

MURDER ON THE EBERRON EXPRESS



Murder on the Eberron Express

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Introduction

Egan Bakker is a foundling from House Cannith, one of Khorvaire's powerful Dragonmarked Houses, trying to make his way into their good graces. Bakker is an artificer on his way from Sharn to Fairhaven with his family and a suspicious collection of others. On the final day of travel, Bakker is shot and killed with a newly invented firearm.

Murder on the Eberron Express is a 3-5 hour one-shot for level 6 characters that gives you all the fun of a game of Clue, with all the variety of Dungeons & Dragons Fifth Edition. It is set in Eberron, an unusual D&D setting, that is darker and with more pulp noir aesthetics.

Stories primarily focus on the continent of Khorvaire following the long and destructive Last War. Much has been lost, but Eberron is still notably technologically advanced and blends artifice with arcane magic.

The premise of the adventure is that the characters must solve the murder before they get to Fairhaven or the killer might escape, and they might be blamed by the Fairhaven guard. Also, the possibility that one of them did it is always there.

RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

It is strongly recommended that you read the whole book before trying to run this adventure. While most of the mechanical effects and information required to run this adventure is contained in this book, it is also recommended that the Dungeon Master have access to the *Players Handbook* and *Dungeon Masters' Guide* for spells and other effects we might not have been predicted.

It would also be useful for the DM to have access to *Eberron: Rising from The Last War* or *Wayfinders Guide to Eberron* before running this adventure. The most important lore for your players to understand is that the continent of Khorvaire has just emerged from a war that lasted a hundred years. Very few people remember life before the war and two years of peace is not much time to readjust your world view.

The Last War; a civil war that ripped the kingdom of Galifar apart, ended just two years ago with the Treaty of Thronehold which recognized twelve nations. One of the only constants from before the war, during it, and now is the power of the dragonmarked families and their Houses. These Houses

operate like neutral, independent entities across all the countries and hold tight monopolies over certain industries and fields.

Their power stems from the dynastic arcane sigils that appear on the skin of certain family members, granting them particular magical skills. House Orien, for example, holds the Mark of Passage which, among other powers, allows them to control the lightning rail, where this story takes place.

There are eight 'character archetypes' supplied in the character creation section numbered 1-8. Whatever roles go unfilled are the Non-Player Characters (NPCs) that populate the train. NPC stat blocks for each role can be found in Appendix 1.

For each archetype, there is a printable archetype sheet that gives the player information, motivation and clues related to their archetype. On the back of this sheet is information as to how the murder would happen if that character is the murderer.

For this adventure, it is necessary to allow Player Characters to roll contested rolls against each other, including social rolls.

Before the adventure begins the DM should:

- Give the players access to the archetype table
- Let them choose their archetypes or roll a D8.
- Give them a chance to answer the question on the archetype sheet and discuss any possible connected backstory with other players
- Then roll a D8 to determine the murderer.

If the murderer is a Player Character (PC), let them know and allow them the opportunity to discuss the murder with another player if their archetype sheet calls for it, such as the Ice Queen and the Loyal Retainer.

If the murderer is NPC, then none of the PCs should know who the murderer is to begin with.

MANAGING SECRETS

There are many points at which the DM may need to confer with the murderer or let one PC know a piece of information that the others should not know. When playing around a table there are several ways to manage this while building tension in the game.

Whisper or pass notes to each player in turn. Some of these notes may hold fairly banal information but this will make it harder for players to single out the murderer. Continue to pass notes, sometimes asking questions they must reply to encourage players to pass notes back. This will give the murderer cover to pass the DM information as well, such as trying to hide an action or move stealthily.

STORY OUTLINE

The game begins after the characters have already spent 2 days on the train together. The train is traveling from Sharn to Fairhaven. There are 5 hours in-game time before the train reaches Fairhaven and the murderer can escape. The DM should use this time limit to add tension at key moments.

Chapter One is Character Creation and determining the murderer. Players can choose an archetype from the table or roll a D8 to select at random (re-rolling on repeats). Race, class, and gender are for the player to decide, except in the case of The Lost Heir who must play a human, dragonmarked human, half-elf or half-orc.

Chapter Two introduces the layout of the train, the discovery of the murder scene, and

the encounter with Blue Shield, Bakker's warforged bodyguard.

Chapter Three gives details on how to continue the investigation, a potential second murder, red herrings, and secrets before explaining how to bring the story to a conclusion.

EGAN BAKKER

Egan Bakker has made his fortune in his home city of Sharn, the City of Towers. He has the Dragonmark of Making, but his mother was an excoriate (a member of the house who was banished) of House Cannith. The leader of House Cannith in Sharn, Baron Merrix d'Cannith, hated Egan's mother so much that he would not even accept Egan into the house when he returned as an adult.

Egan has spent many years attempting to win the good favor of the Baron Merrix d'Cannith, but was continuously rebuffed, so now he and his household are leaving Sharn and moving to Fairhaven to meet with another Baron of House Cannith, Jorlanna d'Cannith. She is a rival to Merrix, and she has a competing claim on the leadership of House Cannith. Traveling with Bakker is his spouse, his loyal retainer, his former business partner, his bodyguard,

his lover and a strange youth who claims to be his long-lost child.

Egan Bakker is an artificer that specializes in weapons. Recently he developed a new kind of firearm that does not require arcane training to use through its use of explosive powder and makes hardly any noise when fired due to a *Silence* enchantment. This invention seems to have caught the interest of quite a few people.

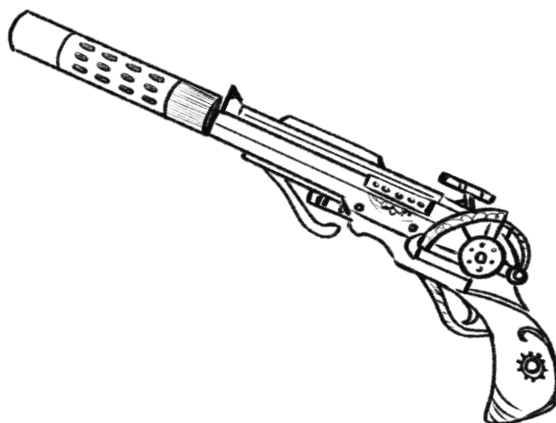
BAKKER'S PISTOL

Ranged weapon (range 35ft (90))

Damage 1d10+Dex

Holds 4 rounds

A character must SUCCEED on a DC 18 Intelligence check to operate the pistol without disadvantage. On their first attempt to fire, a character that rolls below a 10, misfires the pistol.



Chapter 1 Character Creation

D8	Character Role	Description
1	The Scholar	You knew the victim socially of course, but not well. You are privileged, well-educated, soft-spoken and a little snobbish. Egan Bakker once humiliated you in public and you have never forgotten.
2	The Former Business Partner	You worked together, sure, and no it didn't end well, what of it? Just what are they trying to imply? You helped Bakker when one else trusted him, and he stiffed you. Now you're stuck on a train for days with him and his loudmouth habits...
3	The Secretive Lover	You're sexy and you know it. You don't tell people where you're from or your history, because half the fun is the mystery right? You're sleeping with someone on this train (maybe a few of them) but what did you really think of Egan Bakker?
4	The Spouse	You've been estranged from Egan for some time. Perhaps you never truly loved each other, perhaps you were once very in love. Either way, recently Egan's attention has been elsewhere. Was it an affair like you suspected? Or did he know something terrible was going to happen?
5	The Lost Heir	You never knew your father until letters that your mother had kept led you to Egan Bakker with proof. You confronted him, but he did not believe you. Then a few days later, out of the blue, he asks you to come with him to Fairhaven. Now that he's dead, are you heartbroken not to have gotten that chance or did you secretly hate the father who was absent from your life? You certainly stand to profit now.
6	The Veteran Conductor	Readjusting after the war has not been easy. Getting this job on the lighting rail was the best thing that could have happened to you. But Egan Bakker knows things about your past and is using them to get favors. You let him sneak that stupid new invention of his onto the train because of it.
7	The Ice Queen	A cold personality, and no apparent connection to anyone there, but maybe you knew Egan Bakker a long time ago before he made his money. Maybe you have a debt to collect.
8	The Loyal Retainer	Whether a personal servant, sidekick or mild-mannered friend of the victim, you've been by Egan's side for years. You seem to grieve for him the most, but you also knew all his secrets and had to clean up after all his messes all these years... Was he ever even grateful?

