



ADVENTURERS LEAGUE™



THE GHOSTLY INFESTATION

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Adventure Code: CCC-BMG-CORE03-02

Optimized For: APL 2



Tensions are high within Melvaunt after the incident at the planar portal. Reports of strange behavior from several people, from the lowliest dockworker to the members of the Council of Lords, are taxing the resources of the City Watch. Are all of these strange behaviors just paranoid imaginings, or is a more dire threat lurking in the hearts of Melvaunt's citizen?

A four-hour adventure for 1st-4th level characters

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to *The Ghostly Infestation*, a Convention Created Content D&D Adventurers League™ adventure, part of the official D&D Adventurers League™ organized play system.

This adventure is designed for three to seven 1st - 4th level characters, and is optimized for five characters with an average party level (APL) of 2. Characters outside this level range cannot participate in this adventure.

Adjusting This Adventure

This adventure provides suggestions in making adjustments for smaller or larger groups, characters of higher or lower levels, and characters that are otherwise a bit more powerful than the adventure is optimized for. You're not bound to these adjustments; they're here for your convenience.

To figure out whether you should consider adjusting the adventure, add up the total levels of all the characters and divide the total by the number of characters (rounding .5 or greater up; .4 or less down). This is the group's APL. To approximate the **party strength** for the adventure, consult the following table.

Determining Party Strength

Party Composition	Party Strength
3-4 characters, APL less than	Very weak
3-4 characters, APL equivalent	Weak
3-4 characters, APL greater than	Average
5 characters, APL less than	Weak
5 characters, APL equivalent	Average
5 characters, APL greater than	Strong
6-7 characters, APL less than	Average
6-7 characters, APL equivalent	Strong
6-7 characters, APL greater than	Very strong

Some encounters may include a sidebar that offers suggestions for certain party strengths. If a particular recommendation is not offered or appropriate for your group, you don't have to make adjustments.

Before Play at the Table

Before you start play, consider the following:

- Read through the adventure, taking notes of anything you'd like to highlight or remind yourself of while running the adventure, such as a way you'd like to portray an NPC or a tactic you'd like to use in a combat. Become familiar with the adventure's appendices and handouts.

- Gather any resources you'd like to use to aid you in running this adventure--such as notecards, a DM screen, miniatures, and battlemaps.
- Ask the players to provide you with relevant character information, such as name, race, class, and level; passive Wisdom (Perception), and anything specified as notable by the adventure (such as backgrounds, traits, flaws, etc.)

Playing the Dungeon Master

You have the most important role—facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You provide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life. To facilitate this, keep in mind the following:

You're Empowered. Make decisions about how the group interacts with the adventure; adjusting or improvising is encouraged, so long as you maintain the adventure's spirit. This doesn't allow you to implement house rules or change those of the Adventurers League, however; they should be consistent in this regard.

Challenge Your Players. Gauge the experience level of your players (not the characters), try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to deliver the experience they're after. Everyone should have the opportunity to shine.

Keep the Adventure Moving. When the game starts to get bogged down, feel free to provide hints and clues to your players so they can attempt to solve puzzles, engage in combat, and roleplay interactions without getting too frustrated over a lack of information. This gives players "little victories" for figuring out good choices from clues. Watch for stalling--play loses momentum when this happens. At the same time, make sure that players don't finish too early; provide them with a full play experience.

Adventure Primer

Adventure Background

In the wake of the sudden activation of the portal outside Melvaunt, undead spirits poured forth onto the Material Plane and began wreaking havoc. Many of the already depleted City Guard are injured, dead, or missing. The unquiet spirits are possessing townsfolk, using their bodies to settle undying scores, or simply to indulge the damned souls' appetite for destruction. To make matters worse, the unrest provokes perfectly mundane, but no less disruptive, feuds and altercations.

Captain LeCampe Eledstra needs help containing the civil disturbances. The former Red Wizard Zarabi Thar'khul, having been saved from possession by an infernal spirit, searches for the true power behind the disaster.

With the City Guard stretched dangerously thin, Zarabi implores the adventurers to help her unravel the sinister events looming over Melvaunt.

Location and NPC Summary

The following NPCs and locations feature prominently in this adventure.

Zarabi Thar'khul (zahr-RAH-bee thar-COOL).

Zarabi, a necromancer, used to be a Red Wizard. It took the murder of her husband at the hands of a rival to realize how cruel and malicious Thayans can be. She fled Thay soon after rather than seeking vengeance. She came to Melvaunt to study the effects of the planar portal. She is excited, confident, and brilliant. Initially reserved, Zarabi loves to converse about her work with those she trusts, but these days she is plagued by the troubles stemming from the portal and her recent possession. As a result, she is driven to discover the truth behind these events.

Captain LeCampe Eledstra (le-CAMP el-LED-strah). LeCampe Eledstra is a human of late middle age. She's a decent woman who takes her job of protecting Melvaunt's ordinary citizens seriously. Eledstra is tall, thin, and lanky with a shock of unruly white hair through which she runs her fingers constantly whenever she's trying to think. Despite her long years of service she is newly appointed to her position and dreads the politics

that come with it. That's all been pushed to the back burner now, with undead spirits on the loose who are undoubtedly responsible for most if not all of the unrest in Melvaunt.

Tek Morlan (TEK MORE-lahn). An enforcer for the local thieves' guild who was killed by a possessed merchant.

Baylen Sarhaas (BEH-lin SAHR-hahz). A possessed merchant who killed Tek Morlan.

Davol Port (DAH-vol Port). A member of the Council of Lords, Davol is a fit human, stout, well-groomed and finely clothed, with a deep voice. He's warm and yet forward about what he wants or would like people to do for him. He doesn't mince words but is a businessman first, treating most things in life as a transaction: payment for service and service for payment. While some evidence was found that he encouraged and maybe even assisted the orc invasion of Melvaunt, he was never convicted and has retained his seat.

Despite the potential shady dealings, Davol had nothing to do with the current troubles facing the city, at least not originally. A devious spirit from the portal is in possession of his body, and it's ready to launch a deadly gambit to take control of Melvaunt.

Adventure Overview

The adventure is broken into four parts:

Beginnings. Seeking the Trail. Zarabi Thar'kul invites the adventurers to her home to request their assistance in her research. She hopes to drive out the possessing spirits and locate the person behind the plot.

