



Animal & Adventures

Secrets of Gullet Cove



Sourcebook







Credits

Creator & Designer

Russ Charles

Lead Writer & Designer

Richard August

Adventure Writing

Rachael Cruz

Jason Durall

Additional Writing & World Lore

Gaz Bowerbank

Kate Charles

Barry Stevens

Editing

Richard August

Emma Benfield

Russ Charles

Ben Clapperton

Isa Shaw-Abulafia

Cover Art

Cindy Avelino

Character Concept Design

April Prime

Illustrations

Cindy Avelino

Paul Canavan

Cynthia Fernandez

GarciaViktoria

Gavrilenko

Ilse Gort

Katy Grierson

Becca Hallstedt

Leesha Hannigan

Suzanne Helmigh

Sam Hogg

Forrest Imel

Valeria Ivanova

Christina Kraus

Tom Lishman

Sam Santala

April Prime

Andrea Radek

Glynn Seal

Katie Winchester

Sculpting

Russ Charles

Ben Charles

Tom Lishman

Holly Woolford

Graphic Design & Layout

Tom Hutchings

Cristina Ruiz

Abigail Thornton

Production

Matt Elliott

Tom Rochford

*An extra-special thanks
to our amazing 5,884
Kickstarter backers who
helped bring this project
to life!*

Steamforged Games Team

Co-Founders

Mat Hart (CCO)

Rich Loxam (CEO)

Chairman

Simon Spalding

Non-Executive Director

Ian Livingstone CBE

Design

Alex Hall

Sherwin Matthews

Development & QA

Richard August

Bryce Johnston

Samantha Laydon

Steve Margetson

Fraser McFetridge

Jamie Perkins

Dominic Westerland

Sculpting & Art

Ben Charles

Russ Charles

Tom Lishman

Doug Telford

Holly Woolford

Graphic Design & Layout

Cristina Ruiz

Abigail Thornton

Production

Ben Clapperton

Matthew Elliott

Emma Foster

Louis Moore

Aitch Parker

Tom Rochford

Finance & IT

John Higham

Adam King

Vanessa O'Brien

Marketing & Community Management

Derek Baker

Charlotte Cloud

Sean Dooley

Jamie Giblin

Chynna-Blue Haycastle

Ronan Kelly

Licensing and Commercial

Emma Benfield

Toby Davies

Firoz Rana

Human Resources & Operations

Gareth Reid

Fulfilment & Logistics

Mike Appleton

Alex Black

David Fear

Judy Guan

John Hockey

Lee Hughes

Richard Jennings

Callum Jessop

Animal Adventures: Secrets of Gullet Cove is Copyright © 2020 Steamforged Games Ltd. No part of this product may be reproduced without specific permission. Steamforged Games is a trademark of Steamforged Games Ltd. Steamforged Games Ltd is located at Unit 1 Kestrel Road, Trafford Park, Manchester, M17 1SF, United Kingdom and can be contacted by telephone on +44 161 429 0000 or by email to support@steamforged.com. Retain this information for your records. Actual components may vary from those shown. Designed in the United Kingdom and made in China.

Contents



Introduction7

Dogs: New Race and Class Features.....8

Canine Traits.....9

Canine Sizes.....9

Breed Abilities.....10

New Background: Awakened Dogs12

Suggested Characteristics14

Class Options17

Cats: New Race and Class Features.....30

Feline Traits.....31

Feline Sizes.....31

Breed Abilities.....32

New Background: Awakened Cat34

Suggested Characteristics35

Class Options39

Welcoming Dark Rules.....52

Religions and Guilds.....53

The Good Mother.....54

Aspects of the Good Mother ... 55

Cat Religion.....56

Animal Guilds.....58

Joining a Guild 58

The Cradle 58

The Houndlings 59

Order of the Golden Collar... 60

The Watchers 61

Guild Marks 62

Gullet Cove Gazetteer...64

A Brief History of Gullet Cove..68

*Awakened Animals
and Gullet Cove*..... 70

Geographical Features.....71

Key Town Locations.....74

Guild Houses.....97

Minor Guilds..... 101

The Gullet Cove Year.....102

The Isle of Dogs104

History..... 104

Inhabitants..... 105

Conditions..... 105

Key Locations..... 106

Adventures on
the Isle of Dogs.....109

Mutt & Bailey and the

Legend of the Golden Crab... 109

NPCs and Bestiary:

Villains and Minions.....113

Denizens of Gullet Cove.....129

New Heroes.....147

Magic Items.....160

Gullet Cove Magic Items...161

Animal Magic Items.....168

Cat Magic Items..... 168

Dog Magic Items..... 170

Campaign Guide.....172

Adventure 1:

A Gullet Cove Hello176

Adventure Overview.....176

Arriving in Gullet Cove 177

Stop! Thief!..... 177

The Alleyway.....178

Master Pettifer's Emporium .. 179

The Watch.....181

The Market.....183

The Master's Retreat.....184

The Cellar.....185

The Garden.....186

Wrapping Things Up.....186

Adventure 2:

Tooth & Paw187

Adventure Overview.....187

A Plea for Help.....188

First Things First.....189

The Watcher.....190

Working with the Watcher...191

Inside the Warehouse.....191

The Pet Shop.....195

Adventure 3:

The Enemy of My Enemy 195

Adventure Overview.....195

Opening Scene.....196

Sewer Explosion..... 197

Rampaging Rataclysm!..... 198

Mob Rule..... 199

So...What's Next?..... 199

Assault on Pawcinct 13.....200

Graveyard.....203

The Mausoleum..... 203

Wrapping Things Up.....204

Adventure 4:

Kill Ten Rats205

Adventure Overview.....205

Scene One: Going Gold!.....207

A Visit to the

Port Warden's Office..... 208

Asking Around at the Docks.. 209

Meeting with the Thieves Guild..210

The Mangers' Hideout..... 211

The Obstacles..... 213

The End of the Tunnel..... 214

The Rat Queen..... 214

You Thought it Would End

Without a Fight, Did You?... 215

Wrapping Things Up.....216

Adventure 5: Dark Doings at Grimmsmouth Hall ..217

Adventure Overview.....217

Fur-ther Breakdown

and Secrets.....218

So What's Really Happening?

(Spoilers)..... 218

Grimmsmouth Hall.....219

The Outside..... 219

Top Dog, Top Floor,

Cursed Door..... 222

The Drawing Room..... 223

The Big Bad Battle..... 225

The Final Confrontation.... 226

Notes and

Licensing Agreement...232





Introduction

Welcome to *Animal Adventures: Secrets of Gullet Cove*!

This book provides you with everything you need to tell exciting tales (or should that be tails?) of derring-do, featuring the bravest adventurers on four legs! Whether it's comprehensive rules for creating brave animal adventurers, an intriguing setting with plot hooks galore, or a gripping adventure for you to play, you'll find what you're looking for in these pages!

What do you need?

This book is a supplement, designed to offer you a new way of playing the world's favourite roleplaying game. To make use of its contents, you'll need the three core books, a set of dice, some pens and pencils and, of course, some friends who want to make awesome animal adventurers! Everything else is in this book — If you want to fully immerse yourself, you can also add the incredible miniatures and maps from Steamforged Games' *Animal Adventures* range!

What's in this book then?

That's a good question...well, let's start with all new and expanded rules for creating and playing animal characters. Want to be a formidable barbarian pug? The rules are here. Want to be a sneaky feline thief? Turn to the appropriate page. Everything you need to build a unique animal adventurer is here. With new class features and unique feats, whatever you want your cat or dog to be, they can be.

Curious about Gullet Cove? Well, there's an extensive gazetteer, showing you everything you could possibly need to know about this enigmatic port, revealing its mysteries, and detailing its more interesting residents. Fancy a visit to the Home for Retired Pirates, Buccaneers, and Other Practitioners of Derring-do? What about applying for membership in the Seafarers Guild? It's all here, ready to explore. Just turn to page 62 and you're there!

Maybe you want to get straight to playing? Well, we've provided you with a host of pregenerated player characters and some adventures to help you do exactly that! You'll find these on page 127 and page 174.

So why are you holding me up with this introduction?!
We're sorry!

We just wanted to say, finally...have fun exploring Gullet Cove! It's a small town but big on adventure, and we hope you enjoy exploring it as much as we enjoyed creating it.

So what are you waiting for?
Turn over the page and start your adventure!



Dogs: New Race and Class Features

Endlessly variable, constantly adaptable, dogs have been shaped by their entwined history with other races until little trace of their wild ancestry remains — although all dogs still think of themselves as wolves, to some extent. Dogs are inexhaustible sources of energy, devotion, and love. When a dog makes a friend, it has made a friend forever. Nothing can break that bond; and a dog defends its companions against anything and then licks their faces afterwards, just to remind them that they're definitely still friends. They might have forgotten in the five minutes between being rescued and being licked, after all. Better safe than sorry.

Loyal and True

Dogs are naturally loyal to those they consider part of their pack (see...they're still kind of wolves!) Dog companions are excellent guards and amazing hunters — so they've been trusted companions for millennia. Whether they have been at the side of a half-orc ranger, calmly stalking a moose, or helping an elven wizard select the right herb for a magical brew, dogs have always been there to help. It's in their nature. While they can be ferocious fighters when cornered, dogs are usually kindly creatures. They are fiercely protective and devoted to helping those they have chosen as their kin. That's the big thing about dogs; they choose who they love very quickly and it takes an awful lot to change their minds.

Who's a Good Dog?

Dogs have the capacity to make their homes almost anywhere they choose, but the most common places they are found is within the settlements of other races, acting in a wide range of roles. A dog who has been awakened tends to remain closely linked with their adopted society, taking on a new job but behaving in much the same way and with much the same group of friends (though new ones are always very, very welcome!). A dog's sense of home is usually defined by the company around them rather than a place, and dogs are comfortable travelling widely as long as they have the constancy of friendship.

A Nose for Adventure

Dogs gifted with unusual intelligence seek adventure for many reasons. Their instinctive urge to support and assist, coupled with the ability to reflect on the world in deep terms can be more than enough to lead a dog from the warmth of a home into the wider world.



Canine Traits

All dogs begin with the following traits:

🐾 Ability score increase:

Your Charisma score increases by 1.

🐾 Age:

Dogs reach maturity around 18 months and usually live between 10 and 15 years.

🐾 Alignment:

Dogs tend towards good alignments due to their natural urge to be helpful, but there are exceptions to this.

🐾 Size:

Dogs vary in height and length enormously. Your size is dependent on your subrace, see below.

🐾 Speed:

Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

🐾 Languages:

You can speak and read Common, Canine, and one other language of your choice. Canine is a special language known only to dogs and the very few taught its subtleties. It relies on a combination of bark, scent, and gesture.

🐾 Keen Senses:

Dogs have advantage on Perception checks based on smell or hearing and disadvantage on Perception checks which depend on colour recognition.

🐾 Worse than the Bark:

You have a natural Bite attack. You are proficient with this attack and it counts as both a weapon attack and an unarmed attack. This attack does 1d6 + your strength modifier damage. This increases to 1d8 + your strength modifier at level 5, and 1d10 + your strength modifier at level 10.

🐾 Many Breeds, Many Forms:

Dogs are highly diverse. Choose one of the following subraces to reflect your chosen breeding and select one breed ability from the list below. You may only choose one such ability.

Canine Sizes

Big Dog

Big dogs are the strongest and most physically imposing animals in the canine family. Mastiffs, St. Bernard's, and Alsations all fall into this size of breed.

🐾 Size

Medium.

🐾 Ability score increase

Constitution score increases by 1.

Regular Dog

Regular dogs may be the most common sized dogs and tend to be known for energy and hale sturdiness. This includes Spaniels, Bulldogs, and many crossbreeds.

🐾 Size

Medium.

🐾 Ability score increase

Strength score increases by 1.

Lap Dog

Tiny of body but giant of heart, lap dogs are known for nimble movement and fearless attitude. This category includes Chihuahuas, Terriers, and Maltese.

🐾 Size

Small.

🐾 Ability score increase

Dexterity score increases by 1.



Breed Abilities

🐾 Assistance Dog

You are gifted at guiding others. You can nominate a creature within five feet of you as a bonus action. That creature may make their next Perception check or save at advantage.

🐾 At Their Heels

You are skilled in harrying your opponent no matter what. When a target provokes an opportunity attack from you, if you hit then you may also move up to half your movement speed towards your foe.

🐾 Bloodhound

You are a master of tracking. You have advantage on Wisdom (Survival) checks on rolls related to tracking a target using scent.

🐾 Catch and Fetch

You've played *a lot* of fetch and you could pluck a stick out of the air in a thunderstorm. You can use your reaction to reduce the damage from a ranged weapon attack by 1d10 + your Dexterity modifier. If you reduce the damage to 0 in this way, you catch the weapon.

🐾 Round 'em Up!

You are a natural at herding creatures...even cats when necessary! When you hit a creature with an attack of opportunity, you may move that creature up to 10 feet in any direction before it resolves the rest of its movement.

🐾 Comforting Companion

Whether it's letting them stroke your fur, or you giving them a lick on the face...you just make people feel better. When you share an entire short or long rest with up to six creatures you choose within 30 feet of you, each regains additional hit points equal to your level.

🐾 Digger

You just have to dig! You have advantage on ability checks for digging. In combat, if you are in an environment which can be dug into by your paws, you may take an action to go prone and gain half cover.

🐾 Dogged Persistence

You possess boundless energy and determination. When you take damage, you can use your reaction to gain resistance to all of the triggering damage. After you use this ability, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

🐾 Faithful Friend

You are able to aid those around you just by your presence. Once per long rest, when an ally within 30ft fails a saving throw, ability check, or attack roll, you may use your reaction to allow them to attempt the roll again.

🐾 Grabbing Bite

You have a strong and powerful mouth and neck. When you succeed in hitting a creature of your size or smaller with your Bite attack you may declare it is grappled. If you do so, the grappled creature only takes half damage but cannot move until it has freed itself.

🐾 Guard Dog

You are gifted at reacting to attacks on your companions. If an ally is hit by an attack within 5 feet of you, you may make an attack against the attacker as your reaction for your turn.

🐾 Hunting Hound

You are a natural at seeking the quarry of your allies. You have advantage on an attack roll against a creature if at least one of your allies is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

🐾 Incessant Barking

You have a bark that is hard to ignore, driving foes to distraction. Once per long rest you may affect all enemy creatures within 15 feet. Targets must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw ($DC = 10 + \text{Wisdom modifier}$) or immediately move 10 feet away from you. If a creature cannot move 10ft away, it is stunned for 1d3 turns.

🐾 Old Dog, New Trick

Choose one skill and gain proficiency in it.

🐾 Retriever

Some species might forget where they left things. Not you. You can find just about anything. You gain advantage on Intelligence (Investigation) checks.

🐾 Shake It Off

It's not in a dog's nature to feel sorry for itself. You can get through just about anything! Once per long rest, you make take advantage on any saving throw to end a condition currently affecting you.

🐾 Snow Dog

You are naturally adapted to cold weather, and freezing climates. As a result you have resistance to cold damage.

🐾 Sprinter

You are built for bursts of impressive speed. Increase your base move by 10 feet. When you use the Dash action, you can ignore the first opportunity attack you would provoke.

🐾 The Eyes Have It

You are just the cutest. You have advantage on any Charisma based ability checks.

🐾 Thick Coat

Your thick and glossy fur is a natural defence. You have an armour class of $12 + \text{your Dexterity modifier}$ when not wearing armour.

🐾 Upright and Alert

You can never be surprised. If your party is surprised, you will act normally in initiative order.



New Background: Awakened Dogs

You woke up, or you were woken up. And you knew things were going to be different. After a walk. And a good wag of the tail. And maybe a run. Then, then, things were different. Because now you could talk! And think! And go for walks! Well...no, you could always do that. But now you could do it better because you could talk about it. You're not exactly sure how you got like this but it doesn't really matter, does it? No. There're far more important things to worry about now. Like...where did you leave your food? And what kind of adventures are you going to get into now? Because you've suddenly realised just how big the world is and how much of it you want to see!

As an awakened dog, you have determined that the life of a mute companion and pet is not for you. The one place in this world where the unique and extraordinary have a chance to realise their ambition and seek answers is the path of adventure, compelling you out into the wider world.

You still retain a deeply held desire to be of use and benefit to those around you. Now, equipped with a perspective on the world few of your kind ever possess, you have set your paws on an incredible journey...

Awakened Dogs

You woke up one day and knew immediately you were different. Yes, you could still wag your tail. Yes, you could still deafen anyone you fancied by barking *really* loudly. But you suddenly found that your mouth was able to form new shapes...shapes that meant the words you'd always had to settle for merely responding to could now be said out loud! It made getting fed a lot easier, that's for certain. But you also began to dream of different things...wanderlust filled your brain. Curiosity for things other than new smells and new places to dig couldn't be put off for long. What was out there? What was waiting to be found? You wanted to know, in a way you never had before. And so you set out, into the world, to find a new life, new friends and companions. To start your life as an awakened dog. Still a dog, of course, but now, with a little bit extra.



Suggested Characteristics

You're a dog, and just as a dog owner is shaped by their pet, you've been shaped by the people and creatures you've met. Your personality is a tapestry, composed of bits and pieces of those you've known and loved. Your bonds with those people or favourite objects you have always treasured are unbreakable and are your deepest and most abiding. Your flaws may be related to being overprotective to the point of jealousy, or a deeply buried resentment at the way dogs have been treated by some unsavoury aspects of society, which conflicts with your other drives and emotions.

Skill Proficiencies: Insight, Persuasion.

Tool Proficiencies: None.

Languages: Any one of player's choice.

Feature: You can use the vast and often disregarded population of dogs that is found throughout society to your advantage. You are always aware of the local canine population and can seek information about the locality and goings on from the many dogs you encounter. By sniffing popular places and scents, you can instantly learn limited information about a place such as quality of water and food supplies, population levels, general mood and atmosphere. Furthermore, you can usually find a friendly local dog who can help you seek safe and welcoming accommodation, food, and shelter.

Equipment: An object relating to your awakening (such as the worn scroll you slept under as a puppy or a locket with the image of the family you were born to), well chewed toy, and a collar pouch containing 15 gp.