In Appendix 1 there are character sheets for each of the archetypes to play as Non-Player Characters (NPCs) if they do not get selected by a player character or to use as pre-generated character sheets for the players to speed up game preparation.

BEFORE THE GAME BEGINS

Before the game starts, make sure your players have had time to read their archetype sheets and either build a character or understand the pre-generated one that they were given.

Take a moment to introduce them by their characters' names and clarify the relationships between characters. For example, The Spouse, The Former Business Partner, and The Loyal Retainer all know each other very well. The Scholar, The Lover, and The Heir are newcomers to Bakker's life.

This should be made clear on the archetype sheet but there is also room for characters to expand on what is written.



MOTIVES FOR MURDER

Each archetype has its own possible motives for murder, but there is also the table below where characters can roll a D6 for motives that could apply to any of the character archetypes.

D6	Motive
1	House Agent. You have the House Agent background, and the house you serve has sent you to kill Bakker, steal his gun, and discover whether he invented it alone or if he received designs from somewhere else.
2	The Memories of War. You fought the Last War, not like Bakker. You understand how fragile the peace is and better tools for assassinations like this "pistol" risk everything.
3	Personal Revenge. Bakker wronged you and it has become too much to bear.
4	He is just the worst. Bakker is an objectively awful person. He uses those around him as tools and Eberron is better off without him.
5	Business Rival. This new weapon has the potential to be very profitable, and better you than Bakker.
6	The Best Defense, is a good murder. Bakker was a threat to you in some way. Maybe it was what he knew about you, maybe it was his new invention, or what he planned to do once in House Cannith; whatever it was he had to die.

CHARACTER EQUIPMENT

Players can select one piece of advanced gear (highly quality armor, +1 enchanted weapon or other uncommon magic items) at the DM's discretion or roll on the table below.

However, all weapons and magic items will be locked in the cargo hold at the start of the game. In the game introduction, characters can try to sneak a small item such as daggers or amulets onto the train.

To successfully smuggle such an item onboard they must succeed on a contested roll by the Train Conductor searching them. The Train Conductor has a Wand of Magic Detection, so searches for magical items are made with advantage.

D8	Item	Description
1	<i>Alchemy Jug</i>	You can use an action and name one liquid to cause the jug to produce the chosen liquid.
2	<i>Dust of Disappearance</i>	2d4 minutes of invisibility for everything within 10ft.
3	<i>Gem of Seeing</i>	10 minutes of 120ft truesight.
4	<i>Philter of Love</i>	Potion: 1 full hour charm
5	<i>Potion of Healing</i>	2d4+2 hit points restored when drunk.
6	<i>The Survivors' Jerkin</i>	+1 Enchanted Studded Leather Armor.
7	<i>Sending Stones</i>	Remote conversations, only once a day.
8	<i>Slippers of Spider Climbing</i>	Climb speed equal to your walking speed.



THE SCHOLAR

You are privileged, well-educated, soft-spoken and a little snobbish.

Your primary reason to take this train journey is that the Lover told you it was important to Bakker. You were going to try to make the Lover publicly choose you over him to humiliate Bakker.

What you know:

- You think Bakker is a cash-grabbing social climber who made his money during the war as an arms dealer.
- You met him at social events and parties in the last few years. At one he humiliated you and you've hated him ever since.
- You've been sleeping with The Lover, who Bakker has had on his arm, for a short while.

Who you know:

- You hate Egan Bakker
- You've met the Spouse once or twice
- You've been sleeping with the Lover for a short time.

At the time of the murder:

- You were just waking up in your cabin with The Lover.
- They left shortly before you heard the conductor yelling for help.
- You are unlikely to want to advertise you were with the Lover if you have a choice, as it gives you another motive to kill Bakker but if you are accused, you'll use them as an alibi.

The player must decide:

- How did Bakker humiliate you?
- How do you really feel about the Lover?

Items in your cabin:

- A lot of books, writing materials, and ink
- One of the Lover's earrings under your pillow

If the Scholar is the murderer

If the Scholar killed Bakker, it was on impulse. After the Lover left your cabin you went into the dining car and saw Bakker there unconscious. His pistol was ostentatiously on his hip, as always. Maybe when you picked it up at first, you were thinking of stealing it, just out of spite.

Then as you held it in your hand, remember him boasting about how quiet it was, you realized you can have him dead and gone from your life.

You tossed the gun back onto the table, burning your hand on the hot barrel. Your nightshirt was covered in blood, you pulled it off and hid it behind some seats before running back into your room. The conductor found Bakker's body and started shouting for help just seconds later.

What might get you caught:

- The burn on your hand
- The Lover left before the muffled gunshot
- The bloody nightshirt might not identify you, but it narrows it down to someone of your size.

A second murder

The Scholar will be reluctant to commit a second murder but will panic if they feel anyone is getting close to figuring them out.

If an NPC sees the burn on your hand, the DM will pass you a note and you can decide if it's enough to kill them. If a PC looks close to catching you, you can strike without warning the DM.

THE FORMER BUSINESS

PARTNER

You have known Egan Bakker for fifteen years or more and even helped him set up his first workshop. At first, everything was split fifty-fifty, but then he squeezed you out of the business right before he made it big.

What you know:

- Egan Bakker is loud; a bully and he loves money more than anything.
- He does love his spouse in his own, possessive way, but they are too good for him.
- He still owes you a hundred gold.
- His inventions would have never been bought during the War if not for your hard work and as soon as they were, he ditched you.
- Recently he seemed interested in your help again. You hate it, but you want the money he owes you.

Who you know:

- You've known The Spouse since they met Bakker
- The Loyal Retainer has known Egan longer than you

- The Ice Queen looks very familiar

At the time of the murder:

- You were drinking together in the First-Class Dining Car until he passed out.
- You left him sleeping it off on the table and went to bed.

The player must decide:

- How exactly did the partnership end?
- How did you get involved in arms dealing during the war?

Items in your cabin:

- An old picture of you and Egan at a party from when you first met. The Ice Queen is just visible in the background. A coincidence?
- A schema for a device very similar to Bakker's new pistol.

If the Business Partner is the murderer

Bakker has owed you so much for so long. Now he has the nerve to drag you all the way to Fairhaven just to help him more. You both knew he is going to double-cross you again, but then he got so drunk that he just admitted it.

You just lost your temper. Then he was dead. You washed all the blood off your clothes and hid them under your mattress.

What might get you caught:

- You were known to be the last person with him that night.
- It's well known that Bakker betrayed you.
- There's a pile of wet clothes under your mattress.

A second murder

You don't want to kill anyone else, but to protect yourself you will.

If an NPC is close to catching you, the DM will pass you a note and you can decide if it's enough to kill them by passing a note back. If a PC looks close to catching you, you can strike without warning the DM.

THE SECRETIVE LOVER

You're sexy and you know it. You don't tell people where you're from or your history because half the fun is the mystery right? You have been publicly on Bakker's arm for a while now, accepting his gifts, but what do you really think of him?

What you know:

- He was a greedy, selfish man, but giving lavish gifts made him feel important.
- Bakker had no intention of ever leaving his spouse for you.
- Even though it was assumed the House in Fairhaven would accept him, he was still paranoid they would not.
- The Scholar hated Bakker for humiliating them at a party a year ago, but you do not know much about it.

Who you know:

- The Spouse (from a distance)
- The Loyal Retainer from his waiting on Egan
- You've been sleeping with The Scholar for a short time.

At the time of the murder:

- You were waking up in the Scholar's cabin.
- You crept from their room back to your own before dawn.
- You will claim to have been alone at first, but if any accusations come, you'll admit where you were.

The player must decide:

- Were you sleeping with Bakker?
- How do you feel about the Scholar?
- What is one secret that either Bakker or the Scholar might know about you?

Items in your cabin:

- Gifts from Bakker (jewelry, perfume, etc.)
- One of the Scholar's notebooks

If the Lover is the murderer

If the Lover was the murderer, it was an impulsive decision after seeing Bakker unconscious in the Dining Cart after sneaking out of the Scholar's quarters.