Part 1. Tensions Rise. Since the incident with the planar portal, reports of crime and unrest have risen steadily. In search of the undead spirits at work in the city, the adventurers must sort out mundane grievances from supernatural malice.

Part 2. A City in Flames. The rising tension reaches its breaking point, and a full-scale riot erupts in the city streets. Tracking down the spark that lit the flames leads to an assassination plot and an ally in mortal danger.

Part 3. The Hidden Blade. Armed with the knowledge of a possessed high-ranking noble, the party must foil the spirit's plot to assassinate and

replace the Lord of Keys. Determining which Lord Councilor is behind the plot also points toward the power behind the portal's sudden activation.

Adventure Hooks

Played CCC-BMG-CORE03-01 *The Spectral Incursion*. Characters playing the previous adventure in the series are probably returning to Melvaunt with Zarabi in tow. They can benefit from a long rest, obviously, but then they should jump right into this adventure. Assume Captain

Eledstra has briefed the adventurers on the current situation in the city, and asked them to work with Zarabi to find a solution.

New to Melvaunt. The necromancer Zarabi Thar'khul seeks out the adventurers through her previous dealings with them if they played *The Spectral Incursion*, or through Captain Eledstra if not. Failing that, she leverages her contacts in one or more of the factions to invite them to her home, having learned of their previous exploits.



BEGINNINGS. SEEKING THE TRAIL

Estimated Duration: 10 minutes

When the players are ready, read the following text. If the characters have played *The Spectral Invasion* and drove the possessing spirit from Zarabi's body, she invites them to her home for a sumptuous meal by way of thanks. Otherwise she knows of their exploits and invites them for dinner, presenting a job offer:

Zarabi Thar'khul settles into a comfortable leather chair in her study after filling your glasses with sweet red wine. Though she isn't wearing red, her shaved scalp and the intricate arcane tattoos on her face and head forever mark her former allegiance to the Red Wizards of Thay.

"I'm pleased you decided to join me for dinner," she says warmly. A few last notes of the sumptuous meal linger pleasantly in your memory. "I find myself in need of assistance, and given the situation in Melvaunt, I can't rely on the City Guard." She pauses to take a long drink and banish the unpleasant memories.

"I don't remember much from my time in thrall to one of those unquiet souls, but what I do recall chills me. Much of the unrest in the city these days is the work of more spirits, and I'm certain there is a purpose behind it all. Someone created a pact with those infernal souls, and we must discover who did this or I fear our troubles are only just beginning. In

order to work against them, I am developing a means to cast the possessing spirits out of a host, but my research has hit a wall. That's where you come in."

She gazes at each of you in turn. "With the City Guard stretched thin, they have no one to assist me, and I've learned all I can from the few possessed guardsmen they captured at the portal. Captain Eledstra tells me that disturbances and criminal activity are on the rise since the incursion, and I'm certain this is the work of these spirits. If you're willing, investigate the incidents the Guard can't, and bring possessed people to me."

The adventurers may have questions. Use the bullets below to guide that conversation:

- Since the planar portal disgorged numerous undead spirits, things have gone from bad to worse. The City Watch is overworked
- Disturbances throughout Melvaunt are on the rise. Most are minor crimes or domestic disputes among families or neighbors, but their frequency and severity are increasing.
- The majority of reports are coming in from the common sections of the city: townsfolk, craftspeople, and merchants.
- The remaining City Watch are swamped protecting the wealthy and noble citizens, and their lack of manpower is starting to show as the commoners' complaints pile up.

- The possessed guards are being held in the jail, many restrained for their own safety. There are a total of 6 possessed guards in custody. Zarabi has investigated all of them, but learned little.
- The spirits are possessing victims with disturbing ease and frequency, and Zarabi suspects the energies of the portal are responsible. The proper ritual can exorcise a spirit from its host. She needs more possessed subjects to study.
- The possessed child Eduar Hugot (from the previous adventure) is being looked at by clerics of Ilmater. They are not giving Zarabi access to the boy for study, but they are having no luck with him either.
- Captain Eledstra is aware of Zarabi's plan and has

given her permission to seek out mercenaries to assist. She's that desperate.

Zarabi provides a short list of the reports the Watch simply can't cover; a curt but signed writ from Captain Eledstra; and 50 gp per character for incentive and expenses. The work could take days.

The writ doesn't make them official members of the Watch; this preserves their ability to act as they see fit but doesn't give them any direct authority over citizens. It does, however, carry a certain amount of weight. Savvy characters can leverage this to gain advantage on the first Charisma (Intimidation or Persuasion) check made against a citizen who isn't possessed.

If the adventurers agree, continue to **Part 1: Tensions Rise**.



PART 1. TENSIONS RISE

Estimated Duration: 50 minutes

When the adventurers begin their investigation, the atmosphere in the city isn't too far from normal, but there is a faint tension noticeable in public settings.

Cold rain drizzles over the streets and buildings, casting everything in dingy gray. The people on the street go about their business as usual, but many of them cast furtive glances as they do, particularly in your direction.

Merchants hawk their wares in the open markets, but most citizens stick to the shops for their needs to get out of the cold wind.

The document provided by Zarabi lists the following reports:

- Domestic disturbance at the home of Varlen and Asha Tormholdt. Varlen is a human dock worker who lives with his wife Asha, who is an apprentice blacksmith.
- Disappearance of Tek Morlan, a person of interest in several home invasions and burglaries.

Reported by a tavern owner for not settling his tab.

- Assault and battery against Baylen Sarhaas, a general goods merchant and importer.

The adventurers can pick any direction to investigate first.

General Features

The investigations span lower- to middle-class districts of Melvaunt.

Citizens. There is a general feeling of unrest on the streets of Melvaunt. Random citizens give curt, cursory answers before going their way unless an adventurer succeeds on a DC 12 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation) check.

Weather. Cold rain sporadically falls, leaving anyone caught outside damp and uncomfortable in the chill wind. Light precipitation, and very cool for the summer.

Light. Overcast, wan gray light during daylight hours. At night there are sporadic street lamps, creating small 20-foot patches of bright light in the darkness.

Domestic Disturbance

Varlen Tormholdt is a human dockworker in his late 30s, balding with a ruddy complexion that belies a love of strong drink. He's muscular and a little overweight, quiet and gruff when speaking.