Personality Trait

- 🐾 I tend to the dramatic, as a creature of impulse I have few middle gears and often narrate my circumstances with great flair and florid expression.
- 🐾 I dislike conflict and try to be a calming mediator, seeking common ground in conflict.
- 🐾 I have a tendency to diffuse tension with humour and love doing silly tricks to make people like me.
- 🐾 When in a new place, I have a need to... establish my ownership...
- 🐾 I am the one who charges into every situation with gusto, rarely stopping to think about consequences.
- 🐾 I get bored easily if I'm not the centre of attention.
- 🐾 I love to play more than anything, be it racing around with children or more cerebral fare.
- 🐾 I'm constantly delighted by fooling people into thinking I'm a normal dog, and I'm not against using this to my advantage.

Ideal

- 🐾 **Selflessness.** I believe in self-sacrifice and unhesitating action to improve the lives of others.
- 🐾 **Aid.** My skills are a gift to the world, and I must assist in endeavours where I can be of use.
- 🐾 **Family.** Nothing is more important than the people we love. I'd do anything to keep family together.
- 🐾 **Comfort.** I cannot stand to see a creature in pain, and will act within my power to provide succour and lift spirits.
- 🐾 **Knowledge.** I have a unique gift and perspective, and I must share that, and further my knowledge of the world so maybe more like me can follow.
- 🐾 **Change.** My enhanced understanding of the world shows me many injustices. I have a deep desire to enact change within the world order, one day at a time.



Bond

- 🐾 The magical writings of my lost master gave me this gift, now I bear them to the place they must be laid.
- 🐾 The one who did this to me did not expect me to escape. But my return will be even more shocking.
- 🐾 When the one who made me this way set off on their long quest, they were ignorant of what they had given me. I will find them and together we will achieve greatness.
- 🐾 I made a promise that the child I knew as a pup would always be safe. I work towards that still.
- 🐾 This object may look like junk, but it is the last tie to a lost past. One day I will return that past to the world.
- 🐾 There are others like me, for I am their kin. I will seek them out no matter what.

Flaw

- 🐾 I cannot escape the loneliness I feel as a singular intelligence among animals and long to meet another like myself.
- 🐾 Deep down, I am angry at the way my species is treated, and I am easily offended by condescending attitudes or perceived cruelties.
- 🐾 I fear losing my companions and so I can react to strangers with mistrust and even aggression.
- 🐾 I regard myself as a superior version of my kind, and I am prone to forcing non sentient dogs into submission.
- 🐾 I've never let go of my basic instincts and can be the cause of social awkwardness with my canine behaviour.
- 🐾 My willingness to trust and follow people, even strangers, means I am easily led into compromising scenarios.





Class Options

The following gives a brief overview of how the dog-versions of the individual classes manifest themselves and provides unique class features. A player may substitute one or more of the features listed here for any standard features.

Barbarian

Lean, inured to the hardship of the wilds; barbarian dogs are resilient and resolute. They are formidable fighters, absolutely determined to bring their enemy down, whatever the cost and however hard the task might be. These dogs are often loners, hunting through the trackless wastes for whatever it is they seek, but when they join a pack or a group they are committed for life.

At **1st level**, you may take the following ability in addition to your standard starting abilities:

Alpha of the Pack

Your howling fury establishes you as master of the hunt; you can bring down any quarry! Once per round, if you have moved 20 feet or more to engage an enemy, your melee attack delivers an extra 1d6 damage. This increases to 1d8 damage at 6th level and 1d10 damage at 12th level.

At **7th level**, instead of *Feral Instinct*, you may take the following ability:

Grim Resistance

You've been through the fire. Or the ice. Or whatever. You've been through something and come out the other side that little bit tougher. You may choose one form of damage; you gain resistance against that form of damage.

At **15th level**, instead of *Persistent Rage*, you may take the following ability.

Savage Howl

Your rages are accompanied by feral howls that inflame the blood of your allies and drive them forward, an echo of ancient hunting packs. Each turn while you are raging, if you hit with at least one attack, you may nominate one ally within 30 feet of you. That ally receives a 1d10 bonus to its next damage roll. You may nominate the same or a different ally each round.



Bard

Dogs cannot help but attempt to raise the spirits of those around them. It is something they do constantly, naturally, just by being there. The bard is, in some respects, the dog's ideal role. What dog doesn't love lifting up their head and barking in joy? Or greeting their friends with a frenzied yapping? Well, fortunately, the dog bard is slightly more tuneful than some of the barking, but the meaning behind the songs is much the same as the intention behind the barking. It's about friends, love, and protection. Like dogs, really.

Instead of taking one of the standard Bardic College paths, you may instead choose to become a Bard of Amity at **3rd level**.

Bard of Amity

You are untrained, you never attended a college, sitting at the feet of a master. You learned everything yourself — travelling from town to town, from an inn to a field, to a campfire, to a caravan. Everything you saw taught you more about helping those you grew to love and you've become a beacon of friendship, hope, and decency. That's what being a Bardic dog is about, concentrating your inner goodness into something that touches the hearts of others... inspiring them to be more and better than they were before.

Bonus Proficiency

When you become a Bard of Amity at **3rd level**, you gain proficiency in one new skill and in Constitution tests and saves.

With a Little Help for Your Friends

Also at 3rd level, a creature who uses your Bardic Inspiration die to make a successful roll may, as a bonus action, pass the Bardic Inspiration die to an ally within 30 feet. The recipient must use the inspiration die on their next attack roll, ability check, or saving throw. The die cannot be passed again that turn. In addition, the Bardic Inspiration die can be used to reduce damage suffered by the number of hit points shown on the die.

Howling Melody

At 6th level, you may cast the spells *Charm Person* and *Dissonant Whispers* once per short rest without spending a spell slot. You do not need to prepare these spells.

And I'll Scratch Yours

At 14th level, whenever a player character is reduced to 0 hit points within 10 feet of you, they may make a Constitution save. On a success, they immediately regain 1 hit dice of health and may act as normal. This ability may be used once per long rest.



Cleric

Faith. It defines dogs of all breeds and sizes, whether awakened or not. Whether awakened or not. The dog in the home has faith that its master will return. The awakened dog believes in their companions, that they have its back, and that they'll always be there to help. Religious belief, therefore, came quickly and easily to awakened dogs. Their questing minds soon found gods, or aspects of the gods, they wished to worship. Dog clerics are committed to their god, the Good Mother, in all her aspects, but they are not zealots. They're deeply committed to the tenets of the Good Mother but only so far as their belief aids and comforts those who require such things. For a dog, the compassion and aid which their belief in the Good Mother offers is the true purpose of their faith.

Canine clerics may choose to follow the Companion Domain, rather than one of the standard Domains.

Companion Domain

Dogs that find their way into the worship of deities usually do so out of a desire to protect and aid others. Consequently, they are drawn to pantheons whose ethos is one of protection, friendship, and family. For such dogs, being stalwart friends and faithful companions is more than a cause; it is a calling from a higher realm. Some dogs who follow this path imagine canine deities sitting at the sides of the principal gods. An example of such deities is the Good Mother, the principle locus for awakened canine's faith and belief.

Companionship Domain Spells

- 🐾 **1st level:** Guiding Bolt, Healing Word
- 🐾 **3rd level:** Aid, Calm Emotions
- 🐾 **5th level:** Beacon of Hope, Mass Healing Word
- 🐾 **7th level:** Death Ward, Locate Creature
- 🐾 **9th level:** Geas, Greater Restoration

Aspect of the Amicable

When you choose this Domain at **1st level**, you gain advantage on all Charisma based checks.

Channel Divinity: Invoke Companionship

Starting at 2nd level, you can use your Channel Divinity to reaffirm your allies' bonds.

As an action, you present your Holy Symbol and evoke a positive energy which can heal and stir your allies. Choose any number of creatures within 30 feet. Each creature affected may gain temporary hit points equal to your cleric level.

Channel Divinity: Lifted Spirits

At 6th level, you can inspire an ally to face down impossible odds and press on in the face of adversity.

As an action, you present your Holy Symbol and nominate one creature within 30 feet. It gains advantage on a saving throw type of your choosing. This effect lasts for one minute.

Divine Bite

At 8th level, you gain the ability to infuse your Bite attacks with the combined strength of your allies. Once in each of your turns, when you hit a creature with a Bite attack, you can cause the attack to deal an additional 1d8 piercing damage. When you reach 14th level, the extra damage increases to 2d8.

Leader of the Pack

At 17th level, you gain the ability to command other animals. Twice per long rest, you may use take a bonus action on your turn to dictate to one creature what they will do in their next turn.



Druid

The natural joyousness of dogs means that many gravitate towards the mysteries of druidism, learning to harness their boundless enthusiasm and delight in the falling of leaves, the scent of grass, and the activities of small animals. Dogs must study hard to become druids; their sheer love and enthusiasm for the world around them making them impatient with the slow and deliberate ways of the druid — why spend so long learning to commune with the roots of a tree and hear their answers in the shuffle of leaves, when you could go dig them up? But for those dogs who can restrain their passion, druidism is a natural fit, harnessing their innate love for the wild to protect and watch over all living things.

At **6th level**, in place of your circle ability, you may take the following ability:

Nature's Own

Animals know you as a friend and help you when called upon. You may take Animal Messenger as a Cantrip.

At **10th level**, in place of your circle ability, you may take the following ability:

Kin of the Wild

Nature knows you as one of its children, awakened perhaps, but still an animal in your essence. It seeks to protect you against the forces which assail you on your adventures. You may choose two types of damage and become resistant to them. You are also immune to poison damage.

At **14th level**, in place of your circle ability, you may take the following ability:

Bond of the Wildblood

You can call upon the aid of nearby creatures. Once per long rest you can issue a cry for assistance, calling nearby companions to your side. The DM will determine the exact creature that responds as is suitable for the environment you are in and this ability may not work if no living creatures are present. A group of 1d6 creatures of the Beast subtype appear within two turns of the cry. The CR of the summoned creatures is equal to your Wild Shape form Max. CR, halved and rounded down. Summoned creatures will aid you and fight for you as a friendly NPC might. Once the combat is complete, or the task they are needed for is complete, they run off.



Fighter

Do not come between a dog and its companions; there are few things more dangerous and more formidable than a canine whose friends are being threatened. Such is the motivation of the fighter. Skilled in all forms of combat, the fighter makes sure that those they love are guarded, shielded, defended. Whatever threats they might face, the fighter is ready for them and more than a match. Dog fighters use their endless energy to push their foes back, forcing them onto the defensive and ensuring that the fight lasts no longer than it has too.

At **2nd level**, in place of *Action Surge*, you may take the following ability:

Fangs of the Wolf

Whenever you score a critical hit with your chosen weapon, you may make a free bonus attack with your Bite.

At **9th level**, in place of *Indomitable*, you may take the following ability:

Pack Fighter

You have become adept at aiding your allies when fighting in close formation with them. Once per short rest, allies who remain within 10 feet of you gain a +2 AC bonus for one minute.



Monk

Stillness. Poise. Tranquility. None of these things are natural canine conditions are special and a little different, often large creatures who can seem ungainly from afar. Their intensive training and focus, however, makes their movements sinuous, flowing from one position to another. A dog's intense commitment to their friends and to those they love also makes their ki exceedingly strong. Those dogs who dedicate themselves to the path of the monk quickly learn to channel their species' natural enthusiasm into a new and different kind of focus. Fast of thought and paw, the dog monk is a skilled fighter and a philosopher.

Instead of one of the standard monk traditions, you may take the following:

Way of the Striking Tail

You are a follower of the martial path created, so they say, by the first martial arts master's canine friend. That dog, faithful and clever, recognised that she could not imitate her master's every movement because she had four paws. Something else was required. Thus was born the Way of the Striking Tail. This unique martial art is specifically designed for the canine form, making the most of their speed, balance, and strong jaws. Those who become initiates of the Striking Tail often become healers at temples and shrines, or else travel abroad, teaching the Striking Tail path to those who seek them out.

The Pack Is Many, the Pack Is One.

Starting when you choose this tradition at 3rd level, you can use your ki to duplicate the effects of certain spells. As an action, you can spend 3 ki points to cast *Healing Word*, *Purify Food and Drink*, or *Sanctuary* without material components. Additionally, you gain Mage Hand as a cantrip, if you didn't know it already.

Four-Paw Strike

At 6th level, you gain the ability to launch the famous 'four-paw strike'. When making an attack, you may spend 2 ki points to turn make four unarmed attacks as a bonus action.

The Wisdom of Playfulness

At 11th level, you are able to channel the positive attitude of dogs and their delight at the world, projecting this to those around you. Once per long rest, as an action choose to receive the benefit of one of the below effects. Spend 1 ki point per additional creature within 30 feet you wish for it to effect.

- 🐾 Laughing at danger. For one hour, you have resistance to a specified damage type.
- 🐾 The folly of fear. For one hour, you are immune to fear effects.
- 🐾 Irrepressible joy. For one hour, you have advantage on all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws.

Balance of the Tail

At 17th level, you are able to achieve both external balance and internal balance, turning aside all negative forces which would seek to afflict you. You may spend 5 ki points to cast a *Globe of Invulnerability* around yourself, as though it were a 7th-level spell.



Paladin

As anyone fortunate enough to have a dog as a companion knows, there are no truer and more devoted friends in the world. Dogs who become paladins deliberately cultivate this part of their nature, seeking to become a friend to the world, to any in need — to extend the canine gift for friendship to any who might require it. There is no limit to the paladin's devotion, or to the lengths they'll go to protect those who have sought shelter with them. The paladin dog is a warrior for everything that is good in the world — true, loyal, and just. But they still like to have their fur ruffled. And scratches.

At **1st level**, you may take the following ability in addition to your standard starting abilities:

Bark of Protection

You give voice to your hatred of evil, in the form of a powerful bark. Any evil creatures within 10 feet make their next attack at disadvantage. You can use this ability once + your Charisma modifier, per long rest.

At **4th level**, in place of an ability score improvement, you may take the following bonus ability:

Devoted to the Pack

You never care or think only of yourself. When you use your Channel Divinity feature, in addition to your chosen effect, one friendly creature you nominate within 30 feet is encouraged for one minute, becoming immune to fear.

At **14th level**, in place of *Cleansing Touch*, you can take the following ability:

Loyalty to the Last

Death is no obstacle when it comes to helping a friend. If a friendly creature within 20 feet of you is reduced to 0 hit points, you may use your reaction to use your Lay on Hands as a ranged ability. You may use this ability twice per long rest.



Ranger

Bounding through the wild, hunting one moment, joyously rolling in piles of leaves the next, the Ranger is a natural fit for almost any dog. With an acute sense of smell, a canine ranger possesses almost unparalleled tracking abilities, able to detect a lost friend or a deadly enemy from miles away. Despite their reputation for full-hearted bounding, dogs can also move with exceptional stealth — prowling through the undergrowth, the ranger is a master of movement and the hunt. What dog doesn't love chasing things?

At **3rd level**, in place of *Primeval Awareness*, you may take the following ability:

Scent on the Wind

Your sense of smell has become so acute that you can pick up the trace of an enemy creature with ease. You can detect the scent and location of any enemy creature within 1 mile, on a successful DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check.

At **8th level**, in place of *Land's Stride*, you may take the following ability:

Guide the Pack

You show your companions how to move as you do, making them almost as skilled in the wilderness as you are. You gain the following benefits:

- 🐾 Your group can move stealthily at normal pace.
- 🐾 When any member of your group forages, they find twice as much food as they normally would.
- 🐾 If you forage for food alone, you find four times as much food as you normally would.
- 🐾 When tracking other creatures, you can not only learn their exact number, size, and how long ago they passed, but also their alignment and level.

At **14th level**, in place of *Vanish*, you may take the following ability:

Apex Predator

Once per short rest, when you reduce a target to 0 hit points, you grant up to three creatures within 30 feet of you advantage on their next attack. You also gain advantage on your first attack against your next target.



Rogue

Dogs are many things but, it must be said, rarely quiet. That's why there aren't a huge number of dog rogues. Those you do find are usually smaller, quicker, and more cunning. The kind of dogs you don't notice until they're chewing your ankle. Those kind of dogs...exactly. They're never quite what you expect them to be, or hope they are. They scamper between your legs, up on to a chair and are gone, out the window. All told, useful skills for a thief. Experts in hiding and more than happy to sink their teeth into the wrist of someone threatening them, canine rogues might be rare but that just makes them more special.

At **2nd level**, in place of *Cunning Action*, you may take the following ability:

Silent Paws

When making a dash move during your turn, you may make a bonus hide action at the end of it.

At **5th level**, in place of *Uncanny Dodge*, you may take the following ability:

Shadow Paw Rogue

Moving with incredible speed, you are impossible to pin down. If you make a successful Sneak Attack, you may choose to move up to 10 feet as a free action. This movement does not provoke opportunity attacks.

At **11th level**, in place of *Reliable Talent*, you may take the following ability:

Ankle Cutter

Once per long rest, when you make a successful attack against a target, your target's speed is reduced to 0 until they pass a Constitution saving throw at the end of one of their turns. The DC for this is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Dexterity modifier.



Sorcerer

Charisma? Check. A deep well of inner love and power? Check. A loveable face? Check. Technically, that last one isn't a key element of both dogs and sorcerers, but the point stands. Dogs have a lot that makes them ideal natural sorcerers. They are creatures capable of drawing on deep reserves of natural energy, energy which can become something more, something magical. Of course, such reserves of power drives dog sorcerers out of the comfortable life and into the adventuring one. But they're perfect companions, if you're lucky enough to have one at your side.

Dog Sorcerers must take the Wild Magic bloodline.

At **1st level**, you may take the following ability in addition to your standard starting abilities:

Buried in the Veil

Once per long rest, you may 'bury' an object of no more than 1 cubic foot in size as an action. It passes beyond the material plane. You may 'retrieve' it at any time as a bonus action. You may bury a number of objects in total equal to your Charisma modifier.

At **6th level**, instead of *Bend Luck*, you may take the following ability:

Supportive Spell

When you cast a spell which successfully affects an enemy creature, you may spend a sorcery point to give a friendly creature you choose within 15 feet of you advantage on their next roll against the target.