After you shot him, there was blood everywhere and you panicked. You ran into the bathroom to clean yourself up, hiding your glamerweave dress in the toilet cistern.

What might get you caught:

- The Scholar might realize you left their quarters too early to have an alibi for the murder.
- The bloody glamerweave dress will be recognized if it's found.

A second murder

The Lover will be reluctant to kill again but to protect yourself, you will.

If an NPC goes looking in the cistern the DM will pass you a note and you can decide if you are willing to risk killing them or not.

If a PC looks close to catching you, you can strike without warning the DM.

THE SPOUSE

You've been estranged from Egan for some time. Perhaps you never truly loved each other, perhaps you were once very in love. Either way, recently Egan's attention has been elsewhere.

What you know:

- You married Egan ten years ago.
- You fought in the War. He did not.
- At first, his ambition was exciting, then it was draining.
- He's been neglecting you for the past three years.
- His rejection by the Baron of House Cannith South means that he takes smaller rejections very badly.
- He was blackmailing the Train Conductor
- Egan has already functionally been accepted into House Cannith West

Who you know:

- The Former Business Partner was still good friends with Egan when you married him
- The Loyal Retainer has been living in your house the whole time
- You've seen The Scholar at parties

- You know of The Lover.
- You were surprised by the appearance of the Lost Heir recently.
- You've met the Conductor once or twice.
- Blue Shield is most devoted to Egan, but they protect you too

At the time of the murder you were:

- Asleep in your quarters. You had taken your sleeping potion and didn't realize that Egan hadn't come back.
- You had mixed some of your sleeping potion with Egan's brandy

The player must decide:

- Do you still love Egan? Were you jealous of the Lover or just humiliated?
- What do you feeling about the War?

Items in your cabin:

- A chest filled with single doses of *Potion of Sleeping*.
- A letter to Egan from the Conductor asking for the blackmail to stop, begging that they had done enough.
- A piece of your old military banner.

If the Spouse is the murderer

It's always the Spouse, right? You have grown to hate Egan. He refuses to love you and yet refuses to leave you. You drugged his brandy earlier in the night, thinking this would stop him from being unfaithful but you saw the Lover sneaking back into their room before dawn and assumed that they had been with Egan.

In a fit of rage, you killed him with his own precious gun.

What might get you caught:

- You are well known to have the potion Egan was dosed with before he died.
- People always assume it's the spouse.
- There was no one in your cabin to give you an alibi.
- You pulled a dressing gown on over your blood-stained nightdress, but you are still wearing it, so you don't risk leaving it around to be found. This makes getting searched a risk.

A second murder

You have killed before many times during the war. This is a life-and-death circumstance, so

you will do what it takes to survive until you can leave this train.

If an NPC starts to figure it out, the DM will pass you a note and you can decide if you are willing to risk killing them or not.

If a PC looks close to catching you, you can strike without warning the DM.

THE LOST HEIR

You never knew your father. That was until letters that your mother had kept led you to Egan Bakker with proof. You confronted him, but he did not believe you. Then a few days later, out of the blue, he asked you to come with him to Fairhaven so he can get to know you better.

Now that he's dead, are you heartbroken not to have gotten that chance or did you secretly hate the father who was absent from your life? You certainly stand to profit now.

What you know:

- One day Bakker didn't seem interested in knowing you. The next he completely changed his mind.
- He claims he had no idea you existed.
- The night before the murder, you saw the Spouse mixing something into the brandy bottle that Bakker took to drink with his Former Business Partner.

Who you know:

- You met The Spouse at the Bakker home when you visited

- You met the Loyal Retainer and Blue Shield in the journey to the lightning rail station

The player must decide:

- The Heir must be a human, dragonmarked human, half-elf or half-orc.
- Why do you even want Egan Bakker to acknowledge you?
- What do you think of him?

Items in your cabin:

- A picture of Bakker and your mother.
- Something you stole.

If the Heir is the Murderer

Did you hate him for abandoning you? Did you just need him to acknowledge you so you could inherit everything?

Whatever your reason, you saw the Spouse drugging his brandy and you said nothing. You waited until he passed out and the others left so you could kill him.

What might get you caught:

- You stand to inherit nearly half of Bakker's assets.
- Everyone knows he was an absentee father.
- You pulled a tunic on over your bloody shirt, but you are still wearing it, so you don't risk leaving it around to be found. This makes getting searched a risk.

A second murder

If an NPC starts to figure it out the DM will pass you a note and you can decide if you are willing to risk killing them or not.

If a PC looks close to catching you, you can strike without warning the DM.

THE VETERAN CONDUCTOR

Readjusting after the War has not been easy. Getting this job on the lightning rail was the best thing that could have happened to you.

What you know:

- You've known Egan Bakker since before the War ended.
- He knows things about you that he enjoys holding over your head, blackmailing you so you do him favors whenever you're in Sharn.
- You even let him bring that stupid pistol onto the train and he's been flaunting it.

Who you know:

- You've seen The Loyal Retainer hanging around Bakker, doing his bidding too
- You've met The Spouse, they were a solidier too, and you like them better than Bakker.
- You are aware of Bakker's warforged bodyguard, Blue Shield, in the cargo hold.

At the time of the murder:

- You were doing your last patrol of the train and had locked up the galley.
- You saw Bakker slumped over a table.
- You went back to the staff quarters and slept before finding him dead just before dawn the next day.

The player must decide:

- How affected by the War are you?
- What does Egan Bakker know about you?
- What evidence of the blackmail might exist?

Items in your cabin:

- Wand of Magic Detection.
- Keys for Engine and Cargo Cars.
- Schema of the train.

If the Conductor is the murderer

Egan Bakker was a bastard. He cheated people. He was a terrible husband and it looked like an even worse father. He never had any intention of letting you live in peace.

Then he got so drunk he passed out right in front of you. That stupid gun was right there on his hip.

What might get you caught:

- You searched each of the passengers when they arrived for weapons. You let Bakker take the pistol on board.
- You were the last one to bed that night and the first one up in the morning to “find” the body.
- The Spouse and the Loyal Retainer know that Bakker was blackmailing you.
- Your bloodstained shirt is in your room in the staff quarters. where the passengers are not allowed access but enforcing this rule might make you look suspicious.

A second murder

You won't kill again unless you are attacked outright.

THE ICE QUEEN

A cold personality, and no apparent connection to anyone there, but maybe you knew Egan Bakker a long time ago, twenty years or more, before he made his money, and you have a debt to collect.

What you know:

- Egan Bakker is greedy, egotistical and resentful.
- He hates House Cannith as much as he is desperate to be accepted by them.
- Bakker secretly knew the Heir existed this whole time, despite what he says.
- You helped Bakker pay off the Heir's mother.
- You know the Loyal Retainer well; they have kept cleaning up after Bakker all these years.
- Bakker was not expecting to see you on this train, but the Loyal Retainer was.
- House Cannith West is already prepared to accept Bakker.

Who you know:

- The Loyal Retainer is the only one who has known Bakker long enough to know you too

- The Former Business Partner saw you once but you don't think he recognizes you
- You saw the Heir as a baby, they will not recognize you.

At the time of the murder:

- You were in your cabin with the Loyal Retainer discussing Bakker's debt to you.
- The nature of that conversation is sensitive, and you will not share it easily.

The player must decide:

- What is your real business?
- What deep secret does Bakker owe you for?
- What is your real relationship with the Loyal Retainer?

Items in your cabin:

- An old letter from Bakker thanking you for your help and promising to pay you back someday.

If the Ice Queen is the murderer

If the Ice Queen killed Bakker, it was calmly, with good reason and with the Loyal Retainer's help.

The Loyal Retainer saw The Heir sneaking around watching the Spouse and followed. They saw the Spouse drug Bakker's brandy and told the Ice Queen. The Ice Queen decided it was the right time to strike. They would only have to sow enough confusion to make it as far as Fairhaven and then escape.

Make sure to communicate with the Loyal Retainer. They will likely do as you say and might even kill for you to keep this covered up.

What might get you caught:

- You are one of the few people in first-class without an explicit tie to Bakker. None of the others know you and so might be suspicious.
- Your bloody clothes are in the Loyal Retainer's cabin, soaking in a tub of water.