His wife Asha is of similar age. She works as an apprentice blacksmith, and Asha is sour that she's still an apprentice, blaming her jealous master (rather than her own poor skill). She's short and powerfully built with black hair pulled back. Her hands are burn-scarred and calloused.

The neighbors have complained to the City Guard of arguments growing more and more heated, and the previous night they could hear the sound of things breaking.

Both Varlen and Asha vehemently deny the reports when confronted. As interactions continue, Varlen's face grows redder, and he says less. Asha does all the talking, trying to get the adventurers to leave: "Please just let us be. Everything is fine!"

Neither of the Tormholdts are possessed; they're just both unhappy. Neither is physically or emotionally abusive toward the other. The tension of being unhappy with their lots and living in a city where so much has happened has pushed them both to the edge.

Asha has a temper, which has begun to get the better of her, and during their more frequent arguments she has taken to throwing dishes and pottery. Varlen is extremely embarrassed about this, and it takes a successful DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion), or DC 12 Charisma (Intimidation) check to get them to admit the truth.

Note to DMs: Domestic violence and the complicated issues around it are real-world problems that you or some of your players might have dealt with in your pasts. If any are uncomfortable, resolve the scene quickly and move on.

Disappearance

Speaking to the innkeeper of the Wheel and Bale Inn, the adventurers learn quickly that Tek Morlan is a hard drinker, bad gambler, and a low-ranking arm-breaker with the Iron Masks thieves' guild. Tek ran up a sizeable tab, not to mention a debt at

cards and dice, and hasn't been seen in a few days.

A successful DC 10 Charisma (Persuasion) or Intelligence (Investigation) check allows the adventurers to quickly track down Tek's home, a tiny shack in a rough neighborhood not far from the Inn. The door is unlocked, despite the stout lock it bears, and Tek is dead in the bedroom. A mace, heavy crossbow with 20 bolts, and a simple iron mask with eye, nose, and mouth slits are in the drawers of his dresser: the costume of an Iron Mask enforcer.

The smell in the house is an unpleasant bouquet of old blood and decay, and a successful DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that Tek was killed in his sleep by a pair of deadly-precise stabs with a shortsword. Whoever killed Tek was skilled and efficient. Unknown to the adventurers at this time, the possessed merchant Baylen Sarhaas killed Tek in vigilante fashion.

If the adventurers investigate Tek further, they can make DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion or Intimidation), or Intelligence (Investigation) checks over the course of several hours canvassing shady sources who might know something about the dead thug. Success indicates that Tek's most recent activity for the Iron Masks involved a protection racket over several shops and merchants. One name on the list jumps out: Baylen Sarhaas.

Assault and Battery

The final entry on the party's list is Baylen Sarhaas, a merchant who imports and sells all variety of general goods. His home and office are located just on the border between the merchant's district and the docks. Recently, Baylen ran afoul of the Iron Masks thieves' guild, and Tek Morlan led the effort to extort and intimidate him. Everything went swimmingly for Tek until Baylen was possessed.

The spirit inhabiting the merchant's body is called Sliver. She doesn't remember much of her mortal life, just that she made bad choices for good reasons, and that she was very good with a blade. Whatever she did, it landed her first in the Hells, and now here. Some of the anguish and pain clouding her soul lifted when she slipped into a breathing body, sore from the beating at the

hands of Tek. Sliver fixated on Baylen's plight, and through her obsession she's managed to subvert the compulsion driving the other spirits. She's still sowing unrest in the city, but on her own terms. She acquired weapons from a shipment in Baylen's office, tracked down Tek, and killed the evil extortionist in his sleep.

Unfortunately, the rest of the Iron Masks are wise to what happened, and they aren't going to take it lying down. Sliver expects reprisals and doesn't hold out hope that her stolen body can survive the encounter. She doesn't hold any love for her host Baylen, but she would rather not be cast out of his body and returned to the fiery pits.

Interacting with Baylen over any amount of time quickly reveals that something isn't right. Sliver can maintain the ruse of being the merchant for a time, but it's difficult. When the adventurers first speak to Baylen, keep the following points in mind:

- He assures them that he hasn't seen the men who attacked him since he filed the report, and everything seems back to normal.
- The men robbed him and intimidated him, expecting him to pay "protection" money.
- He hasn't changed clothes in days, still wearing the bloodied, dirty clothing he had on when he was beaten.
- He often ignores when they call him by his name, thinking they're talking to someone else until they repeat the question.
- A successful DC 13 Wisdom (Insight) check points out these strange behaviors if the players don't pick up on them, and reveals that he has an unfocused, glassy look to his eyes.

Baylen denies anything is wrong until it's clear the adventurers know he's lying, at which point, Sliver has little option left but to take a chance:

"All right," the merchant says with a sigh, his

voice now a bit higher, and strangely hollow. "You've got me. My name is Sliver, and yes, I'm riding this miserable man's flesh. But it's not what you think! I'm actually doing him a favor. Those masked scum were set to take everything he had. Now at least one of them got what he deserved." The man

smirks cruelly.

"But the rest, they're coming. They'll kill him for certain, and I don't want that. I'm guessing you don't either. So, I'll tell you what. I'll come along with you, quietly and all that--if you help me make sure the rest of the thieves get what's coming to them."

He leans back, that strange unfocused gaze and hollow voice an eerie combination. "I'll even throw in a little extra information once it's done, about one of the damned running loose in your city. Believe me, you don't want to meet HIM unprepared."

Sliver offers any information or explanation from the **Assault and Battery** background. If the adventurers agree to Baylen/Sliver's terms, move on to **Turning the Tables**. If they refuse, they must kill Baylen or knock him unconscious. While possessed, Baylen/Sliver has the statistics of a **spy**. Sliver has nothing but contempt for the forces that brought her to this plane and threaten to enslave her.

Turning the Tables

If the adventurers agreed to help Baylen, he reveals that a force of Iron Masks are coming tonight to take revenge on the merchant, and that the adventurers should make ready. Allow the players to set up however they'd like to meet the Iron Masks, either in the home or on the street.

The players might be intent on setting an ambush; unfortunately, the thieves now know that Baylen is more than he seems, and they kept an eye on the merchant's home with the help of a hired wizard and his raven familiar. They know there's going to be trouble, and they are prepared. When the moment arrives:

An icy wind howls in the night as the Iron Masks come for blood and gold. Figures swathed in black, wearing masks of iron and weapons drawn, emerge howling from the shadows.