At **14th level**, instead of *Controlled Chaos*, you may take the following ability:

Relentless Energy

You are never tired; when suffering a level of exhaustion, you always experience the adverse effects of the level below (so when you gain your first level of exhaustion, you suffer no ill effects). In addition, whenever you cast a healing spell on a companion, you also regain hit points equal to your Charisma modifier + your Proficiency bonus.



Warlock

Dogs aren't prone to making pacts with forbidden creatures. But they can be forced into one. A dog's inherent loyalty to their friends and companions means that, when faced with difficult circumstances, a dog prefers to sacrifice part of itself rather than see their friend hurt. And the Archfey is always prepared to listen to the pleas of a good dog.

A dog warlock must take the Archfey pact.

At **1st level**, you may take the following ability in addition to your standard starting abilities:

Fey Friend

You can call upon the Hunting Packs of your Patron. You may use *Find Familiar* once per long rest without requiring material components, summoning a creature equal to your warlock level. Regardless of the creature type you summon, its appearance is a smaller version of your own canine appearance, although it retains the abilities of the creature type you call upon.

At **10th level**, in place of *Beguiling Defenses*, you may take the following ability:

Netherhound Companion (requires Fey Friend)

Your Patron has gifted you a fully formed hunting companion to join the hunt. You may call upon this companion twice per long rest. The summoned companion follows the same rules and behaviours as the Channel Divinity effect, *Invoke Duplicity*, and may cast your spells and Eldritch Invocations.

At **14th level**, in place of *Dark Delirium*, you may take the following ability:

Obey!

You are capable of exerting great control over even the most recalcitrant of subjects. You may cast the spell *Dominate Person* twice per long rest without expending a spell slot.



Wizard

Books filled with paw prints, and dog-eared pages (pun very much intended) are all the hallmarks of a canine wizard. Dogs are very good at paying attention, especially to those they build a close relationship with, and what's closer than the connection between a master wizard and their apprentice? As a result, there are a surprising number of dogs walking around clad in midnight blue robes, with heavy grimoires attached to their sides and pointy hats mounted on their heads. A few people laugh at the idea. But a fireball usually deals with that, quite effectively.

At **1st level**, you may take the following ability as well as your starting class features:

Wiser Than You Look

You may take the spell *Detect Good and Evil* as a bonus cantrip.

At **10th level**, you may take the following ability, replacing the ability of corresponding level from your School features:

Familiar Friends

Your natural affinity with the creatures of the world makes summoning familiars far easier for you than most. You may prepare the *Find Familiar* spell without a spellbook. Also, reduce the casting time of *Find Familiar* to 1 minute and the cost of materials consumed to 1 gp. The summoned creature remains on this plane for one hour.







Cats: New Race and Class Features

A sudden, fleeting movement glimpsed in the corner of an eye. A svelte shape insinuating itself into an implausibly small gap. A small, curled form in front of the fire, suddenly startled from sleep. Cats get everywhere, comfortable in any situation and adaptable in the way that few creatures are. They find a home in the most inhospitable of places, making themselves warm and comfortable almost instantly. But they are also deeply loyal, often friendly, and willing to defend those they love to the death. Cats are the perfect adventurers; they are capable of withstanding hardship, and do not trust lightly, but protect fiercely those in whom they have placed their trust.

An Old Bond

Cats have been welcomed into the homes of man, dwarf, elf, and even orcs and goblins for thousands of years. They provide an invaluable service, after all. Catching mice, rats, and other small vermin requires speed and coordination, not to mention a small stature, that most of the bigger races simply do not possess. And so a relationship of mutual advantage began and continued, strengthening the strange bond between the cats and those who, quite mistakenly, believe themselves to be their owners, or masters. Cats aren't recklessly loyal like dogs, but they do love and form deep attachments to those who take the time to earn such devotion. It is not enough, with a cat, to simply feed it and expect adoration. It requires patience and persistence, it requires consistency. Cats are as varied in temperament and appearance as humans or dogs and need to be treated with respect, care, and attention. But they repay those who are prepared to spend the required time to earn their friendship a thousandfold. This is true even with awakened cats, blessed with human levels of intelligence. They are suspicious but, if treated properly, can become fiercely loyal companions.

Common Interest

Cats are, by nature, somewhat solitary creatures, often preferring their own space and company to that of a pack or group. But this is not always the case. Cats often form small circles of friends which, while looser than those formed by other animals, are no less devoted. If a cat is in trouble, their friends arrive in moments to assist them. Cats also form groups to achieve specific goals. Looking to solve a mystery, or loot a dungeon? What about halting a villainous wizard with designs on the city's supply of treats? Cats band together when faced with such threats, utilising each other's differing strengths to achieve their ends. Afterwards, they may part ways or may remain together...not that they need to. They could split up any time they want...

Agile, and Hard to See

Renowned for their nimbleness, cats can make the most extraordinary leaps, fit into spaces that barely seem wide enough to slide a sheet of parchment through, and walk away, casually, from the most dangerous of falls. Awakened cats still possess these traits, but now combined with acute intelligence and an understanding of how to use these natural traits to their best advantage. This makes cats extremely dangerous combatants, able to evade enemy attacks before suddenly appearing at their enemy's back, pouncing onto a vulnerable patch of flesh and sinking their claws in. This makes even heavily armoured and well-trained soldiers fear facing Awakened cats in combat... you never know from where they'll strike next!

Feline Traits

All cats begin with the following traits:

🐾 **Ability Score Increase:** All cats increase their Dexterity score by 2.

🐾 **Age:** Cats reach maturity between the age of 1 or 2, and live, on average to the age of 15.

🐾 **Alignment:** Cats tend toward neutral alignments; they are very rarely wholly evil or wholly good. Their main preoccupation is themselves and the small circle of loved ones they seek to protect. This can occasionally seem like callousness or disinterest in the larger world.

🐾 **Size:** While there are larger and smaller cats, this variation in size and length is much more limited than it is in dogs. As a result, all cats are considered small.

🐾 **Languages:** A cat can speak and read Common, Feline, and one other language. Cats only use language with humans and other races; when with each other, they communicate entirely through gesture, small inflections of the face and eyes, and carefully modulated thrusts of the paw or flank. This language is called Feline and can only be spoken fluently by other cats.

🐾 **Speed:** A cat's basic speed is 30 feet.

🐾 **Darkvision:** Cats have Darkvision up to 60 feet.

🐾 **Bite & Scratch:** Sharp teeth, and claws which can be quickly unsheathed and used to slice through flesh - all cats possess these natural weapons. Cats are proficient with this attack, which counts as both a weapon attack and an unarmed attack. The attack does 1d6 damage plus your Strength modifier bonus. This increases to d8 + your Strength modifier bonus at level 5, and d10 + your strength modifier bonus at level 10.

🐾 **All So Different:** There are many different varieties of cat breed, each with their own idiosyncrasies, preferences, and behaviours - remember that any breed can belong to any of the three subraces; cats are born at all sizes. Choose a feline subrace from the list below and then choose one ability from the subsequent list. You may only choose one such ability.

🐾 **Welcoming Dark:** Cats turn up where they are least expected, and disappear from sight when it seems impossible. On these occasions, a cat is probably visiting the Welcoming Dark. Cats don't Long Rest like other races. Instead, they visit the Welcoming Dark. See page 52 for more detail.

Feline Sizes

Hefty Cat

These big, substantial cats are the biggest of their kind and are tougher and more durable than their feline kin. If you want to play a Maine Coon, a Norwegian Forest cat, or just an unusually chunky version of your favourite breed, choose a Hefty Cat!

🐾 **Ability score increase**
Strength score increases by 1.

Regular Cat

The typical cat. Neither too large, nor too small. Purrfect, you might say. Play a regular cat if you want to be a tabby, a Bengal, or an American Bobtail; you're the kind of cat who knows how the world works. You can live in a home, or in the wild.

🐾 **Ability score increase**
Wisdom score increases by 1.

Lap Cat

Smaller, more delicate, and all the smarter for it, lap cats are experts at getting others to do the work for them. After all, when you're this adorable, why wouldn't you? Play a lap cat if you want to be a Persian, a Sphynx, or a Ragdoll - or if you just want to be small, cute, and loveable.

🐾 **Ability score increase**
Charisma score increases by 1.



Breed Abilities

How Did They Get Up There?

Moving with preternatural speed and grace, you scramble up sheer surfaces with ease. You may add double your proficiency bonus to all climb checks.

Feline Intuition

You know things. Even if you're not entirely sure how sometimes, you just do... Gain +1 to Intelligence score permanently.

Gone!

No thanks, you're not sticking around to be smashed with a mace. You know how to stay safe and stay alive. When fleeing or escaping from combat, double your base walking speed.

Attention must be paid!

Are they...ignoring you? Have they seen what you look like? Well, you'll soon put a stop to that. Add your proficiency bonus to all Charisma checks.

Skilled Hunter

You can follow your prey through any terrain, no one is getting away from you! You gain advantage on all checks relating to tracking, or hunting.

Action Cat

You're always ready for what comes next; you're poised, cunning, and able to anticipate. Add +1 to your Initiative modifier.

Like Smoke

The enemy flails about them, trying to hit you. But you've already gone, like mist in a strong breeze. Whenever attempting to move past an enemy, or disengage from combat, you may avoid the first attack of opportunity made by an enemy.

Flower Marked

Your distinctive patterned fur is actually highly effective camouflage, making you difficult to spot in the wilderness. You have advantage on all stealth rolls made in natural terrain, such as a forest or a jungle.

Lands on Feet

You are incredibly agile, so much so that even falling from a great height seems to scarcely affect you. Whenever you take fall damage, it is halved.

🐾 **Good Luck Cat**

You're just...lucky. You don't know why, but you are. Once per session, you may reroll one failed test.

🐾 **Life in the Shadows**

Twilight is your element, your colouring and lithe form making you almost impossible to track as the light dims. Whenever you are in partial or reduced light, you gain advantage on all stealth roles.

🐾 **Like a Wolf**

As you shed your fur, you begin to resemble a vicious wolf, teeth bared and hungry for blood. You know how to use this appearance to your own ends! Whenever making an Intimidate check, you may use your proficiency bonus on top of any other modifiers.

🐾 **Big Unit**

Hulking and mighty, it doesn't matter that you aren't as big as a dragon... you pack just as much into a smaller package! Add +1 to your Strength attribute.

🐾 **Defensive Fluff**

Your fur is spectacularly fluffy, softening the blows of your enemies and protecting you against whatever forces you must confront. Add +1 to your armour class.

🐾 **Adaptation**

You were born in freezing cold conditions, you're used to them, capable of putting up with anything. You have resistance to cold damage.

🐾 **Go Limp**

You've spent a lot of time going limp and playing dead. You're eerily good at it, in fact, but you've learned something more while lying there, unmoving. When knocked Prone, you may attack as normal, and enemies do not attack you at advantage, even if within 5 feet of you.

🐾 **Everybody Wants to Be a Cat**

You know it's natural to envy your grace, your fur, your beauty. How could they not? They won't get close, of course, but they can always watch you. Add +1 to your Charisma score.

🐾 **And...Push**

Things need pushing! That's what they're there for! Just give them a little nudge and see what happens! Whenever attempting to move a stationary object, you may add your proficiency bonus to the roll.

🐾 **Stubborn**

You don't go down. You've been in a lot of fights and you don't like losing. You don't like doing anything unless you want to do it. When you're reduced to 0 hit points in combat, make a DC 14 Constitution save. If you succeed, you are not knocked unconscious but remain standing, on 1 hit point. This ability can only be used once per combat.

🐾 **Light Sleeper:** You don't need much in the way of recovery time. You can get by in a way others can't. When short resting, determine the number of hit points regained in the normal fashion (roll a Hit Dice and add the Constitution modifier), then add an additional 1d4+2 hit points to the total.

🐾 **Slippery Customer**

Someone with your dignity is, most assuredly, not going to be manhandled! Whenever an enemy attempts to grapple you, you make your opposing Dexterity roll at advantage.

🐾 **Nine Lives**

Everyone knows that cats are too fast for death to catch. You make all death saves at advantage.



New Background: Awakened Cat

Not that you weren't ever aware of being different. Better. You're a cat. Of course you knew everything you needed to about the world around you; you knew how to hunt, where the cleanest water was to be found, and where to go when you fancied sharpening your claws on another cat's face. But now...now you're even more advanced than the stupid animals you run into (and, on the most degrading occasions, run from) on the streets or in the fields of your home. What exactly happened you're not sure...was it something you ate? Did you sleep too near that sorcerer's hearth? It doesn't really matter. Instead, you've got the chance to go out and get yourself the respect, and the food, you've always wanted. No more of this having to meow for attention. Not for you. And there's lots of other things you could be doing with your time...lots more of the world to see. And lots of different food to try. There are even stories of treasure. Imagine the food you could buy with that! Not that it's all about food. No...you're a cat. It's also about reminding everyone how graceful and beautiful you are. And if there's some food that happens to need eating...well, who would say no to that?

Feelin' Feline

Cats aren't the friendliest of species, but you are loyal and, once you've chosen to like someone (and it's always that way round) then you'll keep them safe and fight to do so. Unlike awakened dogs, who typically maintain their relationships with their less fortunate kin, cats rarely bother. Why would you? Just because they can speak doesn't mean that other cats aren't still a threat! Cats are predators, smoothly sliding through the world around them, and being awakened only made you more aware of the dangers and the risks you must confront. It also made you ever more protective and loyal to your friends. You know you can't trust them to look after themselves, not really. Cats are highly self-sufficient, and you are skilled in hunting for food in even the most unprepossessing of situations. You are also highly capable of navigating either the urban or the rural environment, as though you were born to either. You can find sources of food and water anywhere you go - whether in a bakery or a warehouse, your keen senses are able to find sustenance. You can also squeeze yourself into tiny spaces, ensuring a dry and warm haven wherever you go (though there is rarely enough room for your companions).



Suggested Characteristics

Every cat has their own peccadillos and unusual behaviours. Awakened cats are no different; if anything, they are likely to be amplified as you deal with the dangers and difficulties of the world. This manifests itself as some form of personality flaw — arrogance, timidity, belligerence — but cats typically embrace such aspects of themselves. While a dog might be in constant conflict over their anger towards some humans, you feel no such divisions. All that matters is: what keeps you alive? A cat is all about survival — if you have a personality trait, it's because it helped keep you alive this far, so why try and 'improve' yourself or your attitude? No. Stay alive. Anything that helps with that task can stick around.

Skill Proficiencies: Insight, Acrobatics

Languages: Any one of player's choice

Feature: You can spot another awakened cat immediately, and know how to speak to them, how to win them over, and how to earn their trust. You also communicate with unawakened cats easily.

Equipment: A single reminder of your life before becoming awakened; a collar, a bowl with your old name emblazoned on it, a bell attached to a length of yellow ribbon that was your favourite toy. A pouch containing 15gp.



Personality Trait

- 🐾 I'm pretty much the most perfect creature who has ever existed. Have you seen me walk? You lucky thing, getting to watch me stroll down the street for the first time. You can come with me, if you must. I guess looking at you reminds everyone of how amazing I am.
- 🐾 I'm a fighter; a scrapper; a brawler. I've lost fur, ears, teeth...everything. But I'm still here. Because I'm tough. Really, really tough. And I'm afraid of nothing. Bring me the bloody Tarrasque...I'll still take it!
- 🐾 Sigh. Yes, yes, I'm coming. It really is too much, you know. Some call me lazy. They're wrong, of course. What I am is considered. I don't go running around. I conserve my energy and act at just the right time.
- 🐾 I'm fun! I'm fun! Look at what I can do! Look at my tail! I'm a happy catty and I'm always ready for another game. Or just to run in circles! It's all fun!
- 🐾 I've never seen a hole in a wall I didn't want to investigate, or a scent-trail I didn't want to follow. It gets me in trouble sometimes, but it also gets me the kind of experience I want. Who wants to be a house cat?
- 🐾 Hmm... Distracted? I guess I can be easily...oh! Is that chicken? Yes, I'd love some!
- 🐾 I just prefer hiding under the nearest bed to being outside. Is that really being timid or scared? I don't think so...Wait! What was that? Alright yes, I'm a complete coward. Just let me get somewhere safe!
- 🐾 Of course I'm angry! Do you know what I've endured? How much I've seen? Suffered? Life as a cat isn't curling up in front of the fire for all of us, you know. Sometimes, it's much more difficult.

Ideal

- 🐾 Courage. Bravery is the highest goal any can achieve; to master your fear is to master yourself.
- 🐾 Change. The world is not as it should be. I'm going to change that, whatever it may cost.
- 🐾 Survival. Ensuring my survival, and that of the few I love, is the only worthwhile goal.
- 🐾 Knowledge. There is much out there to learn. I intend to use this knowledge to my advantage.
- 🐾 Revenge. Getting rid of those who harmed me is the only reason I travel through these lands.
- 🐾 Restoration. Bad things have happened to me, and I have done bad things myself. I want to make everything right, if I can.
- 🐾 Preservation. Too much has been lost to time. Now that I can speak and write, I want to preserve the true nature and history of my species.
- 🐾 Family. My love is not easily earned. These people have done so and I spend my life ensuring their safety and comfort.



Bond

- 🐾 My old owner, who gave me this power, was a good person. They're gone now but they deserve to be remembered. I'll ensure they are.
- 🐾 I don't know what is in this jar, just that when I licked it, I learned to speak as humans do. Now I carry it with me, granting small amounts to the few cats I judge worthy.
- 🐾 The collar I tore off myself and flung away. I can still feel it, rubbing against my fur. I'll not wear one again.
- 🐾 A can of fish. My favourite food. It reminds me of the past, of what has changed, and of the future I will make myself.
- 🐾 A vow I took to protect the two children who took me in and gave me milk, when I was barely a kitten. I have not forgotten them, or my oath.
- 🐾 My mother was taken away when I was young. I never saw her again. I can feel that she is still alive, and I pursue her trail wherever it goes.
- 🐾 Once, cats ruled this world. They can do so again. I carry this knowledge inside me and share it with whomever listens...and believes.
- 🐾 I was an experiment — one that failed and was cast aside. The person who treated me so poorly will pay for it.