A second murder

You have no problem killing to survive but will avoid the mess unless necessary.

If an NPC starts to figure it out, the DM will pass you a note and you can decide if you are willing to risk killing them or not.

If a PC looks close to catching you, you can strike without warning the DM.

THE LOYAL RETAINER

Whether a personal servant or mild-mannered sidekick of the victim, you've been by Egan's side for years. You seem to grieve for him the most, but you also knew all his secrets and had to clean up after all his messes all these years... was he ever even grateful?

You were very loyal to Bakker because Bakker had helped you long ago and kept one of your deepest secrets.

What you know:

- Bakker used people then discarded them.
- You know that he knew that the Heir's mother had come to him and Bakker paid her to go away.
- He did not care that the Spouse is unhappy, so long as they do not leave him.
- He was blackmailing the Train Conductor for something that happened years ago
- House Cannith West has already accepted Bakker

Who you know:

- You've been with Bakker longest, so you know the Ice Queen
- You have lived with Bakker for years and so you also lived with the Spouse
- You knew the Former Business Partner but kept your distance.
- You met the Conductor but kept your distance.
- You saw the Heir as a baby, but they will not recognize you
- You have seen the Lover but not spoken to them

At the time of the murder:

- You were in the Ice Queen's cabin

The player must decide:

- Who is the Loyal Retainer really?
- What is the awful secret Bakker kept for you?
- What is your real relationship to the Ice Queen?

Items in your cabin:

- Egan and your clothes in a tub of water

If the Loyal Retainer is the Murderer

If a PC looks close to catching you, you can strike without warning the DM.

If the Loyal Retainer killed Bakker, it was hate-fueled, desperate and assisted by the Ice Queen. Whatever protection you needed from Bakker; they have promised to give you now.

You saw The Heir sneaking around watching the Spouse and followed. You saw the Spouse drug Bakker's brandy and told the Ice Queen who told you that the time was right.

Make sure to communicate with the Ice Queen, if the Ice Queen is a player character.

What might get you caught:

Your own bloody clothes are soaking in a tub of cold water under your bed.

A second murder

You will be hesitant to kill again, but if the Ice Queen tells you to, you will.

If an NPC starts to figure it out the DM will pass you a note and you can decide if you are willing to risk killing them or not.

Chapter 2: Murder

As the game begins, ask the players if they intend to smuggle a small item on board and roll contested Dexterity (Sleight of Hands) or Charisma (Deception) versus the Conductor's Intelligence (Investigation) or Perception (Wisdom), whether they are an NPC or PC. Then have those characters that succeeded pass you a note that tells you what they snuck on board.

Then ask the players how they think they have spent the last two days aboard the train up until the night before the murder when all the first-class passengers had dinner in the dining cart. Who sat with whom? Who made conversation? After dinner, drinks were served, and the players know where their archetype was by midnight.

The next morning the Conductor finds Egan Bakker's body. If the Conductor is a PC, ask the player how they respond. If the Conductor is an NPC, they shout for help until someone appears.

Ask the players who enters first and how they react to Bakker's death until all the players are included in the scene.

It is clear that Bakker has been shot twice in the back. There is a mostly empty

bottle of brandy on the table beside the body. Let the players direct how the action happens next.

A character that succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Medicine) check can tell that Bakker has been dead at least an hour but no more than five hours, putting the time of death between midnight and five in the morning.

A character that succeeds on a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check can tell that Bakker was shot twice in the back by someone standing directly over him, while he was slumped forward on the table.

There are two bullet holes in the table under Bakker's body with the bullets lodged inside.

After a short while, one of the NPCs will suggest getting Bakker's bodyguard, Blue Shield, from the cargo hold as an extra layer of protection and as one of the only people among them who physically could not be the murderer



SEARCHING CHARACTERS OR THEIR CABINS

It is likely that characters will call for passengers or their cabins to be searched. Most characters likely entered the Dining Car when the Conductor started shouting, still wearing pajamas or nightclothes.

There are certain items that archetypes have concealed in their rooms, whether they are the murderer or not. There are two ways the DM could determine what is found.

One is to set DCs for Intelligence (Investigation) checks based on how well the archetype is likely to have hidden something. For example, small personal items such as clothes, a hairbrush or shoes are likely to be out for anyone to see. Valuables like jewelry or money would have a DC of 12 and private, embarrassing or incriminating items would have a DC of 15 or higher.

Another way is to have players write a list of things they have hidden in their rooms and then roll an Intelligence check. That check becomes the DC for how well hidden those items are.

Items in the Scholar's cabin:

- A lot of books, writing materials, and ink
- One of the Lover's earrings under your pillow

Items in the Former Business Partner's cabin:

- An old picture of you and Egan at a party from when you first met. The Ice Queen is just visible in the background. A coincidence?
- A schema for a device very similar to Bakker's new pistol.

Items in the Lover's cabin:

- Gifts from Bakker (jewelry, perfume, etc.)
- One of the Scholar's notebooks

Items in the Spouse and Egan Bakker's cabin:

- A chest filled with single doses of *Potion of Sleeping*.
- A letter to Egan from the Conductor asking for the blackmail to stop, begging that they had done enough.
- A piece of your old military banner.

- Egan's clothes and belongings, including the complete schema for the pistol

Items in the Lost Heir's cabin:

- A picture of Bakker and your mother.
- Something you stole.
- Sparse personal possessions

Items in the Train Conductor's cabin:

- Wand of Magic Detection.
- Keys for Engine and Cargo Cars.
- Schema of the train.

Items in the Ice Queen's cabin:

- An old letter from Bakker thanking you for your help and promising to pay you back someday.
- Sparse personal possessions

Items in the Loyal Retainer's cabin:

- Egan and your clothes in a tub of water

LAYOUT OF THE TRAIN

There are six carriages on this train: the engine car with staff quarters, a car of first-class quarters, a first-class dining car, a car with more first-class quarters, bathrooms and the galley, the second-class passenger car, and the cargo car.