The Iron Masks are spoiling for a fight, and aren't interested in taking prisoners. Two thugs lead the murderous mission, with four bandits in tow.

The bandits spread out to engage as many adventurers as they can, and to set up the thugs' pack tactics.

Though they're out for revenge, the Iron Masks aren't ready to throw their lives away for nothing. If all the bandits are defeated, the thugs flee when reduced to less than 10 hit points.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Remove one **thug**.
- **Strong:** Add one **thug**.
- **Very Strong:** The Iron Masks approach by stealth (Dexterity (Stealth) +4, group check), potentially surprising the adventurers.

Development

When the Iron Masks are defeated, Sliver offers the following through the merchant's tongue:

"Not a bad little fight. You folks sure know how to handle your business," Baylen says in that lilting, hollow voice.

"As promised, there's a ghost out there in your city called Kaash. He's working for someone, and he's easily the worst of the bunch. He killed enough in life to get himself a place of honor in the Nine Hells, and that's never a good thing. If you run into him and don't die in the first few seconds, get out of there fast."

The merchant fishes around inside his tunic, "Here, this'll help you more than me."

Treasure

Sliver gives the adventurers two potions of healing. Technically they're Baylen's, but she figures he won't mind.

Aftermath

With a possessed citizen secured, and possibly even going along with them willingly, the adventurers should return to Zarabi.

Zarabi is fascinated with Baylen and Sliver, and immediately fires questions at the possessed merchant if he's conscious. When she remembers the adventurers are there, she thanks them profusely for their help, suggesting they give her some time to work and return later that night for an update. She gives them 10 gp to get a meal and take a short rest at the local tavern, the Restful Peacock.

If she learns of Kaash, she's concerned and promises to send a messenger to retrieve them immediately from the tavern if she learns anything.

Uncooperative Players

Some players, especially those who have read the adventures and know of the impending attack upon Zarabi, might refuse to do as she asks and leave the premises for a short rest. If this happens, use distractions to get them out of range of Zarabi.

- **Zarabi Insists:** Zarabi is a strange person, and she prefers to work alone, rather than having the adventurers nearby while she tries to study her specimen. She asks them to at least wait outside.
- **Chaos in the Streets:** If the adventurers remain, they should feel the need to respond when chaos erupts in the street. This leaves Zarabi alone, as Part 2 assumes.
- **Zarabi Leaves:** Zarabi can teleport. If the adventurers refuse to give her the peace she needs to do her work, she leaves to find the solitude. She sends a message to tell the adventurers where she is now within the city, but it takes them a while to find her.



PART 2. A CITY IN FLAMES

Estimated Duration: 90 minutes

Disturbances in the city intensify from tension to outright violence. The most powerful spirit directing the events in Melvaunt catches wind of Zarabi's investigations, and he takes matters into his own hands.

The adventurers are shocked out of a complacent evening shortly before they're due to return to Zarabi as rioting erupts across the city. Many possessed citizens take to the streets and ignite pockets of violence that spread like wildfire. The adventurers must make their way through the chaos to Zarabi's home, just in time to meet the deadly Kaash.

General Features

During the rioting Melvaunt has the following general features.

Terrain. The normal streets and walkways of Melvaunt are scattered with debris, rioters, or fleeing citizens. Moving through the main streets is difficult terrain. Alleyways and side streets are clear, perhaps of use to adventurers with the urban-based backgrounds such as urchin.

Weather. The weather remains inclement, with light precipitation. While it is quite cold, the general large number of people on the streets and the occasional fires mean the temperature is not currently a hazard.

Light. Despite the overcast night, Melvaunt's streets are dimly lit thanks to the fires set here and there, except within 20 feet of the fires, which is bright light.

All Hell Breaks Loose

After the adventurers have a chance to finish a short rest, and before they set out to rejoin Zarabi, the riot erupts:

Toward the end of your evening meal at the Restful Peacock, a strange sound rumbles through the room, growing steadily louder.

Soon the din of dozens of angry voices rises like a tide, before a barrel crashes through the glass window at the front of the tavern!

A crazed, burly human swinging a broad axe bursts through the front door, his eyes flickering with cold blue light. Behind him a mob of angry citizens storms into the room, and he fixes your table with a bone-chilling grin!

The burly human is a woodcutter possessed by the mad spirit of a mass murderer, sent here by Kaash to kill, or at least delay, the adventurers from reaching Zarabi. Any adventurer who succeeds on a DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check realizes the madman is looking for them specifically.

The madman is a **berserker**.

Mob Rule. The mob doesn't attack as individual creatures, but rather presents an environmental hazard for the adventurers. The rioters throw rocks and bottles, strike with fists and clubs, but lack the capacity to do real harm to seasoned adventurers for the moment. The mob surges into the room on initiative count 10 on the first round. The mob is difficult terrain, and each adventurer that starts its turn in the mob must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or have disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the start of its next turn.

The berserker attacks to the death. If the adventurers decide to attack the rioters, assume that 10 successful attacks against AC 10, or three area of effect damaging spells or effects disperse the mob, but might leave the adventurers in trouble with the law. Once the berserker is defeated, the mob disperses and flees into the streets.

Braving the Streets

Outside on the street, the conditions are only slightly better. Riots quickly spread throughout Melvaunt, overwhelming the beleaguered City Guard.

Moving across town is difficult. The following complication makes the transition to each subsequent encounter more dangerous, and more interesting:

- Moving openly on the streets draws the rioters' attention. Make one riot attack, and apply the effect against each adventurer:

Riot. Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack: +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., or range 20/60 ft., one target, Hit: 3 (1d4 + 1) bludgeoning damage.

Any character (or the entire party with a group check) who tries to sneak through shadows or side streets and succeeds on a DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth) check avoids the attack.

Consider changing the damage type to create more interesting scenes, such as fire damage from thrown brands that used to be a house, or poison damage from rotting garbage and chamber pots.

Search and Rescue

As the adventurers near Zarabi's home, they encounter a terrible sight:

The sounds of a city tearing itself apart echo in your ears as you pick your way through chaotic streets. Almost to your destination, you catch cries for help echoing from within a burning building nearby. A man is screaming desperately, and there are faint cries of children.

A family is trapped in a burning building along the adventurers' route to Zarabi's home, and without immediate assistance, Jorgun and his three children will surely perish.