Flaw

- 🐾 I lose my temper over the most minor of slights. I cannot help myself. I just love the adrenaline thrill of an imminent fight. Have done since I was a kitten.
- 🐾 I was superior even when I was a normal cat. Now... well, let's be honest. There just isn't another creature in this miserable corner of the world to compare to me.
- 🐾 They call me selfish, and even I have to admit that I am. I earned (or stole) this stuff by myself. I see no reason to share it with those who don't have the wit to do the same.
- 🐾 I take nothing seriously. Risk, danger, my life or those of others...all just one more set-up in a great joke no one else seems to notice. Even other cats!
- 🐾 Setbacks have a horrible habit of making me believe that I should just give up. Even the most minor incident can make me sit down, fold my paws, and refuse to move.
- 🐾 I once bit a man's nose off because I thought he was being too friendly with my family. It turned out he was a friend of theirs and had brought them a present. I may, on occasion, be overprotective.
- 🐾 Style matters far more than the end result. It has been known for me to leave someone in (very mild) peril, because I didn't want to mess up my fur. I know *it* doesn't look great, but I really did.
- 🐾 It's not that I'm a coward, I just refuse to put myself at any risk, for any reason, for anyone. Ever.





Class Options

The following gives a brief overview of how the cat-versions of the individual classes manifest themselves and provides unique class features. A player may elect to take this feature instead of one of the standard class features.

Barbarian

Raised in the mountains or on the plains, barbarian cats are unused to human companionship and are often hostile to any who they believe might try and restrain them or limit their freedom. They are dangerous fighters, lashing out with teeth, claws, and tail while utterly unconcerned for their own safety. While they are rarely the most social of cats, they form deep attachments and become fiercely loyal to those they trust.

At **1st level**, in place of *Unarmoured Defense*, you may take the following ability:

Ferocious Attack

Lunging towards the enemy, claws extended and fangs gleaming, you inflict massive damage as you attack. Whenever rolling for damage following a successful attack, roll two damage dice and choose the highest result.

At **7th level**, instead of *Feral Instinct*, you may take the following ability:

Heavyweight

Heavyweight: When making a successful grapple attack against any enemy of Medium size or smaller, the Barbarian immediately knocks them prone.

At **15th level**, instead of *Persistent Rage*, you may take the following ability:

Go for the Throat

Go for the Throat: When the barbarian has made a successful attack and dealt damage to a creature, they may immediately make a second attack against the same creature as a bonus action. This second attack delivers half damage.



Bard

Entrusted with remembering the history of the cats, bards are highly respected within the ranks of the awakened cats and are welcomed warmly wherever they go. Expected to tell stories and act, in some fashion, as teachers, they remind fellow cats both of where they come from and where they might go. This responsibility means that bards are frequent adventurers, drawn into strange circumstances and mysterious events, in pursuit of new knowledge to return to the ears of those cats who would listen.

At **1st level**, you may take the following ability, in place of your normal 1st level abilities:

High Pitched Screech

While a cat bard can use its voice to achieve the most beautiful, musical effects, they can also do substantially less pleasant things. A bard can unleash a hideous screeching noise as an attack (using Charisma), targeting one enemy within its line of sight. This enemy is afflicted by the Fear condition for the next turn.

At **6th level**, alongside your Bardic College ability, you may take the following ability:

Laughter of the Cat

A strange hybrid of a growl and a purr leaves your mouth, bubbling through the air and leaving all who hear it convinced of your ineffable cuteness. Once per long rest, you can use this ability to convince all creatures within 15 feet not to attack you for one round unless they succeed on a Charisma save with a DC equal to your Spell Save DC.

At **14th level**, alongside your Bardic College ability, you may take the following ability:

Feline Fine

You have an inner reserve of strength, drawn from the great song of creation that so few can truly hear. When reduced to 0 hit points, you may automatically reroll any failed death saving throws. You must accept the second result



Cleric

Religion is a strange new phenomenon for cats. While it seems to come naturally to dogs, for cats it has been rather different. Cleric Cats are those who came to recognise the gods earliest, heard their voices in dreams or in a waking trance and, more importantly, followed their instructions. Clerics provide guidance for cats bewildered by their awakening or unsure of their place in the world and attempt to tread the path of the Ailurokin - combining the dignity of Urbaste, the wiliness of Tom o'th'Alley, and the wisdom of the Old Striped Cat. Clerics are sought out for their guidance and for their skill in combat, almost equally. Especially as many cats simply don't care what the gods say...and, sometimes, it doesn't seem like the gods are especially bothered either...

Instead of one of the standard Domains, cat clerics may choose to follow the Subtle Domain:

The Subtle Domain

Religion is new amongst cats and still undefined. Amongst those who have devoted themselves to the worship of the recently discovered feline deities, many choose to embrace the path of the Ailurokin, the trio of gods called Urbaste, Tom o'th'Alley, and the Old Striped Cat (amongst their many, many other names...what god only has the one?), believing this is the truest and most natural form of belief for their kind. The Subtle Domain emphasises the use of stealth, speed, and wit to evade attacks and protect cats from danger. It is a domain of game playing, teasing, and highlights the mercurial nature of cats, loving one moment, suddenly distant and aloof the next. For the followers of the Ailurokin, this is all part of the game. Enemies are there to be played with, friends to be defended.

The Subtle Domain Spells

- 🐾 **1st level:** Shield of Faith, Healing Word
- 🐾 **3rd level:** Calm Emotions, Hold Person
- 🐾 **5th level:** Spirit Guardians, Dispel Magic
- 🐾 **7th level:** Remove Curse, Banishment
- 🐾 **9th level:** Guardian of Faith, Mass Cure Wounds

Wit of Tom

When you choose this Domain at first level, you gain the ability to cast Tasha's Hideous Laughter as a 1st Level Spell. You may do this without expending a spell slot, once per visit to the Welcoming Dark. You also gain proficiency in Deception.

Channel Divinity: Blessing of Urbaste

Starting at **2nd level** you can use your Channel Divinity to swathe those close to you in the Welcoming Dark, for a few moments.

This is represented by casting Invisibility, as a 2nd level spell, on one player character as a bonus action. This ability scales with level, in the same way as the Invisibility spell does.

Channel Divinity: Cute as a Kitten

At **6th level**, you can persuade your foes that fighting you and your fellows is just... silly. What a waste of everyone's time!

As an action, you present your Holy Symbol and cast Glibness on yourself. It lasts for 10 minutes. You must long rest before you can use this ability again.

Divine Strike

At **8th level** you gain the ability to infuse your weapon strikes with the combined strength of your allies. Once in each of your turns, when you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you can cause the attack to deal an additional 1d8 bludgeoning damage. When you reach 14th level, the extra damage increases to 2d8.

Knowledge of the Old Striped One

At **17th level** you receive the blessed insight of the Old Striped One, the undying font of feline wisdom; even as they look at you, your enemy feels the divine power aligned against them. Any enemy attempting to make a melee attack against you must pass a DC 12 Wisdom test or be unable to act for the rest of the turn.



Druid

The natural world flows through the druid, awakening them to the ways in which the earth and the beings on it are a single organism, all one and inextricably connected. Cats, as predators, know this intimately; they know how deeply they rely on the creatures beneath them in the food chain for survival. Cat druids are determined to protect the balance of nature, never letting their brethren take too much, preserving the precious equilibrium of the world that birthed them which they recognise as their duty to protect.

At **1st level**, you may take the following ability as a bonus:

Wild Cat

You gain Nature or Animal Handling as a starting skill, for free. This does not replace any of the other two skills you may take at 1st level.

At **6th level**, you may take the following ability in place of the corresponding ability from your Druid Circle:

Cat Nap

You have drawn the essence of nature into yourself. Whenever you are in a natural environment, you gain the benefits of a long rest in half the normal time (that is 4 hours rather than 8).

At **14th level**, you may take the following ability in place of the corresponding ability from your Druid Circle:

Nature's Child

You move through the natural world with absolute ease; nothing obstructs you. You may cast the Freedom of Movement spell at will.



Fighter

Resilience and discipline aren't always the characteristics expected of a cat, but they possess them along with courage and skill. These are the attributes a fighter requires and must be prepared to bring to bear in the most ferocious of battles. Cat fighters are renowned for their willingness to fling themselves into the most desperate conflicts, laying about them with deadly speed and accuracy, deflecting blows with ease, and withdrawing before being overwhelmed.

At **1st level**, you may take the following Fighting Style in place of the standard styles:

Artful

You are perfectly poised and exactly balanced when wielding a blade. Whenever using a weapon with the *finesse* quality, you gain a +2 to damage rolls with that weapon.

At **3rd level**, you may take the following Martial Archetype in place of the standard Martial Archetypes:

Cat's Paw Martial Archetype

At **3rd level**, when you take this Archetype, you immediately gain the following ability:

Improved Critical

Your weapon attacks score a critical on a roll of 19 or 20.

At **7th level**, you gain the following ability

Cat's Scratch

Whenever you roll a critical hit, you may make a second attack as well as rolling additional damage. This second attack may be on the same target or on a different target, provided they're within range.

At **10th level**, you gain the following ability:

Impossible Speed

You strike with astonishing speed and then withdraw. When you have made a successful melee attack against an enemy, you may then move up to half your movement away from the enemy, without incurring any attacks of opportunity.

At **15th level**, you gain the following ability:

Superior Critical

Your weapon attacks score a critical on a roll of 18, 19 or 20.

At **18th level**, you gain the following ability:

Cat's Claw

Whenever you roll a critical hit, you may make two additional attacks, as well as rolling additional damage. These additional attacks may be on the same target or on a different target, provided they're within range.



Monk

Precision, grace, speed, flair...these are the traits commonly attributed to all cats, but only a few elevate them to something resembling a divine gift. Such is the monk. A cat monk is agile in a way that leaves any witnesses to such celerity and nimbleness awed; gravity seems to relax its hold on the monk, allowing them to move faster than should be possible. Cat monks form a deep bond with their mentors, learning much from them before their natural wanderlust takes hold and forces them to venture into the world. Such is the path they must follow...

At **1st level**, in addition to the standard monk abilities, you may also take the following ability:

Nothing in the Laws of Physics

When making a Dexterity test to overcome any difficult terrain or jump over a gap, you make the test at advantage.

At **5th level**, you may take the following ability in addition to your other abilities:

Between the Rain

You gain advantage on all Dexterity saves.

At **13th level**, you may take the following ki-empowered ability in place of *Tongue of the Sun & Moon*:

Paw Flurry

You can dash as a single action. Rather than have to move, and then move again as your second action, you can travel up to your full move as a single action.



Paladin

Awakened cats are rarely committed to their faith, being unconcerned whether or not their gods are watching over them. There are some, however, who see in the Ailurokin a model of behaviour that all cats should endeavour to follow. Those who have heard the (fairly infrequent) call of the cat gods become Paladins, dedicated to providing their fellow cats with the defences of faith and dedication. Cat paladins are often thought somewhat strange amongst their feline fellows but are greatly respected for their strength, resilience, and for their determination to help their kin no matter what it is they face.

At **1st level**, you gain the following ability along with your other starting abilities:

Defender of the Fur-th

Cat Paladins are fortified by their belief in the Ailurokin and, as a result, are immune to the Frightened condition.

At **3rd level**, you may take the following Sacred Oath in place of one of the standard Oaths:

Oath of Twilight

You are the guardian of the inbetween. You protect the balance, maintain the equilibrium between the light and the dark. You remain perfectly poised, your powers precisely aligned and balanced between the two extremes of day and night. You protect the innocent, but you do not condemn the wicked, not without having ensured that you know what it is they have faced. Forgiveness is a powerful weapon, too, if used correctly.

Tenets of Devotion

Paladins who have sworn themselves to the Oath of Protection must adhere to the following creed:

- 🐾 **Balance:** You strive to achieve equilibrium in yourself and to help others achieve - ensuring that the world remains in harmony.
- 🐾 **Belief:** No one is wholly good or wholly evil. You know that anyone can be redeemed if they choose to be - and you'll help them if you can.
- 🐾 **Honour:** You never deceive your friends, never take from them, and never deny them.
- 🐾 **Commitment:** You stand between the light and the darkness, ensuring that neither ever overrides the other. You unite them in yourself, and must ensure that they remain reconciled, no matter how difficult it might be.

Oath Spells

You gain oath spells at the paladin levels listed:

- 🐾 **3rd level:** Command, Identify
- 🐾 **5th level:** Mirror Image, Shield of Faith
- 🐾 **9th level:** Flame Blade, Protection from Poison
- 🐾 **13th level:** Mass Healing Word, Remove Curse
- 🐾 **17th level:** Guardian of Faith, Banishment

Channel Divinity

When you take this oath at **3rd level** choose one of the two following Channel Divinity options:

Fellowship of the Old Striped One

With the sagacity and solemnity of the Old Striped Cat you worship, you can use divine power to defend a friendly character from the darkness of a fallen creature. As an action, you may choose one player character within 30 feet to receive the boon of the Old Striped One. They gain +2 armour class for the next turn.

The Bond of the Trickster

Quick wits define your friendships, including those you share with your god. As an action, you can utter a series of strange whispers and whistles that disorient one creature attacking a fellow player character. Your friend gains advantage on all attacks made against that creature for the next turn.

At **7th level**, you gain the following ability:

Loyal to the End

Nothing could make you betray your oath. You and all friendly characters within 10 feet become immune to all psychological conditions - such as Frightened. At 18th level, the range of this ability extends to 30 feet.

At **15th level**, you gain the following ability:

Rescued from the Darkness

When a friendly player character is reduced to 0 hit points within 5 feet of you, they can elect to drop to 1 hit point instead. An individual player character may make use of this ability once per long rest.

At **20th level**, you gain the following ability:

Not Today

With a whispered word, you extract your friends from the grip of the darkness or the light. As an action, you can teleport a friendly character within 30 feet of you, to your side. The teleported player character cannot make any action for that turn, but they also cannot be attacked and any enemies they were in combat with do not make an attack of opportunity.

Ranger

Cat rangers are experts in surviving in inhospitable terrain, overcoming the dangers and hazards posed by nature and the works of man. Whether seeking to hide in the bustling city or track a foe through a river, the ranger possess the skills and instincts to do just that. In many ways, the cat is the natural ranger...they stalk their prey with the same caution, avidity and focus; they move with the same stealth and care. A cat ranger is amongst the deadliest and most gifted hunters imaginable, emerging from nowhere to bring their target to ground. Cats are not only inhabitants of the wilderness, however; they can move and trace their prey as deftly and lethally in cities and towns as they can in the vastness of nature.

At **1st level**, you may take the following ability in addition to your other starting abilities:

Urban Explorer

A Cat Ranger can choose a city and treat it as favoured terrain as though it were subject to the Natural Explorer class feature. When within a city, you receive the following benefits:

- 🐾 Difficult terrain doesn't slow your group's travel
- 🐾 Your group can't become lost except by magical means
- 🐾 Even when engaged in another activity while traveling (such as foraging, navigating, or tracking) you remain alert to danger.
- 🐾 If you are travelling alone, you can move stealthily at a normal pace
- 🐾 When tracking other creatures, you also learn their exact number, their sizes, and how long ago they passed through the area.

At **10th level**, you may take the following ability in place of *Hide in Plain Sight*:

Untouchable

You gain advantage on saves against attacks from any creatures with the 'monstrosity' tag.

At **18th level**, you may take the following ability in place of *Feral Senses*:

Not a Muscle

Staying impossibly still, you focus your senses for a single, perfect attack. If you take no actions for one turn, your next attack (whether melee or ranged) deals double damage. If you score a critical hit on this next attack, roll double your damage dice, as normal, and then double the total.



Rogue

At one with the shadows, untraceable, capable of clambering up a wall in seconds, slipping through the tightest of spaces and escaping moments later with something precious and valuable clenched between their teeth, cat rogues excel at their chosen profession. Whether it be thief or assassin, whether they seek gold for themselves or to help others, cat rogues move with the swift certainty of purpose that makes them virtually undetectable. How many guards have entered a room to check on a precious jewel only to find it gone with nary but a nearby a single strand of fur, left mockingly in its place?

At **1st level**, you may take the following ability in addition to your other starting abilities:

Light on Your Paws

Cat Rogues are agile even for cats. As a result, you may reroll one failed Dexterity save of your choice. This ability can then only be used again after a visit to the Welcoming Dark.

At **11th level**, you may take the following ability in place of *Reliable Talent*:

Vicious Slice

Your claws have been honed to razor sharpness. Whenever you make a successful Bite attack, you may immediately make a second attack as a bonus action.

At **15th level**, you may take the following ability in place of *Slippery Mind*:

And...Gone

You have advantage on all Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) checks, and on all Dexterity saves.



Sorcerer

Power is drawn from many places; for a Sorcerer, it comes from within. From something innate to the individual, from something that is essentially them. Some awakened cats have felt the same stirrings of power; their awakening doing more than blessing them with greater intelligence and consciousness...it has also unleashed their latent magical ability. Cat sorcerers are powerful nodes of magical energy; human, elvish, and dwarven expectations of cats contribute to this power, increasing an awakened cat's consciousness of itself and its abilities. It also makes them more susceptible to the cat's nascent power...

At **1st level**, you may take the following ability along with your other starting abilities:

I'm Sure I Live Here

Cat Sorcerers retain an essential feline confidence which they cannot help but project onto those who meet them, luring them into a false sense of security. As a result, you may take the Command spell as a cantrip.

At **6th level**, you may take the following ability, replacing the ability of corresponding level from your Sorcerous Origin:

Grimalkin's Charm

Whenever you suffer damage, you may reduce the total by your Charisma modifier.

At **14th**, you may take the following ability, replacing the ability of corresponding level from your Sorcerous Origin:

Cat's Eye View

Whenever an enemy creature begins to use magic, you can immediately identify what the spell is. In addition, you gain advantage on any spell save roll against this spell.