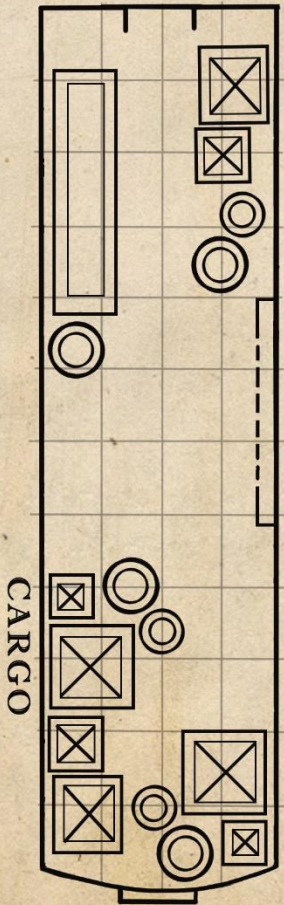
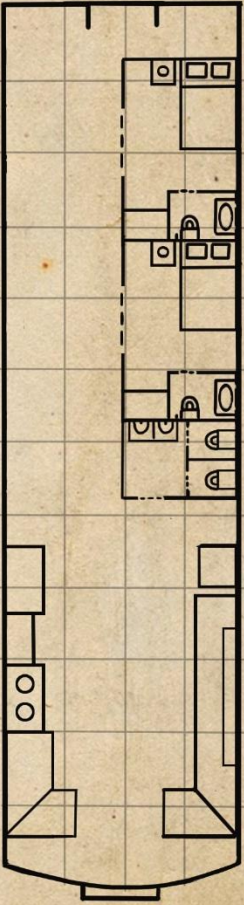
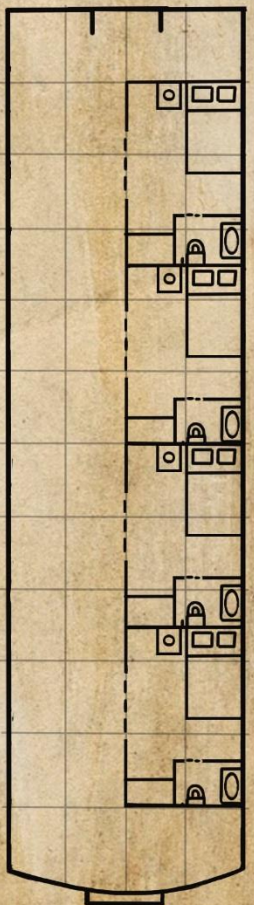
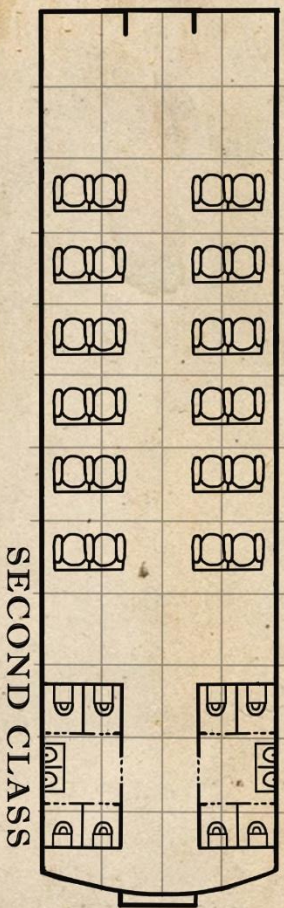
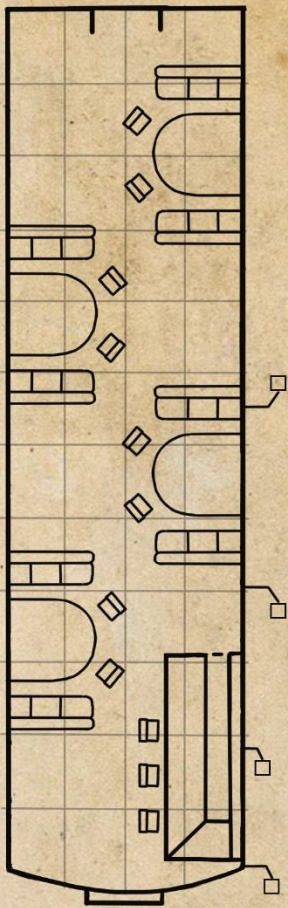
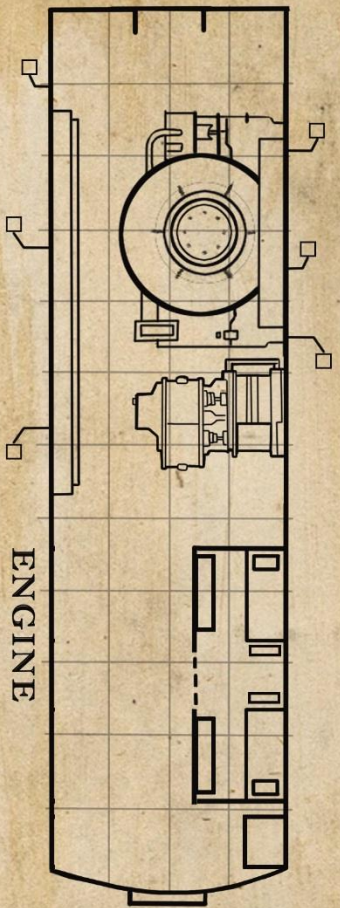
All the train cars are 20ft wide and 60ft long, with 10ft high ceilings. The carriages are connected through flexible tubes made from metallic plates.

This lightning rail is a new model of the 'Lightning Express Service. This service is much smaller, with fewer passengers than the average lightning rails. Since the war ended, moving troops is no longer a major concern.

The train is staffed by the conductor (see Character Creation), a chef and 2 drivers who are never seen, as they remain behind the staff-only door for security. The staff-only door on the engine car and the cargo hold door both have anti-magic fields on them that extend for 5ft on either side.

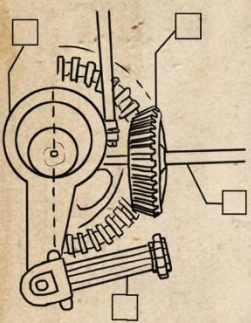
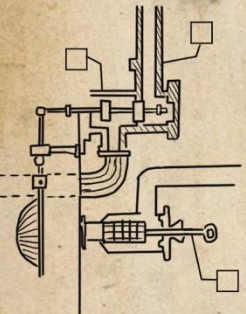
The Conductor has a schema for the train.

101 LIGHTNING EXPRESS SERVICE



Billings

- American
- Oldsmobile
- Cadillac
- Packard
- Buick
- Chrysler
- Ford
- General Motors
- International Harvester
- Lincoln
- Packard
- Studebaker
- Buick



Handwritten signature or initials.

SECOND-CLASS CAR

There are ten second-class passengers. They have reclining seats but have all been living in the one room for the past two days. As such, they look a little haggard.

They are not allowed into the galley, kitchen, or beyond and so few of the first-class passengers are likely to have interacted with them unless they went to the second-class cars. These passengers will mostly be reluctant to engage with the first-class passengers' problems.

It costs 5sp per mile for a normal lightning rail journey, and this express likely costs a bit more, so many second-class passengers might have saved for a long time to take this journey, or they are less prosperous guild merchants. It is unlikely that anyone in real poverty could afford this trip.

D8	Name	Passenger Description
1	Aanya	Human, dark-skinned, confident voice, dry wit, unimpressed but nobility (she/her). She mutters something about the Houses always sending assassins to deal with their problems.
2	Ben	Halfling, pale, dark short hair, soft-spoken, smiles and tries to be helpful but

		wants the conversation to end (he/him).
3	Sam	Half-elf, acolyte of the Church of the Silver Flame. Monk's bowl-cut hair. (they/them) Sam is convinced that there are changelings hiding among the passengers.
4	David	A human, tanned and greying man, in his fifties. If he hears anyone mention changelings, he will launch into an elaborate theory about the Conspiracy of Masks; which claims changelings are secretly taking over everything.
5	Laura	A young halfling girl with short brown hair with a large wicker basket. Inside the basket is a small winged dinosaur, a fourwings (microraptor). (she/her)
6	Alan	A thin warforged sits reading a pamphlet and ignoring those around him.
7	Nico, Kaelan & Wez	Nico, Kaelan & Wez are three longtooth shifter brothers in their teens, glaring at Sam
8	Lorcan	Human, pale skin, red hair, smarmy voice, looks to flatter and ingratiate himself with whoever speaks to him (he/him)

THE CARGO HOLD

Only the Conductor has a key to the cargo hold. The inside of the cargo hold is dim light. There is a double door at the very back where cargo is loaded on. There are a dozen wooden crates stacked around the car, strapped to the floor to keep them from moving. Against the left-hand wall as the characters enter the room are the metal lockboxes that hold the passenger's weapons, magic items and valuables. Blue Shield is resting on a chair bolted to the ground in the middle of the cargo car.

Blue Shield is fiercely devoted to Bakker in the absence of knowing what else to do now that the war is over. They will enter a grief-fueled frenzy and attack everyone in sight after learning he is dead.

When Blue Shield misses with an attack, their greatsword smashes through one of the wooden crates. Roll a DC 12 to determine the effect. You can also roll on this table if any other character misses with a ranged spell attack. A character seeking to calm Blue in the first round must succeed on a DC 25 Charisma (Persuasion) check. That DC reduces by 2 every round or drops to 12 if a character successfully casts *Calm Emotions*.

If Blue is reduced to 0 hit points then stabilized, they will be more cooperative when they wake.

D12	The crate:
1	explodes. Everyone within 10ft must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or suffer 2d6 fire damage.
2	sends shards of glass across the floor, making it difficult terrain.
3	Spills red wine across the floor. This doesn't have an effect, it's just a pity to waste good wine.
4	Crackles electricity up Blue's sword and deals 1d6 lightning damage to them and anyone grappling them.
5	bursts and releases 12 chickens into the cargo hold. The swarm of chickens will attack the nearest creature (see appendix 1 for stats)
6	is empty
7	smashes glass jars of acid which leak onto the floor. A creature entering or beginning their turn there takes 1d6 acid damage. The floor of the train takes 1d6 acid damage per round unless cleaned.
8	is full of butter. A creature moving through that space must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone.
9	BEES! (see appendix 1)
10	is full of black sand
11	contains a tree that grows instantly to 60ft, smashing through the roof of the train.
12	contains 139 gold pieces.