If the adventurers decide to intervene, they must contend with intense heat and falling debris. Four successful actions (examples below) free the family. Each round, however, a character in the building takes 1 fire damage and must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or take 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage from debris. Reward creativity in contending with the hazards as the adventurers rescue the family. For example:

- A nearby rain barrel is overflowing with rainwater. Using it to soak cloaks or outer clothing protects from the flames long enough for an adventurer to help. DC 13 Wisdom

(Perception) to spot the barrel.

- The family is trapped behind a collapsed ceiling beam. The beam can be lifted out of the way with a successful DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check, but any characters attempting this take 3 (1d6) fire damage unless they're protected from the flames somehow.
- A spell or other effect (such as dragonborn breath) that deals cold damage extinguishes the flames around the family for the moment.
- Thick black smoke conceals another way out, a collapsed section of wall that leads to the back room behind the family and avoids the worst of the flames. DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) notices an irregularity in the building's construction that leads to the opening.

XP Award

Each character earns 25 xp for rescuing the trapped family.

Zarabi's Fate

Once the adventurers navigate the city and arrive at Zarabi's home, they find her fighting for her life against the deadly Kaash and his minions.

The front door of Zarabi Thar'khul's home hangs from its hinges, shattered. As you approach you can hear shouts from the upper floor, and a flash of purple light shines through the windows, followed by an agonized scream!

When the adventurers enter the home and head upstairs, they find Zarabi in her library. Read:

As you near the top of the stairs, your skin prickles in the backwash of arcane power emanating from the library. Crackling black energy seeps out from the open door, blackening and cracking the wooden frame.

When you reach the library, you see Zarabi and several zombies backed into a corner. She is bleeding profusely from her side. Three figures lie on the floor, stone dead and in varying degrees of unnatural decay. Baylen the merchant lies still, either dead or

unconscious, on the floor within a circle of white chalk.

Several others stand between you and the wizard. One, a pale man with pitch black eyes, seems to be rotting before your eyes. He spares you a faint glance and orders "Kill them," his voice the cold grind of bone on bone.

The other figures turn on you to oblige his command.

Grievously wounded, Zarabi fights a desperate last stand. Her three zombies move to attack any creature that threatens her but ignore everything else.

The black-eyed man is Kaash. In this possessed body, he has the statistics of an **assassin**. His stat block is included for information purposes, as he is here to deal with Zarabi, not the adventurers. He acts on initiative count 20 in the first round and slays Zarabi with his poisoned blade unless stopped by someone acting before he can.

Even if they stop him somehow, Zarabi is already poisoned. On initiative count 15, unless the poison in her system is somehow neutralized, she dies. If the adventurers somehow find a way to save her nonetheless, Kaash can possess her body and hurl her out the window.

Once that's done, the zombies tear his body to pieces, as he was weakened by Zarabi's *circle of death*. A black cloud, vaguely humanoid in shape, spews from his eyes and mouth, fixes the adventurers with a hollow stare, then flees through the wall into the night.

Baylen the merchant is unconscious, having been successfully exorcised by Zarabi's newly completed ritual. If it becomes necessary, he has the statistics of a **noble**, but he won't awaken for several hours.

The remaining figures still alive in the disheveled library are possessed minions of Kaash: a **bandit captain** and two **guards**. They turn to face the adventurers to block their advance and give Kaash the seconds he needs to finish his work.

Once the last foe falls, read the following:

In the silence that stretches after the last of your foes falls before you, a dark crimson pool spreads out from beneath Zarabi's body. Her right hand is awkwardly stretched toward you.

Adjusting this Encounter

Here are some suggestions for adjusting this encounter, according to your group. These are not cumulative.

- **Very Weak or Weak:** Remove one **guard**.
- **Strong:** Add one **guard**.
- **Very Strong:** Add two **guards**.

A DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a glint of silver in Zarabi's hand: a small key.

When the adventurers notice the key, or after a few moments if they fail to find it, the spirit Sliver manifests for one last moment.

Bluish white light shimmers into being near Zarabi's body. The image of a human female coalesces. She looks down at Zarabi, then Baylen, and sighs silently. She stretches out her hand, pointing with fingers that are more like long slivers of metal than human digits.

She points first at Zarabi's hand, then at the desk against the far wall. She offers you a weak smile, then fades away.

Treasure

Once the adventurers have the silver key, a simple search of Zarabi's desk reveals an arcane locked drawer with a silver keyhole. The key opens the lock easily.

In the drawer are a sheaf of parchments containing notes, and a completed exorcism ritual. Beneath that stack is a *spell scroll of detect thoughts*.

The notes detail information Zarabi retrieved from Sliver despite the ghost's damaged recall, thanks to her necromancy:

- Kaash is exceptionally powerful and not like the other spirits. He is able to leave his host and possess others with extreme effort. It's very taxing for him to do, however, and leaves him weak for a time.

- Kaash's primary host is a person of great power in Melvaunt, one of the Council of Lords! Sadly, she doesn't know which Lord Councilor.
- Kaash intends to assassinate the Lord of the Keys, and in the guise of his possessed host, take that position for himself, which gives him control of Melvaunt's army.
- Kaash isn't the ultimate power behind this disaster but is himself a pawn or minion. The only indication of who that power might be is a name, circled several times: "Zerak Khimit?"

The notes also describe the exorcism ritual:

- The ritual is complete and functions to drive a possessing spirit from its host, but it can be dangerous depending on the strength of the possessing spirit.
- Anyone can attempt the ritual, not just a spellcaster, but it is exacting and must be performed precisely. It requires Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) or Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) checks opposed by the possessing spirit.

- The ritual requires the name of the possessing spirit and must be altered to target that specific entity. The ritual is beyond the adventurers' capabilities to alter correctly, but it is currently tuned to Kaash.
- A special circle diagram drawn on the floor holds the possessed creature within it. During the ritual, it can neither leave the circle nor affect anyone outside of it, but trying to attack the creature disrupts the ritual.

Aftermath

Zarabi's notes reveal the final piece of this puzzle, the fact that a member of the Council of Lords is possessed by a terrible spirit that is trying to take over Melvaunt.

Captain Eledstra can provide the adventurers with information about the Council of Lords and where they can be found. She cannot, however, help them in any other way. They must face this threat on their own, as she has no power over the Council.



PART 3. THE HIDDEN BLADE

Estimated Duration: 90 minutes

Armed with the general knowledge of Kaash's host and plans, as well as with the completed ritual that can free the Lord Councilor, the adventurers now have the daunting task of determining which member of the Council of Lords is possessed.