Warlock

Who knows what the act of awakening might do to a cat, or to any animal? To be suddenly confronted by a world made new and different despite its apparent familiarity. Such a transformation can often trigger a search for meaning, for guidance. While many turn to the gods of Ailurokin, some want something more definite. For some cats, this takes the form of a bargain made with some being of great power, offering them something precious in exchange for potent magical capabilities. The cat warlock is a participant in such a pact, exchanging something of themselves for magical gifts...perhaps it is a soul the cat has offered, or perhaps it is even their awakening...who knows? Such secrets are not meant to be told.

At **1st level**, you may take the following ability along with your other starting abilities:

Cat Nap

Cat Warlocks can use their power to send their enemies into a deep slumber. You can cast Sleep as a 1st level spell.

At **10th level**, you may take the following ability, in place of the ability of corresponding level from your Pact features:

Furbidden Lore

You gain advantage on all Wisdom saves and gain resistance to force damage.

At **14th level**, you may take the following ability, replacing the ability of corresponding level from your pact features:

Welcome to My World

When you hit a creature with an attack, you can use this ability to instantly polymorph the creature into a cat for a turn (except in duration, this works precisely as a polymorph spell does). At the end of the creature's next turn, the creature reverts to its previous form, but it takes 8d10 psychic damage from the experience and disorientation it causes. You must visit the Welcoming Dark before you can use this ability again.



Wizard

Even before awakening, some cats appear to be deeply wise and sagacious; they watch the events of the world going on around them with the cynicism of those who have seen it all before. Such traits remain behind after Awakening and many who possess such characteristics become Wizards, learning to write the Feline tongue with paw and claw and nose, translating spells and grasping the basics of casting them until they become as competent and powerful as any spellcasters of any species. Of course, cat wizards are still cats and are susceptible to the same foibles as any of their kin, like an affinity for bright lights and swatting them. Many cat wizards, however, have learned to use this to their advantage...

At **1st level**, you may take the following ability along with your other starting abilities:

Hit the Lights!

A cat wizard may take Dancing Lights as an additional cantrip.

At **10th level**, you may take the following ability, replacing the ability of corresponding level from your School features:

Animal Friendship

You immediately add the spell Faithful Hound to your spellbook, if it isn't there already. You may cast this spell without expending a spell slot.







Welcoming Dark Rules

Ever wondered how it is that cats can seem to be there one minute and gone the next? How it is that they can disappear for hours at a time in a room with nowhere to hide? Between worlds, outside of time, beyond the wit of any mortal species save other cats, lies the Welcoming Dark. Its presence is felt by all cats at all times, an ancestral home, a place of respite from the harshness of a world which treats animals so cruelly. This is the domain of the cat gods. It is because of their presence in the Welcoming Dark that cats know their gods are real, and also why they feel so ambivalent towards them. They have met them, walked by their side in the Welcoming Dark...they know them in a way that few other mortal races can be said to know their deities. The Welcoming Dark renders all cats equal, even if it is never the same for any two cats. Indeed, the Welcoming Dark manifests itself differently for every cat who visits, swaddling them in the contents of their dreams and nourishing them in the fashion each cat requires. All cats are conscious of the presence of their brothers and sisters in the Welcoming Dark, but only as a vague, ephemeral presence; a comforting reminder of the link they all share.

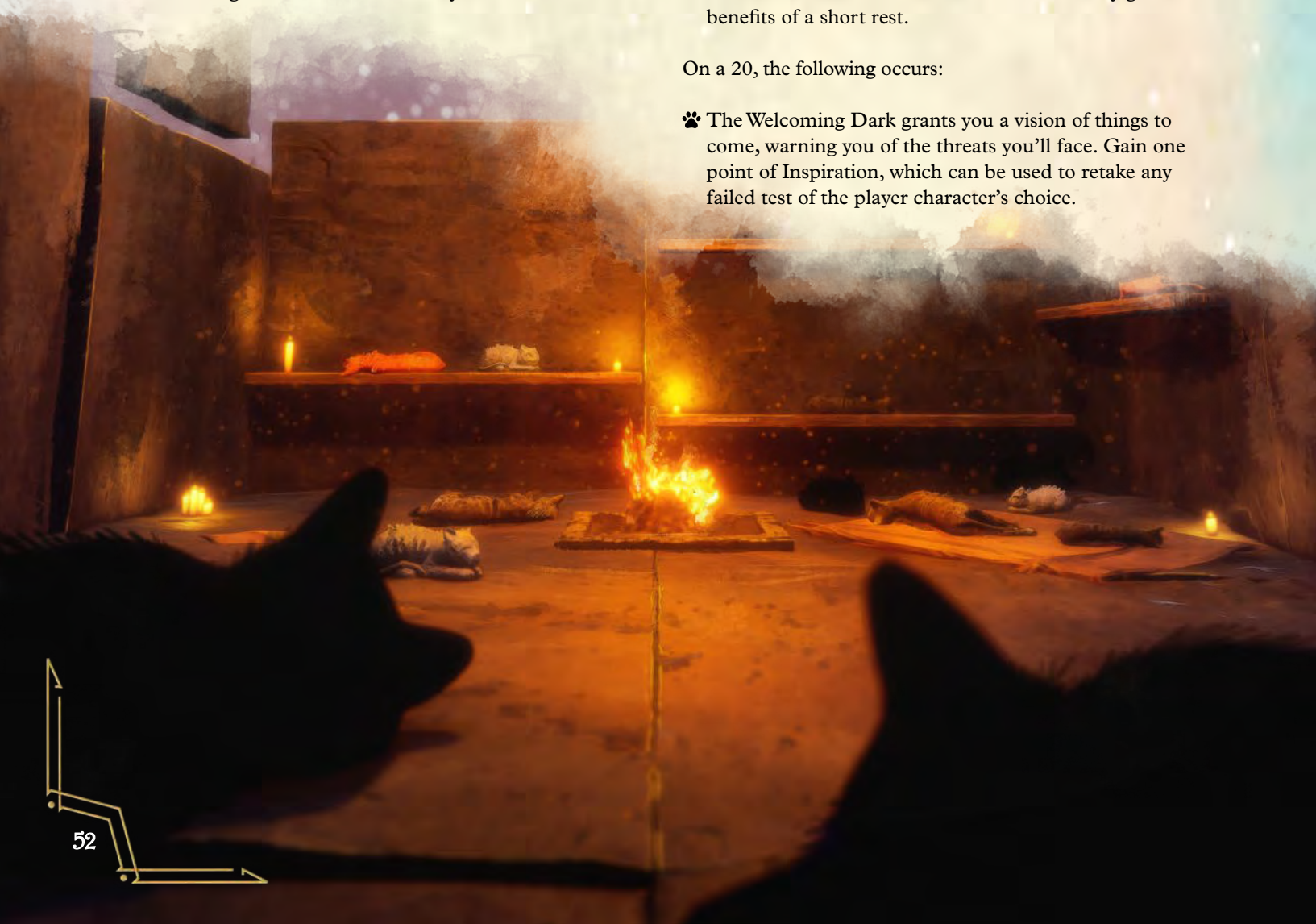
The Welcoming Dark functions as a replacement for a Long Rest, restoring all lost hit points, and spent hit dice, up to a number of dice equal to half of the character's total number of them. The cat must spend at least 8 hours in the Welcoming Dark, not undertaking any strenuous activities. A cat also cannot visit the Welcoming Dark more than once per 24-hour period and must possess at least 1 hit point at the start of its rest to gain its benefits. However, the Welcoming Dark is a physical space, a place apart. When a cat enters the Welcoming Dark, they are gone from the game world and cannot be attacked by any monsters or creatures near to where they previously were. They have entirely vanished and only return when the individual cat chooses. While the Welcoming Dark is safe from terrestrial threats, curious and dangerous things do lurk there. Each time a cat enters the Welcoming Dark, roll a d20.

On a 1, the following occurs:

- 🐾 The Welcoming Dark suddenly opens up and spits you out! You cannot re-enter for 24-hours and only gain the benefits of a short rest.

On a 20, the following occurs:

- 🐾 The Welcoming Dark grants you a vision of things to come, warning you of the threats you'll face. Gain one point of Inspiration, which can be used to retake any failed test of the player character's choice.



Religions and Guilds

Awakened animals occupy a world that is at once intensely familiar and utterly alien. The old certainties replaced by new opportunities, yes, but also with new anxieties and fears. The world has grown, the universe expanded. Where once there was just appetite and sleep, now there is a heaven and a hell, and there are whispering voices and forces in the darkness which demand allegiance. Being your own master is great, of course, but its also a lot of work!

The first awakened animals were alone and struggled to find themselves a place in the world. But not anymore. As the awakened animals came to understand the nature of their world, feel the tides of magic flowing through it, and to recognise the powers of the gods, they began to look for their own deities. And they found them. Great scholars debated whether such deities were called into being by the animal's need, or whether they were always there, waiting for their children to fully understand the nature of the voices in their head, guiding them and protecting them. Either way, now that they do, and now there are religions dedicated to the deities which cats and dogs discovered, guilds have formed to represent the interests of both species. So too has the Order of the Golden Collar — an order of animals devoted to representing the very best of their kind and to driving out evil wherever they find it!

This chapter presents lore and rules concerning the religious life of your animal adventurers, allowing you to shape your game world to accommodate them as much or as little as you choose. Remember, not every animal has to belong to one of the religions in this chapter. They can join the religion of any god you feel most appropriate for the character.





The Good Mother

All awakened dogs know of the Good Mother. This is an instinctive understanding, something all dogs sense. To awakened dogs, there is much more than merely feeling. There is knowledge, recognition even. There are memories, and visions, of a being who nurtures them, who tends to them, even in the darkest of times. Some see a vast white bulldog with piercing green eyes, defending them against a cruel master. Others remember the warmth of a sheep dog's fur they could nuzzle against, even out in the cold. The Good Mother is always there, even if she isn't always seen and can't intervene.

Belief in the Good Mother is universal amongst dogs. That is not to say that all follow her or choose her as their deity, but none deny her existence. She is a presence in the lives of all dogs, even if only as a silent and unwanted one, and even if replaced by a belief in another god more directly pertinent to a given dog's life. There is no aspersion against dogs who choose to worship another deity in place of the Good Mother. To be so judgemental betrays the Good Mother herself. Amongst all true believers in the Good Mother there is a ferocious antipathy towards any dog who lives cruelly, who commits violent acts against the innocent.

The Good Mother's faithful seek to bring her tenderness into the world, and to bring the comfort of a good cuddle with a dog in front of a glowing fire to those who lack it.

Dogs are deeply committed to their faith, once chosen. They believe deeply in the tenets of the Good Mother, believing that through her they might finally arrive at the Great Hearth — the vast kitchen that all good dogs are granted access to. Here, there is always enough food, always a roaring fire to curl up next to, and always a fellow dog to chase and nip and play with. There is no hell which bad dogs are consigned to. The Good Mother is always bereft at the loss of any of her children, but amongst those canines who are attuned to the beyond, they say that bad dogs might be lost, wandering alone, and searching for the Great Hearth. It is said that every prayer uttered to the Good Mother helps to guide a lost dog to her side, and to the warmth of the Great Hearth.

The Great Hearth is always the principle behind the design of the many temples and shrines dedicated to the Good Mother. Such places of congregation can be found throughout the land. While they vary in size and state of repair, each offers any traveller (of any species) a warm welcome, a good meal, and a soft bed (or basket). Safety, comfort, protection. The essential qualities of the Good Mother are held as absolutely sacred in any place dedicated to her worship. Any adventuring party is always pleased to see a Temple of the Good Mother, and all dogs do their utmost to protect them, contributing in whatever way they can to maintain these sanctuaries.

Aspects of the Good Mother

The Good Mother is a god of many different aspects. Each dog cleaves to a different facet of the Good Mother's spirit, finding that part of her that reflects them best. Each aspect is different, unique, and manifests itself as each individual dog requires.

- 🐾 The most commonly worshipped aspect of the Good Mother is She Who Nurtures, manifesting as a large Labrador with deep, dark brown eyes and an expression of purest joy spread across her features, not to forget a constantly wagging tail. She Who Nurtures is the aspect commonly invoked by those awakened dogs in search of comfort, of home and warmth. She is also often honoured by clerics, bards and some druids, who seek to spread the joy and comfort the Good Mother offers to those who need it. The symbol of She Who Nurtures is the basket.
- 🐾 Beloved of rangers and rogues, She Who Hunts is the aspect of the Good Mother committed to the pursuit of the chase — whether for the fun of the game or in earnest. But She Who Hunts is not only concerned with tracking the quarry. Those dogs who follow She Who Hunts do so to celebrate the companionship formed between groups of friends who set out on dangerous journeys, or those who work towards a common goal no matter how risky the outcome might be. The symbol of She Who Hunts is the splayed paw.
- 🐾 She Who Protects is the chosen aspect of most who live by their skill with a weapon or jaws. monks, paladins, fighters...all place their faith in the bared teeth of the protector, drawing on the fierce determination that She Who Protects feels towards all her many children. No matter the odds, no matter the risks, those who commit themselves to She Who Protects always interpose themselves between the innocent and defenceless and anything that seeks to do them harm. It's a path that comes with a lot of hardship but those who walk it do so gladly. The symbol of She Who Protects is the tooth.
- 🐾 This aspect takes a great interest in shaping the lives of the dogs who pledge themselves to her, as She Who Corrects is the part of the Good Mother that helps those who seek it to find redemption. Those who choose to follow She Who Corrects are those who fear that they might be, or might become, bad dogs. Warlocks are often conscientious followers of She Who Corrects, believing that only through balancing the demands of their patron with the positive influence of She Who Corrects can they reach the Great Hearth. The symbol of She Who Corrects is the collar.
- 🐾 For those dogs whose power is drawn from the beyond, there is the aspect known as She Who Seeks. This is the part of the Good Mother that looks beyond, explores, discovers those things which were lost in the darkness or were buried and need to be unearthed through dedicated digging. Sorcerers and wizards are most drawn to She Who Seeks; her restless hunt for that which has been lost mirroring their own obsessive hunt for knowledge to guide and shape their power. The symbol of She Who Seeks is the pricked-up ear.
- 🐾 It is rare to see She Who Bonds worshipped directly. Her role amidst the myriad aspects of the Good Mother is more enigmatic. She is the aspect that brings together all dogs, all canine species, with other species. Some beasts are incapable of being tamed. Dogs are not such a species; they quickly become friends with humanoids, other beasts, and other dogs. They form deep attachments. They love deeply and devotedly. This is the gift of the Good Mother, the capacity to care. So deeply entrenched is this aspect of the Good Mother in all dogs, though, that few feel the need to dedicate themselves to it. It simply is. An inalienable and undeniable part of each and every dog. The symbol of She Who Bonds is the tail.



Cat Religion

While awakened dogs recognise a single deity, cats are less picky. Their religion is far stranger and more obscure, with most of its rites and rituals being entirely secret — spoken only in the Feline language of touch, gesture, and scent. Cats rarely disclose any of the many secrets of their various gods. They don't mention the Welcoming Dark, the place where all cats retreat to when worn down or hurt.

The deities of the cat pantheon are curious beings, never entirely static. But no matter how they change and alter depending on the needs of their believers, cats all think is very proper. Gods are never just one thing; they represent a number of different aspects of life and elements of belief. Cat belief, like cats themselves, is highly individual and changes depending on the believer. Cats avoid dogma for many reasons - not the least of which is the word itself! While the various temples of the cat gods have rituals they enact, these are often not imitated in other temples or churches of the same god. Cat worship is deeply personal and deeply variable. Often the most devout followers of Tom o'th'Alley never visit one of his shrines, believing (not unreasonably) that any true devotee of the trickster god must be trying to fleece visitors of their money. The same is true of many felines who follow the faith of the Old Striped One...why visit a temple dedicated to his worship, they opine, when they could be in a library or in a curious old shop, trying to learn more of the ways of the universe.

Cat beliefs are fluid, often changing depending on circumstance. Cats might cleave to the trickster when young, before becoming more interested in Urbaste as they grow older and nearer to death. The Old Striped One might be a lifelong companion, someone the cat thinks of fondly like an old friend, but never dedicates a prayer. This constant shifting of faith is often considered quite odd by most races, who tend to devote themselves to a single god. Cats simply shrug and wonder...why? Cats change, they say, people change...why should they not change their gods to suit such adjustments? And why shouldn't gods?



Urbaste

Acknowledged by all cats to be the head of the pantheon and the most powerful of the gods, Urbaste is beloved by almost all cats and is the most widely worshipped member of the Ailurokin—the name for the deities worshipped by felines. Some cats believe her to have once been mortal and proclaim her ‘great mother,’ tracing their lineage back to her. Others believe that all forms of cat were once unified in Urbaste but that, as she aged, she began to decay and fall to pieces. Her left-arm, as it dropped from her, became the lion, her right-leg became the tiger, and eventually, when nothing else was left, her heart became the first cat. Who knows what the truth is? What is known is that Urbaste now reigns over the Fields of Yarn - a cat heaven, where everything can be played with, chased, and chivvied. Her followers worship her through acts of ‘cat-ness’, whether that be chasing a mouse, stealing food, creeping over roof tops at night...all are considered tributes to Urbaste. While she adores her children, Urbaste is not a huge fan of humanoid races, considering them to be frequently cruel to her offspring.

Tom o'th'Alley

Cats are mysterious, enigmatic creatures. It is no surprise that they should worship a god whose very nature is equally uncertain. Tom o'th'Alley is a mercurial deity; sometimes charming and seductive, sometimes capricious and cruel. Such is the nature of a trickster god and Tom o'th'Alley is most certainly a trickster. Of all the Ailurokin, it is Tom who is most often seen by awakened cats. He generally takes the form of a large, ginger feline with bright green eyes. These eyes are always gleaming with something like mischief, always friendly, always welcoming — even if Tom is yowling loudly at just the wrong time, bringing an irate human with a cleaver after you. Tom is not always ginger, of course. What self-respecting trickster god wants to be fixed in one shape forever? Certainly not Tom. As a result, all followers of Tom treat every cat they meet with a wary respect, who knows when they might meet the great thief himself?