BLUE SHIELD

Medium Humanoid (Warforged) they/them

Armor Class: 21

Hit Points: 76

Speed: 30ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18	12	16	8	15	9
(+4)	(+1)	(+3)	(-1)	(+2)	(-1)

Skills: Acrobatics +3, Athletics +7, Intimidation +2, Medicine +5, Perception +5, Persuasion +6, Sleight of Hand +3, Stealth +3

Saving Throws: STR +7

Second Wind. Once per short rest, Blue Shield can use a bonus action to regain 1d10 + 8 HP.

Action Surge. They can take one additional action on their turn. This can be used 1 time per short rest.

Improved Critical. Weapon attacks score a critical hit on a roll of 19 or 20.

Warforged Resilience. Advantage on saving throws against being poisoned, and resistance to poison damage. Blue Shield immune to disease, does not need to eat, drink, or breathe. Warforged don't need to sleep and

don't suffer the effects of exhaustion due to lack of rest and cannot be magically put to sleep.

Sentry's Rest. Instead of taking a long rest, a warforged must spend at least 6 hours in an inactive state rather than sleeping. In this state, they appear inert, but they are not unconscious and can see and hear.

Actions

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 11 (2d6+4) slashing damage.

Unarmed Strike / Iron Fists. *Melee Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 7 (1d4+4) bludgeoning damage

Chapter 3: Complications & Conclusions

Once the groundwork of the scene and the investigation has begun. The most important thing for the DM to do is facilitate the players' investigation without giving too much away.

RED HERRINGS (OPTIONAL FLAVOR LORE)

- The Lord of Blades is a warforged seeks vengeance against the humans who created his people as weapons for their war.
- The Houses sometimes send assassinations or agents to do their dirty work for them if they feel someone is a threat to them.
- The schema in Bakker's possession is written in Dar, the goblin language. Those in possession of such things often end up dead in the night.

DAMAGE TO THE TRAIN

Various actions by characters may result in damage to the lightning rail. The AC of sections of the train (the floor, walls, and ceilings) is 19. Each 10ft section has 55 hit points. The windows have an AC of 14 and 35 hit points. Objects automatically fail saving throws.

For objects inside the train, such as furniture, use the Dungeon Masters' Guide as a guideline.

Once a 10ft section of a train car loses all 55 hit points, a hole is created in that section of the car. The hole is 10ft in diameter. Anyone who falls through it will suffer fall damage, plus 2d10 bludgeoning and 2d10 lightning damage for every train car goes over them.

If a character is standing on or adjacent to this space, they must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throws unless another adjacent character uses their reaction to catch them.

If a car has four or more holes in it, it will begin to break apart. Characters will have one round to react before this happens. Any character within five feet of the center of the car when it rips apart must succeed on a DC

14 Dexterity saving throw or fall onto the tracks.

Any characters on the opposite side of the split to the engine car will be left behind by the train as the back cars slow down. The gap will be 50ft for the first round. After this, the distance increases by 250ft a round.

A SECOND MURDER

In the last hour of the game, there is the option for a second murder. The DM should work out a system of communicating with the murderer how this might happen if the opportunity arises.

CONCLUDING THE STORY

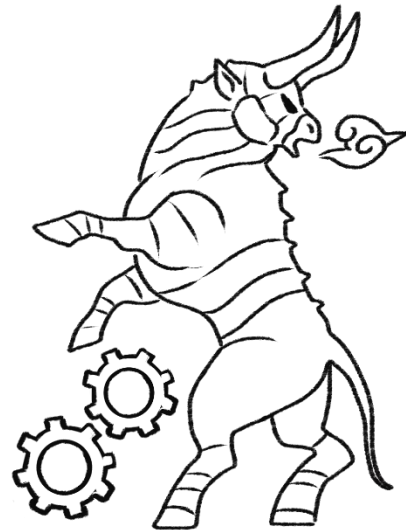
Bringing the story to a close should happen either if the players have discovered and subdued the murderer, or as the train pulls into Fairhaven station.

It's important for the DM to remind the players how much time they have left as the game goes on. Once the train pulls into the station, the drivers will leave the engine car looking for the Conductor if he has not communicated with them all day. Five town guards will be approaching the train.

A murderer that successfully escapes from the train at this point without anyone pursuing for a full round is said to have successfully escaped.

If no murderer is identified by the party by the time the guards arrive, they will all be taken into custody and investigated.

If the party have secured the murderer by this point, they hand them over the guard and receive a free lightning rail journey from House Orien as thanks for preventing a scandal.



Appendix 1: The NPCs

The Scholar

Medium humanoid (half-elf), Wizard (School of Conjuraton)

Armor Class: 11

Hit Points: 32

Speed: 30ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9	11	13	18	11	14
(-1)	(+0)	(+1)	(+4)	(+0)	(+2)

Skills: Arcana +7, History +7, Insight +3, Intimidation +5, Investigation +7, Persuasion +5

Saving Throws: INT +7, WIS +3

Spellcasting. The Scholar is a 6th-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with

spell attacks). The Scholar has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *Mind Sliver*, *Poison Spray*, *Prestidigitation*, *Shocking Grasp*

Level 1 (4 slots): *Detect Magic*, *Shield*, *Unseen Servant*

Level 2 (3 slots): *Flock of Familiars*, *Mind Spike*, *Misty Step*, *See Invisibility*, *Web*

Level 3 (2 slots): *Sleet Storm*, *Thunder Step*

Benign Transposition. You can use your action to teleport up to 30 ft. to an unoccupied space that you can see, or you can choose to swap places with a willing Small or Medium creature within range. Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest, or you cast a conjuration spell of 1st level or higher.

Minor Conjuraton. You can use your action to conjure up an inanimate object (no larger than 3 ft. on a side and no more than 10 lb.) in your hand or in an unoccupied space that you can see within 10 ft. of you. The object disappears after 1 hour, when you use this feature again, or if it takes or deals any damage.

The Former Business Partner

Medium humanoid (dwarf), Bard (College of Whispers)

Armor Class: 12

Hit Points: 45

Speed: 25ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9	13	12	12	12	17
(-1)	(+1)	(+1)	(+1)	(+1)	(+3)

Skills: Deception +9, Insight +4, Investigation +2, Persuasion +6, Persuasion +9, Sleight of Hand +4

Saving Throws: DEX +4, CHA +6

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

Cantrips (at will): *Friends*, *Message*, *Prestidigitation*,

Level 1 (4 slots): *Disguise Self*, *Dissonant Whispers*, *Distort Value*, *Healing Word*,

Level 2 (3 slots): *Calm Emotions*, *Crown of Madness*, *Detect Thoughts*,

Level 3 (3 slots): *Catnap*, *Major Image*

Bardic Inspiration. As a bonus action, a creature within 60 ft. that can hear you gains an inspiration die (3/1d8). For 10 minutes, the creature can add it to one ability check, attack roll, or saving throw. This can be added after seeing the roll, but before knowing the outcome.

Tool Proficiencies: Smiths' Tool, Tinkers' Tools

Psychic Blades. When you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you can expend one use of your Bardic Inspiration to deal an extra 3d6 psychic damage to that target. You can do so only once per round on your turn.

Words of Terror. Once per short rest, you can speak to a humanoid alone for 1 minute and cause it to become frightened of you (or another creature of your choice) if it fails a WIS saving throw (DC 14) for 1 hour or until it or its allies are attacked or damaged. If the target succeeds, it is not aware you used this ability.

The Secretive Lover

Medium humanoid (Aasimar) Bard (College of Glamour)

Armor Class: 12

Hit Points: 33

Speed: 30ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9	12	11	14	11	18
(-1)	(+1)	(+0)	(+2)	(+0)	(+4)

Skills: Acrobatics +7, Deception +8, Investigation +5, Performance +10, Persuasion +7

Saving Throws: DEX +4, CHA +7

Spellcasting. The Lover is a 6th-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). The Lover has the following bard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *Light, Mage Hand, Message, Prestidigitation*

Level 1 (4 Slots): *Charm Person, Cure Wounds, Disguise Self*

Level 2 (3 slots): *Calm Emotions, Gift of Gab, Invisibility, Knock*

Level 3 (3 slots): *Enemies Abound*

Bardic Inspiration. As a bonus action, grant a creature within 60 ft. that can hear you an inspiration die (3/1d8). For 10 minutes, it can add it to one ability check, attack roll, or saving throw after seeing the roll, but before knowing the outcome.