Once that's done, they must find a way to successfully perform the exorcism and drive out the murderous spirit Kaash.

The adventurers learn there is limited time to accomplish this crucial task, as the Council of Lords calls a special session to address the crisis quickly and decisively. The special session is scheduled to last two days. At the end of the second day, Kaash's plans come to fruition and he strikes, slaying and usurping the Lord of Keys unless the adventurers thwart him.

Invitation Only

The first step in ending the threat of Kaash is gaining access to the seat of government, which is easier said than done. With the chaos and unrest in the city, the Council Palace is closed to the public, and the guards only let official personnel enter: all part of Kaash's plan to ensure his transition to the Lord of the Keys.

Simply walking in is impossible, even with the writ from Captain Eledstra. The adventurers must use their wits to gain entrance through stealth, disguise, or an extremely careful and decisive ambush paired with an irresistible diversion. Simply assaulting the guarded entrances is suicide.

General security features and considerations are as follows:

- There are three main entrances into the Palace. The front doors, a back door from the gardens, and a servant's entrance. Each one is guarded

General Features

The Council Palace is the seat of Melvaunt power and government.

Councilors. The Council of Lords is present. The councilors spend most of their time in session, but they occasionally leave the chambers to take refreshment, check with their servants or guards, or simply to take a break. Councilors have the statistics of nobles.

Guardsmen. The last vestiges of the City Guard are concentrated in the Palace. Guards patrol the halls, but they are too few to closely monitor every side chamber. Knights guard the council chamber itself when the Council is in session.

Weather. The rain freezes into snow, and the icy wind howls. Heavy precipitation, strong wind, and extreme cold. Inside is chilly, but many fires create zones of comfort in the marble-clad halls.

Light. The overcast skies provide dim light during the day, and the cloud-choked night skies offer no light at all.

Smells and Sounds. The acrid tang of smoke from the recent riots is faint and masked by incense and perfume within the halls of power.

- by four guards, and the front entrance is commanded by a possessed knight.
- The entrance guards are on high alert and have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks made to spot hiding creatures. A few minutes spent observing the guards reveals this fact without any kind of check.
 - There are windows, but the closest to the ground is 10 feet up, and the windows on the ground floor don't open.
 - A patrol of four guards and one knight periodically circles the building.
 - The entrance guards politely but firmly turn away any unauthorized visitors. Anyone who persists is taken into custody for questioning.
 - Any guard post can sound the alarm by blowing signal horns. Once done, reinforcements arrive two rounds later, and every round thereafter. Two guards each arrive on rounds two and three, then a knight on round four.

Despite this, there are several ways the adventurers might slip past the sentries. These aren't the only means possible: don't make it easy but reward ingenuity:

- Disguising themselves as guards bypasses the advantage on Wisdom (Perception) because the guards are desperate for reinforcements. Any check made for the disguise gains advantage if the adventurers also present the writ from Captain Eledstra.
- Disguising as servants and entering through the servants' entrance also bypasses the guards' advantage.
- A significant diversion (something loud or flashy) can draw all but two guards away from an entrance. If the adventurers strike swiftly and silently, they can slip inside before the alarm is raised. This is risky, however, because when the distracted guards return they will certainly raise the alarm.
- Using silence spells makes breaking in through a ground floor window possible, as the guards inside don't have the manpower to keep a close watch on all the side chambers.
- An unsavory option: with a successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check, the adventurers locate a sewage drain near the back of the gardens. If they can avoid the patrol, and remove the rusty grate covering the drain—a DC 15 Dexterity check with thieves' tools, or Strength (Athletics) DC 17—they can slip into the palace undetected at the cost of crawling through filth.

Once inside, as long as they don't stand out terribly (such as by being covered in sewage), the adventurers can move around with relative freedom. In disguise, the guards don't give them a second look unless they're caught doing something suspicious.

XP Award

Each character earns 50 xp for gaining entrance to the palace without raising the alarm.

The Shell Game

Once inside the adventurers enjoy a brief respite, thanks to the guards' belief that anyone who's in the palace is supposed to be there, coupled with their gross short-handedness. Once in, the next order of business is to discover which member of the Council of Lords is host to the deadly spirit Kaash.

Any of the following ability checks (DC 13 as a starting point) can yield useful information: Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) to steer a conversation, Intelligence (Investigation) to make deductions about which individuals have sway over certain guards, Dexterity (Stealth) to lurk and eavesdrop, or Wisdom (Insight) to spot the telltale odd behaviors of the possessed. Again, reward inventive ideas.

Spells that charm targets or discern mental stats, such as *suggestion* or *detect thoughts*, can be invaluable, allowing the caster to gain advantage or to skip ability checks entirely and jump straight to information. Keep in mind that Davol himself wears a ring of mind shielding, so reading his mind is futile. Even that can be some information, however, as he doesn't make a saving throw—he's simply immune.

A paladin's divine senses or similar features can reveal possessed guardsmen, since they register as undead. Again, this tactic is of no use against Davol directly because of his ring.

The Lord Councilors are more open to speaking with the adventurers once they are inside. They listen to them and take any threats seriously, although none wants to be the one to stop the proceedings. The adventurers must come up with incontrovertible evidence of the possession before they stop deliberations and take action.

The following information can help narrow down the truth:

- The emergency session was called by Councilor Thomas Druat, an incredibly ambitious Lord who had some vested interest in the planar portal. (True, but Thomas was put up to it by Davol. If the adventurers converse with him, he shares this).
- Councilor Davol Port has been pushing to hire

mercenaries to bolster the City Guard and army.

- Possessed guards often check in with Davol. If the adventurers witness two or more known possessed doing so, a successful DC 13 Intelligence (Investigation) check puts two and two together.

Fortunately for the adventurers, Kaash was quite distracted in Zarabi's home, so he doesn't recognize them unless they do or say something to call attention to their connection to Zarabi.

Council of Lords

The Council of Lords consists of 27 merchants, nobles, and other wealthy people who can afford to buy and maintain a position of power within Melvaunt. Normally, one of the 27 is name Lord Envoy, leader of the Council and nominal political leader of Melvaunt. Currently the position is vacant, forcing the council to make decisions by vote.