The Old Striped One

The most mysterious of the cat deities is undoubtedly the Old Striped One. He has no more definite name than this peculiar sobriquet and, whenever he is mentioned, cats close their eyes as though asleep. The Old Striped One is invoked both as a protector of cats and as a possessor of strange and hidden knowledge. While most feline gods are thought of as being loners, the Old Striped One maintains a court of friends — which, according to the scant clerics of the god, includes mice, birds, and other creatures which are traditionally food for cats. This results in clerics of the Old Striped One being thought of as a little odd amongst their kin. They are, however, those most capable of bringing cats together and use their influence and gentleness to ensure that their god's message — that all species must endeavour to live together in harmony — may one day see fulfilment.

Shadow Mover

All cats possess a part of the Shadow Mover in their souls. That predatory grace which cats display, even as they roll in leaves or bat at an overhanging flower with their paws? That's the Shadow Mover. The strange expression of peace which suffuses a cat's face as it readies to spring on prey, even if that prey is only a sunbeam? That's the Shadow Mover. The Shadow Mover is the essence of feline lethality, the quintessence of that part of every cat which is a hunter. Usually imagined as a vast, ever-shifting black phantom, seeping round corners, identifiable only by the glint of golden eyes. Few cats directly praise or worship the Shadow Mover, but all revere him and long to see their reflection in those placid, golden eyes as they leap to the attack. The Shadow Mover never intervenes in the world, never defends or assists his children. To do so would be to grant unfair advantage to the predator, and the prey must have a chance. To this most mysterious of deities, there is no joy in a hunt guaranteed of success. The hunt is a game, a contest, and the Shadow Mover wants his children to be the best at it. To intervene would defeat the purpose. A true cat must hunt by itself.



Animal Guilds

Guilds get everywhere; most towns and cities have them in some form. Collections of people who practice the same trade and same craft, working together to protect their interests. Or, at least, that was the original idea. Now the term is used more broadly, describing organisations of people and animals banded together through common goals.

Certainly, where the animal Guilds are concerned, this is the case. The animal Guilds are a loose confederacy of different groups (very different groups) all organised for and populated by awakened animals. Initially, each of these different organisations worked separately but, recognising the need to quickly prove their resilience to humanoid Guilds — with their hundreds of years of history and experience of ruthlessness behind them — the different factions put aside (most) of their differences for long enough to form an alliance. The alliance guaranteed the rest of the Guilds had to pay attention to those of the awakened animals. The Animal Guild (as opposed to the individual organisations that make up the whole) is little more than a name; the individual component factions operate on their own terms, enforce their own laws and police their own members. Animal Guilds still produce Guild Marks, however, allowing any animal to gain entrance to the hall of another Guild, and to bribe their way past the Watch... if the Watch is feeling forgiving (for more on Guild Marks, see page 62).

Joining a Guild

As part of character creation, a cat or dog player character can declare that they belong to one of the component organisations that make up the animal Guilds. They must explain how they joined and ensure that they observe the laws detailed in the individual Guild write-ups below. The individual Guilds expect their members to be able to look after themselves, though they do provide a degree of support, quietly, when absolutely necessary. Examples of the kinds of support provided by each Guild is also discussed below.



The Cradle

How did the Cradle form? That's a mystery with no answer. It was kind of always just there. Cats were born to be thieves... capable of climbing sheer walls, moving absolutely silently over the creakiest floorboards, and concealing themselves in tiny spaces, cats inherently possess the abilities most thieves spend years trying to perfect. So, as soon as cats became awakened, there simply was a feline Thieves Guild.

The Cradle's inner workings can appear exceedingly complex, but this is deliberate. The cats maintain a constant back and forth of apparently coded messages (in reality, complete nonsense) in order to spread disinformation. The ciphers these messages are written in can be broken, but even then, there is a second layer of obfuscation — and of course, none of the mysterious figures referred to in the letters are real. The Grim Watcher, Jinglepaws, Pale Eyes... all utter nonsense but quite capable of deceiving those foolish enough to try and infiltrate the Cradle in such unsubtle ways.

Joining the Cradle is not a simple business. Firstly, only cats can join. The cat must be fully mature (no kittens allowed, the Cradle aren't keen on inducting innocents into a life of crime), and a prospective member must deliver a stolen jewel to a Cradle hide-out. As Cradle hide-outs change regularly, and are never easy to find, this is quite a challenge. If a cat manages to do this, then they must swear to abide by the Code of Shadow (the Cradle is quite fond of grandiose names), swearing to never reveal any secret of the Cradle to an outsider, never divulging the location of a Cradle meeting place, and never leaving a single cat to face justice alone. Two cats working together, the Cradle believes, can escape any prison. And, if two cats can't escape a prison, no cat should face their fate alone.



Once sworn in, the members of the Cradle are given the passwords and gestures to allow them to enter any of the Cradle's hide-outs, along with the secret of finding them. They are also given a small pouch of Animal Guild Marks. The history of the Cradle is a long and varied one. Initially hated by the Thieves Guilds in whichever city they visited, they soon proved talented and useful enough at their filching, and to be accepted into the broader brethren of thieves. This influence made their inclusion in the broader Animal Guild vital. The Cradle has great respect in the underworld and considerably less so elsewhere...

A cat player character can belong to the Cradle, if they wish. It is most common for rogues, bards, and warlocks to belong to the Cradle but other classes can be useful members too.

Members of the Cradle gain the following items:

🐾 Burglar's Pack

🐾 3 Guild Marks

Support from the Cradle comes in these ways:

- 🐾 Small deposits of money, or Guild Marks, are occasionally found in the pockets of the cradle member.
- 🐾 Occasionally, mysterious messages are delivered containing hints at potential targets for profitable robberies.
- 🐾 If arrested or captured, doors are often left mysteriously unlocked or windows open.

The Houndlings

The Houndlings were founded as a way of allowing young dogs, particularly those with pretensions to martial professions, to receive training and let off their excess energy (and young dogs always have excess energy). The intention was for the Houndlings to trail various merchant caravans as they left Gullet Cove, practicing various survival skills and orientation techniques. This changed when a caravan was attacked by a group of goblins looking for easy prey. The Houndlings immediately hurled themselves into the defence of the caravan, driving the goblins off and returning to the town filled with pride.

Since then, the Houndlings have grown into an organisation dedicated to providing security to whoever requires it (and is prepared to pay, of course). Joining is relatively easy, as long as you're a dog and capable of putting up a good fight...and try finding a dog who doesn't fit that description! A member must be introduced to the Houndling Chapter Master (an impressive sounding title, but in reality, simply the longest service Houndling in a particular town or city),

by an existing Houndling. There, the prospective Houndling is sworn in, uttering the three short barks symbolising loyalty, courage, and resourcefulness. They must also promise not to breach the three laws of the Houndlings:

1. Never betray a client or leave them defenceless
2. Never run from a fight (unless a client, or a friend already has and you need to defend them)
3. Never eat eggs.

No one is quite sure how that third one snuck into the list, but it's been there too long to be changed now.

The Houndlings became an increasingly highly-trained and highly organised guild, dedicated to offering their clients the full range of security services — whether that's an armed and alert escort for a travelling caravan stocked with freshly imported goods, or a bodyguard capable of hiding in the shadows before bounding forward to defend their employer.

The skill of the Houndlings, and their reliability, has made them extremely sought after. So much so that they no longer operate in Gullet Cove to nearly the extent they once did. Originally, the Houndlings possessed a lodge on the edge of Gullet Cove, but they have since moved to a much larger city. No longer possessing a Guild House, the Houndlings are represented only by a diverse range of their various members who still ply the trade of the mercenary to those who require it — the old lodge itself is now empty and slightly melancholy looking. But those Houndlings still in Gullet Cove are as busy as ever. It is said that several prominent humanoid Guild Members employ Houndlings as secret bodyguards, passing them off as cute pets or even strays they've encountered. Until, of course, they are needed.

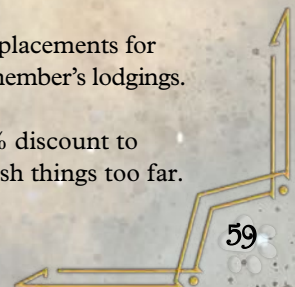
A dog player character can belong to the Houndlings if they wish. Fighters, barbarians and paladins are the most common classes for members, but other classes can join too.

Houndlings gain the following items:

- 🐾 Light Crossbow, 1d8 piercing, 5lb. Ammunition (range 80/320), loading, two-pawed.
- 🐾 2 Guild Marks

Support from the Houndlings comes in the following ways:

- 🐾 Fellow Houndlings offer advice on fighting potential enemies, or on how trustworthy certain clients are.
- 🐾 Extra ammunition, spare rations, and replacements for broken armour appears at the door of a member's lodgings.
- 🐾 Armourers and blacksmiths offer a 20% discount to Houndlings — so long as they don't push things too far.



Order of the Golden Collar

Dedicated to the protection of all creatures, the Order of the Golden Collar is the most prominent and most famous of all the organisations founded and run by awakened animals. Both cats and dogs belong to the Order, representing the best of awakened animals and committed to helping those who require it, whatever struggle they might face. The Order was founded by a dog and a cat, two of the first awakened animals, who came to the rescue of an orphan and the orphan's rabbit, when the pair were being threatened by a brutish shop owner. The cat and the dog chased the callous owner away and then helped find the orphan shelter and ultimately, a safe haven. This, the pair decided, was important work. Work too vital to simply stop doing. The Order proceeded from this idea — that those in need should be helped and that, if no one else would assist the needy, then animals could and would. In order to dedicate themselves to this cause, the pair had golden collars crafted for themselves and for those who soon joined them. These collars represented dedication to the goal of offering true help, wherever and whenever it was needed.

The Order of the Golden Collar grew quickly, hundreds of cats and dogs pledging their oaths to the organisation, seeking to do good. After all, there is a great deal of cruelty and injustice in every land, and always those in need of help. The Golden Collar committed itself to overcoming such problems, whatever it took. The founders of the Order have long since passed on, but the Order is headed, in their image, by a cat and a dog. Individual sanctuaries of the Golden Collar also follow this model. The most important member of any sanctuary of the Golden Collar, however, is always the Warden. The Warden is the member of a sanctuary best representing the Order's values.

The process of becoming a member of the Order is similar to that of joining any other Guild. All prospective Collar Bearers — as all members are known within the walls of a sanctuary — must perform some act of selflessness or great bravery in front of witnesses to earn the right to join; but, if such an act has been performed, all that remains to be done is intone the words of the collar:

***I shall protect all those who need my protection
against any threat***

This is the sacred vow of all those who would wear the Golden Collar. Once the vow has been uttered, the applicant is issued their golden collar (with the vow they've just made inscribed on it). The vow is both the means by which an animal becomes a member of the Golden Collar, and the single rule they must abide by. Any animal who forsakes one in need of help can no longer wear their collar. Some rumours claim that once an animal breaks their vow, the golden collar dissolves into nothing, though there's little evidence to support this as no one who joins the Order of the Golden Collar would ever break their vow.

Any awakened animal character may belong to the Order of the Golden Collar if they wish. Any class is welcome in the Golden Collar, and indeed, the Order likes to have a wide variety of skilled members to call upon.

Members of the Order of the Golden Collar gain the following items:

🐾 Golden Collar, AC +2, Weight 1lb.

🐾 2 Guild Marks

Support from the Order of the Golden Collar comes in the following ways:

🐾 Local shops provide potions and scrolls to members of the Order.

🐾 Many of the inhabitants of Gullet Cove (and other towns and cities) have been helped by the Order, and they try and help you in return.

🐾 The Watch and other Guilds look kindly on you and may turn a blind eye to your antics.



The Watchers

Certain members of the Order of the Golden Collar felt that, as laudable as the aims of the Order were, more could be done. While offering protection was the right thing to do, it was better still to venture into the wilds and hunt down those things which threaten the innocent, and deal with them before they even got a chance. This belief, deeply held by a small but notable proportion of the Order of the Golden Collar, was extremely controversial — after all, if the Order began to hunt down the wicked, or the evil, wouldn't the wicked and evil then require protection? Such moral philosophising was unimportant to those who saw the defence of the innocent as more important than anything else.

Eventually, after numerous debates and arguments within the halls of the Golden Collar, there was a schism. Those who believed that it was the true duty of the Order to hunt down creatures that might one day come to pose a threat left, abandoning their golden collars on the steps of the Sanctuaries in which they'd been given them. In place of the collar, the dagger was chosen instead. Made of highly polished silver, so clean and smooth you could see your face in it, a new Guild was formed: The Watchers. They would watch over the land, rooting out evil and darkness wherever it festered, and, in so doing, protect the innocent from what might wait in the wilderness or in the sewers of an apparently civilised place. The Watchers chose the dagger for two reasons: the first was its keen edge, cutting through anything that might harm the defenceless. The carefully honed sheen of the blade was so that each Watcher could always see themselves when using it, forced to be sure that they employed it for the right reasons and against the right target.

The Watchers eschew most of the trappings of other Guilds. They have no meeting places, no formal means of joining. The only way to become a Watcher is to be inducted into the group by a current member. Watchers meet relatively few people; they spend most of their (often short) careers stalking the wild, pursuing the cruel, the wicked, and the evil. Sometimes, they venture into towns and cities, but usually only on a particular mission — tracking a criminal or a monster they didn't manage to take down earlier. There is little in the way of comfort in a Watcher's life but there are those who put the defence of the innocent before their own lives. The Watcher's code is simple and blunt: *hunt the wicked*. And as long as a member of the Watchers continues to do so, they are more than welcome to count themselves amongst this small but famed organisation.

Any animal player character may become a Watcher, if they wish. Any class might become a Watcher, and indeed, possessing a range of different skills and abilities is useful when attempting to survive in a forbidding wilderness.

Watchers gain the following item:

🐾 Silver Dagger, 1d4 piercing, 1lb. Finesse, light, thrown (range 20/60). 'Inflicts an extra +2 damage to all evil aligned creatures.

🐾 1 Guild Marks

Support from the Watchers comes in these ways:

🐾 A new or better blade left beside you, while you sleep.

🐾 A book, with a page marked indicating a monster's weakness.

🐾 An ally may emerge to aid you in a particularly dangerous fight, before vanishing. But don't count on it.



Guild Marks

In Gullet Cove (and in many other towns where Guilds hold sway), the Guilds produce their own coins. Each Guild manufactures their own mark and possessing a pouch of marks is a token of Guild membership. They also act as a currency, but only between Guilds (after all, you don't want non-Guild members getting their hands on them). Guild Marks form part of the complex network of debts, favours, and other connections which bind the Guilds of Gullet Cove together. A Guild mark from a rival guild is extremely valuable and can be used with any other member of the mark's Guild in place of money. Of course, gold can be used instead, and most Guild members prefer it that way...giving away a Guild Mark is a big deal and it obliges you to the person you're paying with it. Your Guild must honour that mark, providing a favour or service of equal value. Given that there's no agreed upon value for an individual Guild Mark, this can get quite expensive at times, with each Guild attempting to negotiate the price of their own marks up and their rivals' down. Using Guild Marks to purchase products or services from non-Guild businesses, however, is strictly forbidden. Any Guild member who did so would be quickly removed from their Guild and blacklisted. Some rules must be obeyed. Guild Marks are for Guild members only (and Watchmen who get a bit too nosy...but the Guilds consider the Watch a kind of Guild for idiots anyway, so that's fair enough).

The Animal Guild, when it was formed, knew that it needed its own tokens. Thus, the Animal Guild Mark was minted and remains in use, accepted as casually as any other Guild Mark and just as valuable.

An Animal Guild Mark can be used to:

- 🐾 Purchase goods or services from another Guild.
- 🐾 Prove your membership of the Guild.
- 🐾 Bribe a Watchman or other person of authority (of course, this depends on whether the Watchman is susceptible to bribes...but offering a Guild Mark instead of coin grants advantage on an Charisma test to persuade a Watchman to accept a bribe).
- 🐾 Gain entry to a rival Guild Hall or other location...they might not want you there, but Guild treaties mean they likely let you in with the right inducement.
- 🐾 Guild Marks are worth about 40gp on their own. Some traders and merchants accept them as money, others don't. Some buy them, but only ever offer 20gp (after all, they're useless in other towns). But they're best held onto...in Gullet Cove, Guild Marks buy things gold is rarely enough to secure...





Gullet Cove Gazetteer

Welcome, mateys, to Gullet Cove! It's an interesting town you've arrived in — interesting and, if you're not careful, pretty dangerous. So it's a good job you've met me first. I'm one of the few honest people you're likely to meet in these parts. Honest as the day is long, I am. Oh sure, I've been a pirate, but you won't find too many in Gullet Cove who haven't done a trip or two on the briny and come back richer with another person's gold. Just as you won't find many people who aren't...reluctant to pay the right tax to the authorities in these parts. There's a lot of tunnels around and about and all sorts of exciting things get brought up and sold on the markets. You can find just about anything in Gullet Cove if you know where to look...and you're careful about who sees you doing it, of course. This isn't an entirely lawless town...more's the pity. But the head of the Watch isn't a bad sort, really. She'll chase you down if you get violent, but, if things are kept quiet, chances are she'll turn a blind eye to a bit of light thievery. A town like Gullet Cove runs on crime...she understands that. Doesn't mean she's an easy touch, though...far from it. She's as tough as they come.



You've come to the right place if you're an animal with a bit of smarts about them, though. Lots of us here. There's work for a cat onboard a lot of ships keeping vermin under control - and there're warehouses and other places which a smart dog can guard...some might even pay you! Me, I'm sort of a...dog of all trades, I suppose you might say. I'm a friendly sort, and I can always find out what's going on. That's a handy skill in a town like Gullet Cove. I get paid very well for what I know, though, so this little introduction should, by rights be costing you. But I'll let you off, given as how you're new.

Quick word of warning before I go, nothing to be frightened of. Well, nothing to be too frightened of, anyway, so long as you have a sword and don't mind using it from time to time. Watch out for the sewers. Something ugly brewing around there, some sort of turf war. Best to be wary. Oh, I know who's involved alright, but me telling you? That's valuable knowledge I'm afraid.