Countercharm. As an action, you can perform until the end of your next turn. During that time, you and any friendly creatures within 30 ft. that can hear you gain advantage on saving throws against being frightened or charmed.

Healing Hands. 1 per long rest as an action, touch a creature and restore 6 hit points.

Radiant Soul. 1 per long rest as an action, you can transform, gaining glimmering eyes and two incorporeal wings. For 1 minute or until you end it as a bonus action, you have a flying speed (30 ft.) and once per turn you can have one attack or spell deal 6 in additional radiant damage.

Mantle of Inspiration. As a bonus action, spend one use of Bardic Inspiration to grant 8 temporary HP to up to 4 creatures you can see and that can see you within 60 ft. Each creature can immediately use its reaction to move up to its speed, without provoking opportunity attacks.

Enthralling Performance. Once per short rest, you can choose 4 creatures that watched and listened to you perform for 1 minute. Each target makes a WIS saving throw (DC 15) and is charmed if it fails for 1 hour, or until it takes any damage, you attack it, or it sees you attack or damage its allies.

The Spouse

Medium humanoid (Elf), Cleric (domain of war)

Armor Class: 13

Hit Points: 39

Speed: 30ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10	14	12	10	16	13
(+0)	(+2)	(+1)	(+0)	(+3)	(+1)

Skills: Athletics +3, History +3, Intimidation +4
Perception +6, Religion +3

Saving Throws: WIS +6, CHA +4

Spellcasting. The Spouse is a 6th-level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). The Spouse has the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *Guidance, Sacred Flame, Spare the Dying, Word of Radiance*

Level 1 (4 Slots): *Bane, Cure Wounds, Detect Magic, Divine Favor, Guiding Bolt, Shield of Faith*

Level 2 (3 slots): *Hold Person, Lesser Restoration, Magic Weapon, Protection from Poison, Spiritual Weapon*

Level 3 (3 slots): *Crusaders' Mantle, Dispel Magic, Magic Circle, Spirit Guardians*

War Priest. When you use the Attack action, you can make one weapon attack as a bonus action. You can use this feature 3 times per long rest.

Channel Divinity. You can channel divine energy twice per short rest

- **Turn Undead:** 1 Action
- **Guided Strike.** When you make an attack roll, you can gain a +10 bonus to the roll after the roll but before knowing the result.
- **Destroy Undead.** When an undead fails its saving throw against your Turn Undead feature, it is instantly destroyed if its CR is lower than the threshold for your level.
- **War God's Blessing.** When a creature within 30 feet of you makes an attack roll, you can use your reaction to grant that creature a +10 bonus to the roll (after the roll but before knowing the result).

Fey Ancestry. You have advantage on saves against being charmed, and magic can't put you to sleep.

Actions

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, 5(20) ft *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

Valenar Elves worship their ancestors and are well-trained to become heroes worthy of worship for their descendants.

The Lost Heir

Medium humanoid (human) Rogue (Thief)

Armor Class: 15

Hit Points: 33

Speed: 30ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10	18	11	13	10	13
(+0)	(+4)	(+0)	(+1)	(+0)	(+1)

Skills: Acrobatics +7, Deception +7, Investigation +7, Persuasion +4, Sleight of Hand +10, Stealth +7

Saving Throws: Strength +4, Dexterity +7

Sneak Attack. Once per turn, you can deal an extra 3d6 damage to one creature you hit with an attack with a finesse or ranged weapon if you have advantage on the attack roll. You don't need advantage on the attack roll if another enemy of the target is within 5 ft. of it) that isn't incapacitated) and you don't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Thieves' Cant. You have learned thieves' cant, a secret mix of dialect, jargon, and code that allows you to hide messages in seemingly normal conversation. It takes four times longer to convey than it does to speak the same idea plainly.

Cunning Action. You can take a bonus action on each of your turns to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Fast Hands. You can use the bonus action granted by your Cunning Action to make a Sleight of Hand check, use your thieves' tools to disarm a trap or open a lock, or take the Use an Object action.

Artisan's Intuition. Due to your Dragonmark, Mark of Making, when you make an ability check with artisan's tools, roll 1d4 and add it to the result.

Maker's Gift. You know the cantrip *mending* and gain proficiency with 1 type of artisan's tools (Alchemist's Supplies)

Actions

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, 5(20) ft *Hit:* 6 (1d4+4) piercing damage.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 8 (1d6+4) piercing damage.

The Veteran Train Conductor

Medium humanoid (orc), Monk (Way of the Open Hand)

Armor Class: 15

Hit Points: 39

Speed: 45ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12	18	13	12	12	9
(+1)	(+4)	(+1)	(+1)	(+1)	(-1)

Skills: Insight +4, Investigation +7,

Saving Throws: STR +4, DEX +7

Slow Fall. Reduce any falling damage, you take by 30 as a reaction.

Extra Attack. Attack twice when you take the Attack action.

Stunning Strike. After hitting with a melee attack, spend 1 Ki point to stun the target until the end of your next turn if it fails a CON saving throw (DC 12).

Ki-Empowered Strikes. Your unarmed strikes count as magical for the purpose of overcoming resistance and immunity.

Ki Points. 6 per short rest.

Actions

Dart. Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) piercing damage.

Unarmed Strike. Melee Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+3) piercing damage

Bonus Actions

Flurry of Blows. After the Attack action, spend 1 Ki point to make two more unarmed strikes as a bonus action.

Patient Defense. Spend 1 Ki point to take the Dodge action.

Step of the Wind. Spend 1 Ki point to take the Disengage or Dash action, and double your jump distance for the turn.

Unarmed Strike. After the Attack action, make one unarmed strike.

Relentless Endurance. When you are reduced to 0 HP but not killed, you can drop to 1 HP instead once per long rest.

Savage Attacks. When you score a critical hit, roll one of the dice an additional time and add it to the extra damage.

The Ice Queen

Medium humanoid (human), Rogue
(Assassin)/ Warlock

Armor Class: 15

Hit Points: 33

Speed: 30ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10	18	11	13	12	14
(+0)	(+4)	(+0)	(+1)	(+1)	(+2)

Skills: Deception +5, Insight +7, Intimidation +8, Perception +4, Sleight of Hand +7, Stealth +7

Saving Throws: DEX +7, INT +4

Sneak Attack. Once per turn, you can deal an extra 3d6 damage to one creature you hit with an attack with a finesse or ranged weapon if you have advantage on the attack roll. You don't need advantage on the attack roll if another enemy of the target is within 5 ft. of it) that isn't incapacitated) and you don't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Thieves' Cant. A secret mix of dialect, jargon, and code allows you to hide messages in seemingly normal conversation. It takes four times longer to convey such a message than it does to speak the same idea plainly.

Cunning Action. You can take a bonus action on each of your turns to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Assassinate. You have advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn in the combat yet, and any hit you score against a creature that is surprised is a critical hit.

Spellcasting. The Ice Queen is a 1st-level spellcaster. Her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). The Ice Queen has the following warlock spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *Eldritch Blast*, *Minor Illusion*

Level 1 (1 Slot): *Dissonant Whispers*, *Hellish Rebuke*

Actions

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, 5(20) ft *Hit:* 6 (1d4+4) piercing damage.

Rapier. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 9 (1d8+4) piercing damage

Eldritch Blast. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +5 to hit,
120ft *Hit:* 1d10 force damage

The Loyal Retainer

Medium humanoid (changeling), Monk

Armor Class: 13

Hit Points: 33

Speed: 45ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10	16	10	12	11	16
(+0)	(+3)	(+0)	(+1)	(+0)	(+3)

Skills: Arcana +4, Deception +6, History +4, Investigation +4, Persuasion +6, Stealth +6

Saving Throws: STR +3, DEX +6

Change Appearance. As an action, the Loyal Retainer can transform their appearance to a humanoid creature they have seen before. They have advantage on any Deception check to avoid detection.

Shadow Arts. The Loyal Retainer can cast the *minor illusion* cantrip. As an action, they can spend 2 Ki points to cast *darkness*, *Darkvision*, *pass without trace*, or *silence* without material components.

Ki Points. 6 per short rest.