One of the lords is voted the head of Melvaunt's army, called Lord of Keys. Similarly, the Lord of Waves is voted as leader of Melvaunt's navy. These two are free to make unilateral defense decisions to keep Melvaunt safe, but they must answer to the council, who can revoke their positions by vote and appoint a new Lord of Keys or Lord of Waves.

Currently the Lord of Keys is **Jasper Nanther**, a trusted and beloved soldier and weapons dealer. The Lord of Waves is **Samma Bruil**, an expert sailor and fish merchant who is not known for her political skills but is respected by her navy. They have been given great power in the wake of the troubles of the last two years.

Other Councilors. The Council of Lords is a political organization ruled by wealthy merchants. As such, they come together to, first and foremost, protect their own economic interests. They look out for the average citizens of Melvaunt just enough to keep them from undertaking armed revolt. Below are three Councilors whom the adventurers might interact with:

Thomas Druat. Druat is one of the more powerful members of the Council of Lords, leading a large bloc of the Councilors who follow his lead in voting and ruling. He foolishly interferes with

any attempts to close the portal, hoping that it can someday be used as a means to move his valuable iron ore and finished iron products around Toril.

Davol Port. In a group of scheming, self-interested sociopaths, Davol is the most dangerous—even when he is not possessed by a dangerous spirit. He colluded with orcs to help overrun the city, but the evidence could never be found. He is conniving, charismatic, and dangerous.

Enra Leiyraghon (EN-rah lay-RAH-gun). An energetic and able leader of the families that control the agricultural and livestock trade in Melvaunt, Enra is the closest thing to a human being on the Council of Lords, and she leads the only coalition that can rival Davol's caucus.

XP Award

Each character earns 50 xp for successfully identifying Davol Port as the possessed councilor.

Endgame

Once the adventurers are certain of Kaash's host identity, only one thing remains: driving the spirit out for good.

Again, this is easier said than done. The first requirement of the exorcism ritual is a circle with glyphs of power drawn in white chalk. The subject must enter and remain within the circle for the entirety of the ritual. The adventurers must find a safe place to set up their circle, which is decidedly suspicious should anyone find it or catch them drawing it. Preparing the circle is relatively simple and takes 5 minutes to draw.

Once inside the completed circle, Kaash can't leave it, nor can he attack or affect anyone on the outside of it.

Getting him into the circle is the first major hurdle, and one false step could bring the entire weight of the City Guard down on their heads. Here are some possible ways to get Davol into the circle:

- Disguised as guards or servants, a successful DC 14 Charisma (Deception) check tricks him into following the "messenger" for a few minutes, enough to lead him into the circle.
- Covering the circle with something to conceal it, such as a rug or tarp, doesn't make it any less effective. A DC 14 Dexterity (Sleight of

Hand) check hides the circle from sight without smudging it (which would render it useless).

- Using darkness, fog, or smoke to obscure the area, then leading him through, or placing the circle in a location he's likely to go on his own, such as near a guard post where he meets with the possessed guardsmen.
- The direct approach: The adventurers reveal their true identity, then flee Kaash's wrath. He gives chase, intent on slaying the interlopers and follows straight into the circle.

The circle functions similarly to a *scroll of protection*, except it traps Kaash inside it instead of keeping him out. Once inside:

- One character can begin the exorcism. It requires chanting as an action, and a DC 10 Intelligence (Arcana or Religion) check). On a success, Davol gains one level of exhaustion. On a failure, the ritualist gains one level of exhaustion. When either Davol or the ritualist reaches five levels and falls unconscious, the ritual is over. If Davol falls unconscious in this way, Kaash is driven from his body and banished back to the Nine Hells. If the ritualist falls unconscious, the ritual ends and the circle is ruined. A new one must be drawn to try again.
- One other person can assist the ritualist with the Help action, but both the ritualist and assistant gain exhaustion on failed checks.
- If the ritualist doesn't use their action to continue the ritual, the ritual ends, Davol loses any levels of exhaustion gained from the ritual, and the adventurers must begin again. The circle is not ruined, however.
- Another adventurer can step in to take over before the first ritualist falls unconscious to keep Davol contained.
- If Davol takes damage, or if he is the target of a spell, the ritual ends and the circle is ruined.

Depending on the approach, the adventurers may have to fend off guards after sounding the alarm, buying time to complete the exorcism. If that occurs, reinforcements arrive as described in **Invitation Only**. In this instance, more reinforcements arrive following the same timing, one group after another, until the adventurers either succeed or fail.

Development

If the adventurers succeed in exorcising Kaash, read the following:

The Councilor's body begins to shudder as the exorcism reaches a climax. His eyes roll back in his head until only the whites show. Every muscle in his body goes rigid as black smoke pours out of his eyes and mouth. Once again, it forms into the vaguest of humanoid figures, thrashing and howling as it does.

The creature's voice, a spine-tingling rasp, shrieks out a name in fury and disbelief, "Zerak! No!"

That final word draws out into an agonized wail, fading as the black form is pulled into the center of the circle and vanishes into the floor.

The councilor lets out an explosive breath, and collapses.

Councilor Davol is alive but exhausted and unconscious. Any possessed guards at this point flee their posts, their nerve broken at seeing or hearing their leader's defeat.

When he regains consciousness, which takes until the next morning, Davol is extremely grateful, and he insists on seeing the adventurers to thank them despite his lingering exhaustion. He insists on rewarding them personally and won't take no for an answer. He has his people deliver a chest of gold and silver coins shortly thereafter.

Davol has a spotty memory regarding his time in the thrall of Kaash, but one thing he remembers vividly is the estate of the Red Wizard Zerak Kimit outside of the city. He can't remember why, but he knows it's important.

Alternatively, if things go south, the adventurers may end up having to kill the councilor to end the possession—merely knocking him unconscious isn't successful. In that case, Kaash still emerges from the councilor's body, but this time from his mortal wounds. He screams the Red Wizard's name, giving the adventurers a clue to investigate the final chapter of this mystery, but it also heaps a world of trouble upon them.

Without concrete evidence of the possession, such as another Lord Councilor witnessing the spirit emerging from Davol's corpse, the adventurers are now wanted for the murder of a lord.

Captain Eledstra knows enough to understand the truth, but her hands are tied. She gives the adventurers enough of a head start that they can avoid capture initially, and she implores them to find evidence of the Red Wizard's involvement to clear their good names. The Red Wizard Zerak Kimit seems the natural place to investigate.

