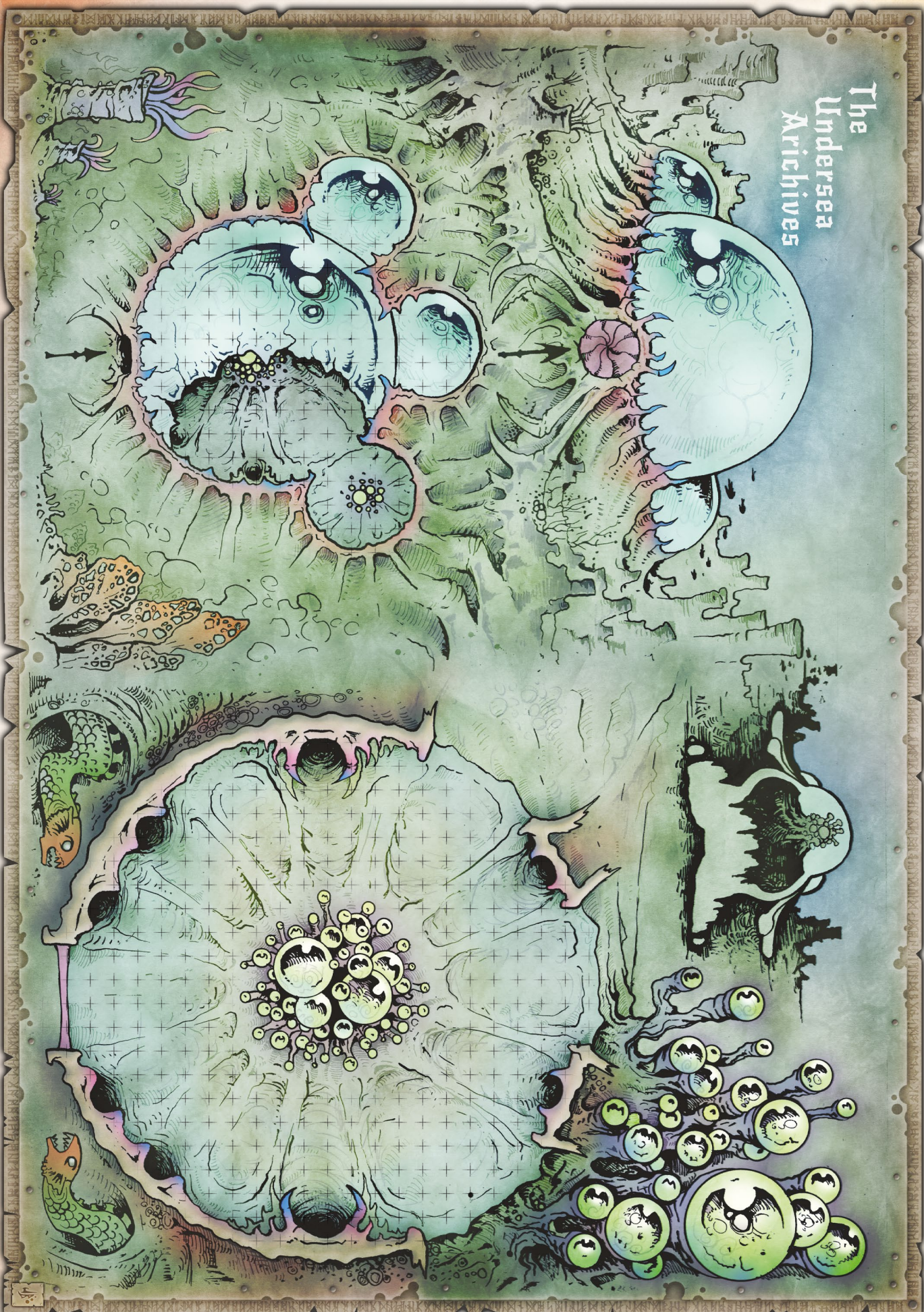


THE OLD MILL



UNDERSEA ARCHIVE

The Undersea Archives



GRIMBLE & SONS TINKERLINGS



THE SHEAR DREAD



HOUSE OF HARMONY



EMPORIO VERDANTIS



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