Actions

Dagger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

Dart. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3) piercing damage.

Unarmed Strike. *Melee Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+3) piercing damage

Bonus Actions

Flurry of Blows. After the Loyal Retainer takes the Attack action, they can spend 1 Ki point to make two more unarmed strikes.

Patient Defense. They can spend 1 Ki point to take the Dodge action.

Shadow Step. When in dim light or darkness, the Loyal Retainer can teleport up to 60 ft to an unoccupied space they can see that is also in dim light or darkness. They then have advantage on the first melee attack before the end of the turn.

Step of the Wind. They can spend 1 Ki point to take the Disengage or Dash action, and their jump distance is doubled for the turn.

Unarmed Strike. When they use the Attack action with an unarmed strike or a monk

weapon on your turn, they can make one unarmed strike as a bonus action.

Swarm of Chickens

Medium swarm of Tiny beasts, chaotic evil

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 24 (7d8 - 7)

Speed 10 ft., fly 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6	14	8	3	12	6
(-1)	(+2)	(-1)	(-4)	(+1)	(-2)

Skills: Intimidation +2

Condition Immunities: Charmed, Frightened, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Prone, Restrained, Stunned

Languages --

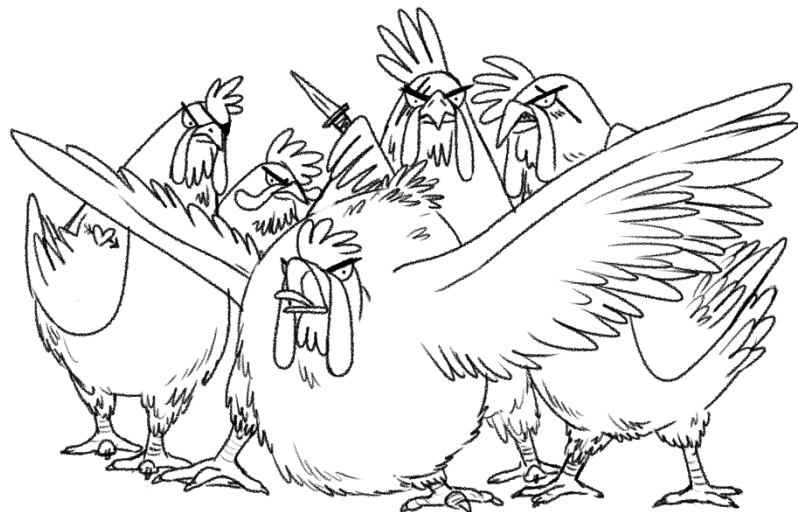
Challenge 1/4 (50 XP)

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large

enough for a Tiny raven. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Actions

Beaks. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target in the swarm's space. **Hit:** 7 (2d6) piercing damage, or 3 (1d6) piercing damage if the swarm has half of its hit points or fewer.



Swarm of Bees

Large swarm of tiny beasts, unaligned

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 45 (6d8 +1)

Speed 15ft crawl 45ft fly

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3	18	12	4	8	5
(-4)	(+4)	(+1)	(-3)	(-1)	(-3)

Condition Immunities: Charmed, Frightened, Grappled, Paralyzed, Prone, Restrained, or Stunned

Damage Resistances Piercing, Slashing

Damage Vulnerabilities: Poison, Thunder

Senses Blindsight 10ft

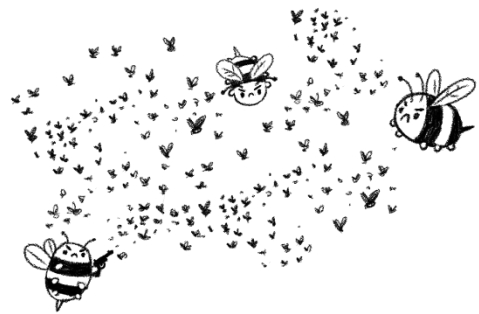
Passive Perception 10

Challenge 1 (200XP)

Swarm. The swarm can occupy another creature's space and vice versa, and the swarm can move through any opening large enough for a Tiny raven. The swarm can't regain hit points or gain temporary hit points.

Actions

Sting. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (4d4) piercing damage, and target must make a DC 12 Constitution Save or take 5 (2d4) poison damage.



Appendix 2: Magic Items

Alchemy Jug

Wonderous Item, uncommon

This ceramic jug appears to be able to hold a gallon of liquid and weighs 12 pounds whether full or empty. Sloshing sounds can be heard even if the jug is empty.

You can use an action and name one liquid from the table below to cause the jug to produce the chosen liquid. Afterward, you can uncork the jug as an action and pour that liquid out, up to 2 gallons per minute. The maximum amount of liquid the jug can produce depends on the liquid you named.

Once the jug starts producing a liquid, it can't produce a different one or more of one that has reached its maximum, until the next dawn.

Liquid	Max Amount
Acid	8 ounces
Basic poison	1/2 ounce
Beer	4 gallons
Honey	1 gallon
Mayonnaise	2 gallons
Oil	quart
Vinegar	2 gallons
Water, fresh	8 gallons
Water, salt	12 gallons
Wine	1 gallon

Dust of Disappearance

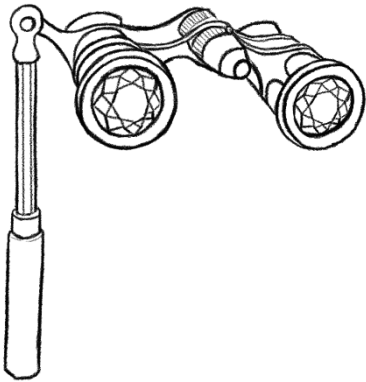
Wonderous Item, uncommon

Found in a small packet, this powder resembles very fine sand. There is enough of it for one use. When you use an action to throw the dust into the air, you and each creature and object within 10 feet of you become invisible for 2d4 minutes. The duration is the same for all subjects, and the dust is consumed when its magic takes effect. If a creature affected by the dust attacks or casts a spell, the invisibility ends for that creature.

Gem of Seeing

Wondrous Item, rare (requires attunement)

This gem has 3 charges. As an action, you can speak the gem's command word and expend 1 charge. For the next 10 minutes, you have truesight out to 120 feet when you peer through the gem. The gem regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn.



Philter of Love

Potion, uncommon

The next time you see a creature within 10 minutes after drinking this philter, you become charmed by that creature for 1 hour. If the creature is of a species and gender you are normally attracted to, you regard it as your true love while you are charmed. This potion's rose-hued, effervescent liquid contains one easy-to-miss bubble shaped like a heart.

Potion of Healing

Potion, common

You regain 2d4+2 hit points when you drink this potion. The potion's red liquid glimmers when agitated.

Potion of Sleep

Potion, uncommon

This pale purple potion has an oily texture and smells faintly of lavender. A creature that consumes this potion or is struck with a weapon coated in it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution Saving Throw or fall asleep for one minute. Condition rules the same as if the *Sleep* spell was cast.

It is an action to apply the potion to a weapon. The potion will only remain potent on this weapon for 1 minute after application.

Sending Stones

Wondrous Item, uncommon

Sending Stones come in pairs, with each smooth stone carved to match the other so the pairing is easily recognized. While you

touch one stone, you can use an action to cast the sending spell from it. The target is the bearer of the other stone. If no creature bears the other stone, you know that fact as soon as you use the stone and don't cast the spell.

Once sending is cast through the stones, they can't be used again until the next dawn. If one of the stones in a pair is destroyed, the other one becomes nonmagical.

Slippers of Spider Climbing

Wondrous Item, uncommon (requires attunement)

While you wear these light shoes, you can move up, down, and across vertical surfaces and upside down along ceilings, while leaving your hands free. You have a climbing speed equal to your walking speed. However, the slippers don't allow you to move this way on a slippery surface, such as one covered by ice or oil.

The Survivors' Jerkin

Armor, uncommon

While wearing this studded leather jerkin, you have a +1 bonus to AC. This bonus is in

addition to studded leather armor's normal bonus to AC (12 + DEX modifier)

Wand of Magic Detection

Wand, uncommon

This wand has 3 charges. While holding it, you can expend 1 charge as an action to cast the detect magic spell from it. The wand regains 1d3 expended charges daily at dawn.