XP Award

If they successfully exorcise Kaash and save Councilor Davol, award each PC an additional 100 XP.

Treasure

If Davol lived, he grants the adventurers 500 gp to divide amongst them, and his ring of mind shielding.

Conclusion for Failure

If the adventurers fail to defeat Kaash, at the end of the second day of deliberation, Davol is found dead at the hands of the Lord of Keys Jasper Nanther. Nanther claims that Davol attacked him, but he was able to defend himself. In reality, Kaash now inhabits Jasper, and the entire army of Melvaunt is in the spirit's control.

If the adventurers are arrested trying to defeat Kaash, they are taken to jail until the preceding events take place. At that point, Captain Eledstra secretly oversees their release and tells them to leave the city, travel to the estate of the Red Wizard Zerak Kimit, and clear their names.

Conclusion for Success

With Kaash banished one way or the other, the most direct threat to Melvaunt is forestalled. The ultimate truth behind the horde of spirits is yet to be revealed, however, and the name Zerak Kimit, a Red Wizard of Thay who lives outside of the city proper, is the only lead the adventurers have.

Zarabi is mourned by Captain Eledstra and Truushee the half-orc sage and laid to rest with honor. The adventure ends as the adventures set out to find the Red Wizard. The series continues with *BMG-CCC-CORE3-03 The Spirited Investigation*.

Rewards

Make sure players note their rewards on their adventure log sheets. Give your name and DCI number (if applicable) so players can record who ran the session.

Experience (Min/Max XP: 450/600)

Total up all combat experience earned for defeated foes and divide by the number of characters present in the combat. For non-combat experience, the rewards are listed per character.

Combat Awards

Name of Foe	XP Per Foe
Thug	100
Bandit	25
Spy	200
Berserker	450
Bandit Captain	450
Guard	25

Non-Combat Awards

Task or Accomplishment	XP Per Char
Rescue the trapped family	25
Entering the palace with no alarm	50
Identifying the possessed councilor	50
Exorcising Kaash and saving Davol	100

Treasure

The characters receive the following treasure, divided up amongst the party. Treasure is divided as evenly as possible. Gold piece values listed for sellable gear are calculated at their selling price, not their purchase price.

Treasure Awards

Item Name	GP Value
Zarabi's Payment	50/character
Final Reward	500 total

Consumable magic items should be divided up however the group sees fit. If more than one character is interested in a specific consumable magic item, the DM can determine who gets it randomly should the group be unable to decide.

Ring of Mind Shielding

Ring, uncommon

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* on page 191.

Potion of Healing

Potion, common

This item can be found in the *Player's Handbook*.

Spell Scroll of Detect Thoughts

Scroll, uncommon

This item can be found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Player Rewards

For completing this mission, the characters earn downtime and renown as described in the D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide (ALDMG).

Renown

Each character receives one renown with their faction at the conclusion of this adventure.

DM Rewards

In exchange for running this adventure, you earn DM Rewards as described in the D&D Adventurers League Dungeon Master's Guide (ALDMG).

Appendix:

NPC / Monster Statistics

Guard

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +2

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

Bandit

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-lawful alignment

Armor Class 12 (leather armor)

Hit Points 11 (2d8 + 2)

Speed 30 ft.

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

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.

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

Bandit Captain

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-lawful alignment

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 65 (10d8 + 20)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +4, Dex +5, Wis +2

Skills Athletics +4, Deception +4

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any two languages

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Actions

Multiattack. The captain makes three melee attacks: two with its scimitar and one with its dagger. Or the captain makes two ranged attacks with its daggers.

Scimitar. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d4 + 3) piercing damage.

Reactions

Parry. The captain adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the captain must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Knight

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 18 (plate)

Hit Points 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Con +4, Wis +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Brave. The knight has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

Actions

Multiattack. The knight makes two melee attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest). For 1 minute, the knight can utter a special command or warning whenever a nonhostile creature that it can see within 30 feet of it makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add a d4 to its roll provided it can hear and understand the knight. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time. This effect ends if the knight is incapacitated.

Reactions

Parry. The knight adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the knight must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Assassin

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 15 (studded leather)

Hit Points 78 (12d8 + 24)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +7, Int +5

Skills Acrobatics +7, Deception +4, Perception +4, Stealth +11

Damage Resistances poison

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Thieves' cant plus any two languages

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Assassinate. During its first turn, the assassin has advantage on attack rolls against any creature that hasn't taken a turn. Any hit the assassin scores against a surprised creature is a critical hit.

Evasion. If the assassin is subjected to an effect that allows it to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the assassin instead takes no damage if it succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if it fails.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). The assassin deals an extra 13 (4d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the assassin that isn't incapacitated, and the assassin doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. The assassin makes two shortsword attacks.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Light Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. Hit: 7 (1d8 + 3) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) poison damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

Berserker

Medium humanoid (any race), any chaotic alignment

Armor Class 13 (hide armor)

Hit Points 67 (9d8 + 27)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	9 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 2 (450 XP)

Reckless. At the start of its turn, the berserker can gain advantage on all melee weapon attack rolls during that turn, but attack rolls against it have advantage until the start of its next turn.

Actions

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

Thug

Medium humanoid (any race), any non-good alignment

Armor Class 11 (leather armor)

Hit Points 32 (5d8 + 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills Intimidation +2

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any one language (usually Common)

Challenge 1/2 (100 XP)

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

Actions

Multiattack. The thug makes two melee attacks.

Mace. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d10) piercing damage.

Spy

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12

Hit Points 27 (6d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +5, Insight +4, Investigation +5, Perception +6, Persuasion +5, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +4

Senses passive Perception 16

Languages any two languages

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Cunning Action. On each of its turns, the spy can use a bonus action to take the Dash, Disengage, or Hide action.

Sneak Attack (1/Turn). The spy deals an extra 7 (2d6) damage when it hits a target with a weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll, or when the target is within 5 feet of an ally of the spy that isn't incapacitated, and the spy doesn't have disadvantage on the attack roll.

Actions

Multiattack. The spy makes two melee attacks.

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

Hand Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Noble

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 15 (breastplate)

Hit Points 9 (2d8)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills Deception +5, Insight +4, Persuasion +5

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages any two languages

Challenge 1/8 (25 XP)

Actions

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

Reactions

Parry. The noble adds 2 to its AC against one melee attack that would hit it. To do so, the noble must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.