So, I'll bid you farewell. Should you need a little more guidance, you can find me at the Scratching Post. A fine old pub on the east side of the town. My name is Colonel Algernon Finlay Rozwanson. But you can call me the Colonel. Most people do. Go careful now and enjoy the town!

Gullet Cove is old, much older than it often looks. The only real clue to its age is the remains of the walls and towers which surround the modern town. These are crumbling and unsafe, but the residents of Gullet Cove are extremely superstitious about repairing them. Certain of the older inhabitants of the place, particularly dwarfs, repeat a little rhyme whenever a new visitor asks why no one does something about the state of the town walls. It goes:

*I will not touch the outer walls
No matter what your plea
Else all of Gullet Cove should fall
Into the hungry sea.*

There's a lot of essential facts about Gullet Cove tied up in this little rhyme. The first of which is: tradition is important. Things change in Gullet Cove, just like they do in all port towns, but certain things remain defiantly the same. Fashions come and go, but the Code of the Cove remains the same. The second is that the sea is both a friend and an enemy; those who live in Gullet Cove for long enough eventually adopt the town's habit of referring to the sea as 'Old Fury.' Most of the time it's an affectionate name. Yes, the huge waves rushing into Gullet Cove can cause flooding, and even level a few buildings during the rough winter months, but the sea is also what makes Gullet Cove rich. Old Fury is as much an inhabitant of the town as Morganna Veries, the implacable leader of the Seafarer's Guild and unacknowledged head of the town's Council. Gullet Cove is a town that understands its own history. It's the present it's a little less sure about!

So...who's reading this?

This chapter is written to be read and enjoyed by both players and GMs. Most of what's below is the kind of information that anyone would pick up after a few days exploring Gullet Cove. At certain points in the text, however, there are call-out boxes like this one. Don't read these if you're planning to play in a game set in Gullet Cove! These contain information and plot hooks for the GM only! We're trusting you here...!







Gullet Cove Map Key

Geographical Features

- ① The Sisters
- ② Fang Point
- ③ The Ruin
- ④ Smuggler's Tunnels
- ⑤ The Twin Throats

Key Town Locations

- ⑥ Main Port & Port Warden's Office
- ⑦ Order of the Golden Collar
- ⑧ The Home for Retired Pirates, Buccaneers, Swashbucklers and other Practitioners of Derring-do
- ⑨ Temple of the Good Mother
- ⑩ The Scratching Post
- ⑪ The Speared Hat
- ⑫ The Water Bowl
- ⑬ The Silver Sovereign
- ⑭ The Master's Retreat
- ⑮ The Poisoned Chop
- ⑯ Shipyard & Old Timory's Venerable Shipwrights Office
- ⑰ Master Pettifer's Emporium
- ⑱ Watch House
- ⑲ The Dredge Entrance
- ⑳ The Town Council Chamber
- ㉑ Temple of Urbaste
- ㉒ Grimmsmouth Hall

Guild Houses

- ㉓ The Guild of Seafarers Guildhall
- ㉔ The Thieves Guild Safe Houses
- ㉕ Guild of Adventurers and Associated Heroes
- ㉖ Guild of Wizards, Ingenious Sorcerers, and Practitioners of Eldritch Ritual (WISPER) Library

A Brief History of Gullet Cove

The area on which Gullet Cove now stands was, in the extreme and distant past, a meeting place of the gods. The curving rocky promontories which provide some shelter from the sea are distinctive for the peculiar stepped formation they assumed. This was not the action of erosion, but the deliberate crafting of the divinities who held debates in an amphitheatre created for that purpose. The gods abandoned the place eventually, breaking the outer wall of their auditorium to allow the sea to flow in. The magical residue of so many beings, possessed of so much power, still marks Gullet Cove. It is for this reason that so many awakened animals are drawn to it, the lingering flavour of ancient magic clings to everything, bringing together creatures themselves touched by magic. Gullet Cove, in its current form, is three hundred years old, though other settlements stood here before it. The few scholars who inhabit the town, and spend time examining the various clusters of ruins found in the nearby landscape, opine that a large elvish city once occupied the area - a town of opulence and extraordinary advancement.

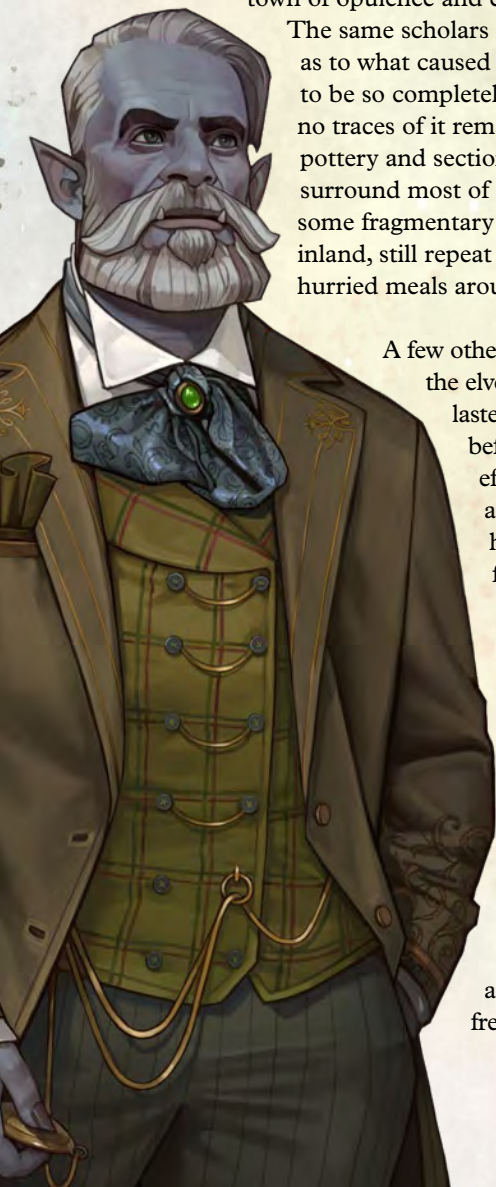
The same scholars are less happy to speculate as to what caused a town of such dimensions to be so completely destroyed that almost no traces of it remain, save for broken pottery and sections of the town walls which surround most of Gullet Cove. There are some fragmentary legends which elves, further inland, still repeat around mugs of ale, or over hurried meals around campfires.

A few other minor settlements replaced the elven conurbation, but few lasted more than a dozen years before, finally, Gullet Cove was effectively founded. There are a number of stories detailing how the town was supposedly founded, though the most persistent involve a group of pirates who grew tired of the various perils of life, settled down, and created a port town deliberately less encumbered by... legality, than other, similar places. These semi-mythical founders are commemorated in a number of different aspects of Gullet Cove's architecture and traditions, but, most frequently, in the curse: 'four

founders!' Of course, some claim there were five founders, or only two, but the oath is always the same: four founders. No more and no less. Some claim that this proves there were four founders. Others, more sensibly, tell these people to shut up. The four founders were some combination of human, elf, dwarf, and either a dog or a cat. No one is too sure on the precise configurations of the original four, but everyone is entirely confident that a very unusual and extremely intelligent animal was among them — and was possibly the leader of the group. Despite, or perhaps because of, the uncertainty surrounding what kind of animal acted as one of the town's founders, Gullet Cove is a haven for animals of all kinds, particularly awakened animals.

Gullet Cove is named for its unusual topography, which, when viewed from the air, appears to remember a vast throat. As one of the town's first cartographers said: 'It looks as though the land were trying to drink the sea'. The shelter the cove offers to ships made it an ideal location for defending. Clearly, those who first settled here agreed, as the oldest constructions dating to after the foundation of Gullet Cove are the Sisters — the two watchtowers which stand on each side of the entrance to the bay. These were soon followed by the bridges which span the two rivers spilling into the cove. There was an attempt to further reinforce the town's defences, reconstructing the existing town walls. This was abandoned, however, when a number of the engineers and masons working on the walls vanished entirely, leaving behind a few scraps of clothes and a few drops of blood. Various attempts were made to root out the cause of this disappearance but to no avail. The engineers were gone. The walls remain untouched.

The leadership of the town has changed considerably since its foundation. Whoever the four founders (or three, five, twelve...) were, they were soon replaced by the first true Mayor of Gullet Cove. Septimus Mugluk rose to prominence in Gullet Cove by dint of two things: being bigger and tougher than everyone else and being friendlier and smarter than them too. A half-orc, Septimus Mugluk became the town's first mayor through a combination of careful negotiation and equally careful violence. Mugluk remained the town's mayor for fifteen years and spent most of that time forging the town into a rough approximation of what it remains to this day. He was the first to welcome awakened animals and render Gullet Cove something of a haven for such creatures. Mugluk's major extravagance was the construction of Grimmsmouth Hall, his enormous residence, on top of the bluff which looks down into the cove. Enormously lavish, Grimmsmouth Hall left Mugluk almost bankrupt and the mayor died soon after its completion. Strange stories abound about the interior of the house and



the various rooms which Mugluk had built within it. Since his death, very few lived there for long and the house has earned a reputation for strangeness - though how much of this is founded in reality, and how much is deliberately cultivated by smugglers who, some rumours claim, discovered tunnels that run from the shore to the hall's basement is anyone's guess.

After Mugluk's death, a number of men and women attempted to replace him, though all proved unpopular and were unseated either through political means or more direct ones (the violent uprising against the dwarf, Englin Forgeworth, who tried to style himself Prince of the Port, being the chief example). So unstable was the town's governance that it seemed, briefly, as though Gullet Cove would collapse. Instead, out of the turmoil, the Town Council was formed. The Council is composed of the six most prominent figures in the town - the head of the Seafarers Guild, the Port Warden, and a select representative from the Guild of Heroes and Adventurers, the Guild of Wizards, Ingenious Sorcerers and Practitioners of Eldritch Ritual (WISPER), and a delegate sent from the Temple of the Good Mother or from the Church of Urbaste. The final member of the Council is the sitting mayor, who has the casting vote and is elected once every three years by the Council. While far from incorruptible, this system of rulership has at least maintained a degree of stability and allowed Gullet Cove to thrive in the hundred or so years it has been in place.

The Council's members depend for their influence and power upon the Guilds, who after Mugluk's demise slowly established themselves as the true power in Gullet Cove. While chaos ruled the town, the Guilds assembled and determined that the best way to ensure their continued pre-eminence was to support the Council, ensuring that it was populated with their members. This culminated in the signing of the . The Treaty of the Guilds, now over a century old, has been observed and maintained through a combination of Guild money, the loyalty of Guild members, and, rarely but when needed, the odd spot of violence. The relationship between the Guilds has been fraught in recent years, as a number of peculiar events have shaken the always-fragile trust between the different factions. There are some who asseverate that an outside force is attempting to turn the Guilds against each other, though to what end, these wild rumours stop short of saying.



Awakened Animals and Gullet Cove

There are few places in the land that *hate* animals. After all, cats and dogs have been the companions of the humanoid species for millennia, helping them and comforting them in exchange for food and shelter. It is an ancient relationship, one based on mutual appreciation and trust. But it's a little more than that in Gullet Cove. The town's legendary founders included an awakened animal — though no one is quite sure whether it was a cat or a dog — and as a result, Gullet Cove has always taken care of any animal who arrives in port. This is especially true for awakened animals; most places in Gullet Cove have some form of adaptation to make them accessible for animals. Whether that is low shelving in shops, displaying produce close to the ground for cats and dogs to inspect just as an elf or a human might with the same goods higher up, or cat and dog-flaps built into the town gates, the animal population within Gullet Cove is as important and valued as any other race or species.

Animals are a key part of the fabric of the town. They form a part of the Council, and all major political decisions usually consider the impact of them on the animal population; after all, different things affect creatures without opposable thumbs differently. The town has temples for the preferred deities of awakened animals, as well as one of the Order of the Golden Collar's sanctuaries. It is also rumoured that the Cradle — the feline Thieves Guild — operates within Gullet Cove's perimeter, stalking the roof tops and sneaking through windows to steal away whatever they can lay their paws on.

In some places, such behaviour might turn people against awakened animals.

In Gullet Cove, however, such things are expected. The Thieves Guild is one of the town's most powerful organisations and the cat version is no different, beyond being slightly more adorable. This attitude of interspecies cooperation extends to most occupations; rat-catchers employ cats to accompany them into the cellars, tavern keepers employ a dog along with a half-orc bruiser as their bouncers should things get ugly, the Watch has a sniffer dog to help them track criminals (whenever the Watch actually gets around to doing that). The whole of Gullet Cove is populated by awakened animals, and they are as inextricable from the nature and identity of the town as the sea is.

The sight of awakened animals on every street, in every tavern, and negotiating, fervently, with a merchant over every market stall is vaguely unsettling for those new to the port, but it quickly becomes something one is accustomed to. For others, it is a lure to find a town where there is such equality and where races and species cooperate so freely. Even if much of that cooperation is about planning robberies, choosing the next merchant ship ripe for plundering, or trying to determine the best way of exploiting foolish customers. But equality means the equality to be every bit as larcenous as a halfling rogue with his hands in a safe...and anyway, who could believe that the cheery sheepdog with the lolling tongue could be anything but a good boy in need of a pat? He definitely couldn't be there to distract you while his partner, a mean-looking sphinx cat, filches all the money from your purse...could he?

It is common to see animals at all of the locations in this chapter. They are all accessible to them and frequented by them. All of these locations have some form of adaptation to suit the animals who make use of the places; these aren't always listed but they're always there. In Gullet Cove, these aren't noticed or commented upon, architects and masons don't spend hours agonising over how they can include a point of access for an animal, it is just a natural response now.

So, whether you are an animal adventurer or merely the fortunate companion of one, go forth and explore this town of pirates, scoundrels, and lovely fluffy animals that just want a cuddle. Who knows what you might find?



Geographical Features

1 The Sisters

Glowering over the entrance into Gullet Cove, the Sisters are the twin watchtowers guarding the bay itself. They haven't been used for their primary defensive purpose in almost a hundred years — though they are kept ready, just in case. The Sisters each possess a pair of vast iron hinges which jut from their sides, set into mortar and magically reinforced. Should Gullet Cove ever be attacked, a net can be stretched between the two to prevent enemy craft from sailing into the harbour. This, so goes the theory at least, allows the massed forces of WISPER to launch fireballs and other offensive spells into the ships of the foe.

The Sisters are always occupied by members of the Watch. Though, as Gullet Cove has become increasingly prosperous and peaceful, what used to be a crew of four is now down to one. And that one guard is usually asleep. It's not called nap duty in the Watch House for nothing... especially as sleeping means that they don't hear the voices on the wind, whispering promises of immortality or wealth if they just *open their minds*. But that too, is just part of the job. The Watch refer to them as 'the listeners', as the bargains extended seem plucked from the minds of those sat in the watchtower — the gambler is offered money, the lonely offered companionship, the bored offered something new. The Watch seek anyone who can explain these ethereal voices, and many have tried, though no exorcism or spell has managed to stop them. It is notable, however, that almost no members of WISPER ever make the journey to the Sisters to diagnose the origin of the disembodied voices. No one is quite sure why.

2 Fang Point

Pointing out into the bay, on a rugged spit of land known as Fang Point, the lighthouse of Gullet Cove is a familiar feature to many sailors who make port their home. Its role is vital — the coast around Gullet Cove is rugged and there are numerous patches of submerged rocks. In the past, ships were lured onto these rocks, deliberately wrecked, and then pillaged by the Gullet Cove smugglers and pirates. In these more civilised times, Fang Point guides ships into the harbour where they can be pillaged by legal, if no less ruthless, means. Fang Point Lighthouse is relatively new. It was built approximately fifty years ago, after the previous lighthouse collapsed.

It is a solid, well-kept tower with a large, magically powered lamp in its peak. The lamp itself is a marvel of dwarven engineering. Shaped into the likeness of four tiger heads, light blazes forth from their maws, teeth bared and roaring across the bay. It is one of the first things most visitors to Gullet Cove see, and one of the last things they forget.

Crewed by three keepers — a dwarf called Migran, a bobtail cat known as Ginger Mick, and the grizzled, white-haired veteran of a decade of hard sailing, Grion Whistle — the lighthouse is reliable, which, as the sailors say, is all it damn well needs to be. All three of the keepers are experienced, committed, and usually to be found smoking a pipe (even Ginger Mick...*especially* Ginger Mick) or sipping from a flask (bowl) filled with rum. The three speak relatively little but they see every ship heading into Gullet Cove...always useful information for those willing to invest time into winning their confidence.





3 The Ruin

The remains of the previous lighthouse, long since crumbled into a mass of moss swarmed stone, are referred to by the inhabitants of Gullet Cove as 'the Ruin'. Few visit the site; none dares build there. What precisely reduced the previously impressive lighthouse to a mound of detritus remains entirely mysterious, though there are dozens of theories. The most pertinacious is that the former lighthouse was constructed on the ruins of the ancient elvish town, perhaps even on top of the lighthouse which the elves had used to guide their sleek ships through storm and gale. There is little beyond superstition to justify this belief, of course, but that has not stopped the ruin becoming a place of fear for many Gullet Cove residents, most of whom keep far away from the wreckage, murmuring about the ominous stories they've heard.

4 Smuggler's Tunnels

The cliff tops surrounding Gullet Cove are a veritable mass of tunnels. Some are natural and others are decidedly not... smuggling is a common pastime of long time Gullet Cove residents. After all, when the Guilds charge tithes on so much that enters the town, anything you can get for free becomes that much sweeter (and potentially profitable)! Over the last century, magic has been deployed to gradually burrow deeper and further into the hillside. The tunnels are usually hidden with carefully placed foliage, or something which enables the tunnels to blend into the scenery. Some smugglers disguise the entrance to their most commonly used tunnels as abandoned mines, hoping to dissuade people from investigating with signs claiming imminent risk of collapse! The tunnels are typically used only by smugglers and, while some of the Guilds advocate for shutting them down or catching those who use them, the more sensible quickly realise that tracking down those who use them is both futile and costly. Instead, the Guilds simply let this illicit trade go...for now at least.



5 The Twin Throats

Two rivers, known as the Twin Throats, disgorge into Gullet Cove. The rivers run a considerable distance in rough parallel before diverging as they cleave their way in-land. The Twin Throats are the town's main source of fresh water and are dammed and tapped at various points, diverted streams being used to irrigate the few farms near to the town, and ensuring that the sewage system is highly effective.

The right-hand river which exits into the bay is the Malkin, that to the left is the Mastin. The Malkin is renowned for being by far the faster and more dangerous of the two, with a section of rapids only a few miles from the town which has left a number of the more ambitious (or greedy, or impatient) merchants and prospective sailors with smashed boats and lost cargo. The Malkin is a dangerous river, and those that travel it do so warily.

The Mastin is far more gentle, placidly making its way from the foothills some miles from Gullet Cove before spilling into the bay. The path of the Mastin is marked by small farms, villages, and inns. Barges frequently travel along it, bringing goods to be transported overseas. The relative prosperity found along the Mastin brings with it its share of peril though; river pirates frequently strike at the unsuspecting, posing as fellow merchants before stealing everything they can get their hands on!

Approximately once a year, a tidal bore races down both rivers, caused by a combination of seasonal rain and the melting of winter snow. Called 'the choke', this bolus of water floods the bay, rattling ships against the stones of the dock walls, deluging the warehouses too near the harbour and preventing any ships making berth. The town has come to celebrate these days of inactivity, with Choke Day becoming something of a holiday — the Guilds taking to providing street entertainment, the taverns staying open later, and a general atmosphere of frivolity gripping the whole of Gullet Cove. Of course, the Guilds also use this as an opportunity to settle scores with each other; while no other business is being conducted, vicious political (and not-so political) negotiations occur in the background.

Key Town Locations

⑥ Main Port

Gullet Cove is many things. But most importantly, it's a port. Ships are supplied and fitted out here for lengthy voyages; they also end their trips here, dropping off vast quantities of cargo which the Guilds and the hundreds of merchants and traders all quickly descend on, picking out the best bits and making ready to sell them on - at a tidy profit! The port is the town's most important and busiest place. It is constantly busy - even at night, sailors wander the streets (most of them having just been thrown out of one tavern and already looking for the next) and those merchants who are happy to make their money by illegal means as well as lawful do a little extra business on the side.

The port consist of the docks, always crowded with ships both large and small, and the various warehouses in which goods are stored before they can be sold on. The streets near to the broad, open sweep of sea and the various mooring points are close and claustrophobic. The warehouses are large, looming buildings and, as Gullet Cove has become a richer and busier town, more have been built in a space scarcely able to accommodate them. At night, when the mist drifts in from the sea, and the few lanterns which hang from isolated way-posts or the signs of small, grim-looking taverns cast shadows, the docks can quickly become a dangerous and threatening place to be. It is perhaps this which has resulted in such sinister rumours gathering around the place - no respectable citizen visits the docks after the sun has begun to set. Strange creatures are said to venture up and into the streets during the night, prowling the secluded streets, or breaking into the warehouses to filch whatever they can. Who knows what truth there is in such wild claims? Certainly, it is difficult to believe the claims of skulking men with the visages of rats. Or of rats which move with the coordination and intelligence of humans. But the stories persist, nevertheless.



Less outlandish are the stories of the secret meeting spots dotted around the docks, in which black market deals are struck and bargains are made. These are all kept concealed from the town's Watch, but are, it is said, tacitly approved of by the Council who recognise that a certain degree of illicit trade is, in fact, good for business. The late-night deals are conducted in carefully protected and carefully concealed trading houses. These are sometimes at the back of the various rough taverns which nestle in between warehouses, sometimes in the side-rooms of warehouses. Other times, the deals require even more clandestine locations: it is well known that the Thieves Guild and the Cradle possess secret hiding places throughout the town and, for the right price, those in the docks can be accessed. Of course, it isn't cheap and requires a long-term contract being signed with the Thieves Guild which is, or at least can be, somewhat dangerous for those who don't read the fine print. The Thieves Guild aren't just good at picking pockets literally; they are also extensively skilled at tying the unsuspecting in legal knots and taking their money that way. For those merchants who can afford the exorbitant rates (or have lawyers as good as the Thieves Guild's), such meeting spots are the best place to conduct the shady business for which the docks are infamous.

Crime. Crime is everywhere at the docks. The Thieves Guild basically looks at the docks as a kind of free-for-all buffet, pillaging any merchant's pocket and any unguarded packing crate. This often leads to eruptions of violence and, more problematically, the Thieves Guild having access to things they shouldn't. And the Rat King's goons operate here, using the Thieves Guild's activities to cover their various thefts, but what, exactly, are they hoping to build? The Rat King is discussed in more detail in the call-out box on page 93.

🐾 The Thieves Guild purloined something very dangerous — a magical flute which, if played, just might bring a demon king crashing down into the earth. Someone needs to get it back. And possibly talk with the wizard who ordered it in the first place!

🐾 The Rat King's minions infest a warehouse; every night there are rattles and mechanical shrieks as they slowly assemble a machine. But what is it, and what do they intend to do with it?

🐾 Merchants have been disappearing and are demanding protection, threatening to forsake Gullet Cove altogether. The only link between the vanishing merchants is that they all had cargo onboard a ship called *Virtue's Folly*. Someone needs to investigate what's going on before the whole town riots!





6 Port Warden's Office

A small, dilapidated, and thoroughly dirty little building stuck between two large warehouses, the Port Warden's Office is the nominal point of authority in the docks. What this means, in reality, is slightly less clear...while once, the Port Warden was a position of respect, this hasn't been the case for some time. Now, the Warden is usually awarded to an old member of the Seafarers Guild who isn't too drunk or too corrupt. That, at least, is the aim. It doesn't take long for the Warden to find the money in their pocket is far more enjoyable than the supposed duties of the Port Warden. When the position was established, the Warden was meant to be an impartial arbiter - ensuring that mooring fees were paid, that crime was controlled, that smuggling wasn't too rampant. There was even, once, a team of Port Guards who served under the Warden, policing the various merchant ships and pirate craft that used the docks. Now, however, the Port Warden is considered something of a joke, when they are thought of at all. The ships that do bother to pay mooring fees usually pay directly to the Thieves Guild (to persuade them not to steal the cargo) or to the Seafarers Guild. As the power and prestige of the Port Warden declined, so did the office...what was once whitewashed, clean and carefully maintained is now all grimy glass windows and peeling paint. The door is clinging to its hinges and sways maniacally in the sea wind that has also left most of the office's roof a mass of broken tile and mouldering wood. Within, there are several desks and chairs, and, at the back, what was a small prison cell for those who attempted to dodge paying taxes and fines. Now, it lies open and is mainly used to store the confused tangle of paper, slates, and vellum scrolls on which the Port Warden's records are kept. The cell is the only dry place in the office now, and the records are the only reason the door to the office is ever kept locked. Who knows what information might be found, hidden in amidst stacks of receipts for mooring?

The current Port Warden is Gaius Vandel. Gaius is well-known throughout the docks as reasonably honest as far as Port Warden's go. A tall man who walks with a pronounced stoop having spent far too long below decks during his life, Gaius isn't flagrantly corrupt (unlike several of his forebears) and considers himself a dutiful seneschal, opening the office every day, and even occasionally moving some of the papers in the cell around, to make the place look tidy. While Gaius doesn't spend more than an hour a day in the office, to open it at all is a considerable improvement on many who held the post. For the rest of the day, Gaius wanders along the docks, ostensibly to keep an eye on things, but in actuality to enjoy himself in the various pubs which dot the area and keep an ear open for the kind of useful information he might be able to sell on to his contacts in the various Guilds. Gaius was never a particularly loyal member of the Seafarer's Guild, unlike most who become Warden, and, as a result, he is able to make a tidy living picking up tidbits from those who made their way into dock. This makes him a valuable resource for those hoping to find out precisely what is going on in Gullet Cove. He's also friendly, though cautious, until he's had enough to drink of course. Though he isn't always the most reliable of informants once he's had too many.

Central Market

The central peninsula of Gullet Cove hosts a huge market three times a week. Despite the modest size of Gullet Cove as a town, the importance of the place as a mercantile hub has ensured that the market is well attended. Traders from most major towns frequent at least one of the markets every week, and other merchants from further afield venture to attend on the off chance that a particularly interesting arrival might have reached the docks. The competition for stall space is intense and frequently turns violent, with various traders resorting to intimidation (or a good old-fashioned punch in the face) in order to secure the pitch they want. Most of the Watch's time on duty is spent ensuring that these punch-ups don't get too nasty. Those who visit the market are typically able to find anything they seek, though the prices are never exactly cheap. Gullet Cove attracts the canniest of negotiators and they don't let their wares go without ensuring they've made every penny they can from them.

Gullet Cove Pricing

Player characters wanting to buy things in Gullet Cove should be encouraged to. This is a port town, and it thrives on such purchases. Most standard items can be bought for the usual price listed in the fifth edition of the world's favourite roleplaying game. The town is also famed for the strange artefacts ending up in shops and market stalls. What the GM wants to make the player characters pay for such items is up to them...but it definitely shouldn't be cheap!



Vandel's Real Activities

Whilst he may look like an absent minded drunk (which is not altogether untrue), Vandel is also something of a spy master — he trades information with everyone in the port, especially the Guilds, but he also has contacts throughout the world. Want to know the price of fish in a port on the far side of the ocean? Vandel can probably tell you. Information is Vandel's main concern, and his constant wandering from pub to pub is as much about determining who is on the way up and who is on the way down as it is about drinking. Vandel's passion for collecting information has led him to become a sort of on-again, off-again spy. Several foreign powers pay him considerable sums to keep a track on precisely who is docking at Gullet Cove, something which his Guild paymasters — most of whom aren't aware of each other — might not look so kindly on. Vandel is always looking for potential agents he can pay to do some of the work for him...less chance of being caught out.

🐾 'Fancy earning a bit of cash, you lucky people?' Vandel needs some friends to help him out. All they must do is sneak into the bed chamber of the head of the Seafarers Guild and take a particular letter, kept in a particular draw. But what does the letter contain? And what does Vandel want it for?

🐾 Sheltering in a gutter, Vandel has been badly beaten. A tavern brawl he lost, or is someone hunting the spy? Begging for help, Vandel promises money, information, whatever is needed if they'll keep the assassin from finishing the job.

🐾 You're sure Vandel is tracking you, keeping a log of your activities. But why? What's so special about you? And who cares enough to pay Vandel to trace you?





7 Order of the Golden Collar

Gullet Cove's reputation as a haven for awakened animals is well earned. The town has a large population of intelligent animals, and as this population has grown, so too has the number of organisations representing and aiding these remarkable creatures. The Order of the Golden Collar is the most immediately noticeable, and spectacular, of the locations in Gullet Cove where awakened animals gather. A large, square building erected in the centre of the town, built with marble and quartz, decorated with meticulously crafted statues of heroic exemplars of animal virtue, the Golden Collar Sanctuary is unmistakable. It is an extensive, and extensively equipped, building too. It possesses bedrooms (for both animal and humanoids), an armoury, a training ground and gymnasium (though this is suitable only for animals), along with a sparring ring and gallery from which the combatants below can be watched. There is also a large meeting chamber, in which the leaders of the Golden Collar within Gullet Cove can gather to discuss those matters which require ruling on – sometimes, this is deciding on which prospective members are worthy of joining the hallowed orders of the Golden Collar; at others, it is determining whether the Golden Collar needs to send its most trusted representatives to assist the Watch in apprehending criminals, or hunting pirates.

The Golden Collar is devoted to performing good works and to protecting animals and the places where those animals live. Its position in Gullet Cove is a delicate one – there's far too much crime and villainy to ever contain it all, for a start. And much of it involves the more roguish kind of animal adventurers. The Golden Collar knows that the elite band of cat thieves, the Cradle, operates in Gullet Cove. While the Golden Collar might attempt to thwart some of the Cradle's more outrageous schemes (such as emptying the town's entire treasury...), it doesn't, however, try and drive them from the town as it might elsewhere. The rules are different in Gullet Cove, however, and the power of the Guilds means that the Order has to be a little more circumspect in some of its activities. The Guilds don't take kindly to their activities being interfered with, no matter how well-intentioned the interference, and far more people are willing to back the Guilds than are committed to the ideals of the Order. This goes for awakened animals as much as for humanoids. Sure, the membership of the Order is made up of dogs and cats devoted to helping their fellow creatures and to defeating evil, but there are also a lot of animals who see the protection the Guilds provide (and the kind of warm basket which money can provide) and decide their lot might be better there!



Despite this, the Golden Collar is seen as a force for good in Gullet Cove and is often turned to by animals and humanoids who recognise that the Watch is often powerless to help them. Instead, they put their trust in the Order who utilise their considerable resources to ensure that justice is done. This involves hunting down thieves (or at least thieves who aren't sticking to the practices of the Guild), chasing off evil magic-users and protecting the innocent. Admittedly, there aren't huge numbers of innocents in Gullet Cove, but those that do turn up there are under the protection of the Order.

In Gullet Cove, the Order is represented by a cat - Sir Bertram of Greyholt, a large, stern Maine Coon - and a dog - Griselda dePugh, a thin and resilient greyhound. Between them, these two attempt to both uphold the code of the Golden Collar and navigate the awkward political waters that Gullet Cove often finds washing down its streets. Such a delicate position requires considerable finesse and, as a result, there are often disagreements between the two leaders. Sir Bertram, a cat with a great deal of honour and integrity but little subtlety struggles to keep his temper with the various Guild representatives, Council lackeys, and other factions who make up the real power in the town. Griselda, meanwhile, is a skilled political operator, who easily navigates such tumult but who also constantly risks compromising the impartiality of the Golden Collar as a result. These contrasting approaches to life and the role of the Order in Gullet Cove results in frequent friction between the two, which their superiors further afield consider very healthy. Griselda ensures that the Golden Collar is always aware of what is going on in the town and can respond effectively to the political chicanery without becoming a part of it, though she does so without Sir Bertram's help. Sir Bertram finds himself pulled into the reckless currents of Gullet Cove politics all too often. Both Griselda and Sir Bertram maintain their own loyal assistants within the Gullet Cove branch of the Order, performing secret tasks for each when required. However, while Sir Bertram and Griselda are the leaders of the Golden Collar in Gullet Cove, the true hero and the face of the Order in the mind of Gullet Cove's residents is its Warden.

The Warden of the Golden Collar is the most honoured and esteemed position in each chapter. A Warden does not lead a chapter of the organisation but they best represent it. The Warden is appointed from those animals who belong to the Order and most fully embody its ideals. They are the noblest, the truest, and the most faithful amongst all their peers. They are brave, decent, and utterly committed to protecting the innocent and helping the needy. In Gullet Cove, the Warden is a rough collie by the name of Orlan. Orlan is beloved throughout the town for their relentless good-naturedness and willingness to help anyone, however complex their problems might be. This is coupled with a skill in combat that few can parallel. Orlan is both adored by those who seek help and feared by those who crossed their path. Things tend to get extremely ugly for any who are cruel to animals or children should Orlan learn of their deeds. Orlan's past is a mystery, and one Orlan does not speak of. None are sure how they became awakened, where they come from, or even what gender they are. The Order of the Golden Collar has many adherents dedicated to the highest of ideals; few are as committed to enacting these ideals in real life as Orlan.





8 The Home for Retired Pirates, Buccaneers, Swashbucklers, and Other Practitioners of Derring-do

Perhaps the strangest looking building in the town, the Home for Retired Pirates, Buccaneers, Swashbucklers, and Other Practitioners of Derring-do is at least half constructed from bits of old ship. Rigging hangs from most of the circular windows, there are several crow's nests emerging from the roof in place of chimneys, and a series of cannons protrude from crudely made holes in the walls (though these are at least decorously covered with lids). As the name of the building - emblazoned in crude paint across a large, tattered black flag suspended from the entrance - states, the place houses an assortment of...colourful characters, most of whom once made a living looting unlucky ships up and down the coast. This makes for a lively house, filled with drunken song and drunken laughter. And drunken fighting. The Pirate House (as it is known by those with better things to do than recite the whole name) is frequently visited by the Watch about the noise of clashing cutlasses, roaring, and general chaos which regularly spills out onto the streets. Just as frequently, members of the Watch are pursued down the street by Admiral Ten Bones, the piratical sheepdog who guards the place. The Pirate House is, perhaps unsurprisingly, in constant need of repairs. Holes in the wall made by wildly brandished cutlasses are common, as are falling roof tiles and cracked windows - all the result of rum bottles flung by drunken hands. Despite this, the Pirate House is extremely opulent - most of its residents put together a considerable sum before retirement. Each cabin is beautifully appointed with a padded hammock, its own cabinet for grog, and a series of cleverly concealed chests in which various treasures can be hidden...though most are occupied by clothes and the bric-a-brac of a life now lived on land. Some of the concealed chests, however, hide much stranger things...magical things brought back from far off lands. A thief might do very nicely should they be able to navigate the strange architecture. The ships don't only appear on the outside...the whole building consists of narrow corridors which creak beneath even the lightest of treads. It's the only way many of the residents can feel at home on dry land.

The residents themselves are typically grey-haired and cantankerous and most have some form of undeniably piratical accoutrement. Whether it's a tricorn hat they are never seen without, a golden earring, an eyepatch, peg-leg, or parrot, someone in the Pirate House has it. A few of the most notorious inhabitants wear all of them simultaneously. While most of the residents long since gave up plying their trade, or at least so they claim, in truth, most of those who dwell in the Pirate House are still involved in piracy — owning shares in different ships and, for some of the younger and more sprightly, participating in smuggling. A life without the thrill of larceny is not a life at all.

Owning shares in ships also ensures that the old pirates are still up to date with what is going on in the teeming ocean, beyond the sheltering walls of Gullet Cove. It also brings several younger pirates to the place, to discuss future raids, to divide loot, or simply for advice. These young pirates often stay for a little while, enjoying the relative impunity with which they are treated in Gullet Cove. No angry naval officers pursue them here and the Watch might visit the Pirate House but only to ask them to keep the bloodshed to a minimum. Currently in residence is the infamous tiefling Pirate Queen Ysandre. The reputation of the Queen of the Northern Straits precedes her - she is clever, cunning, and utterly ruthless. To anyone who opposes her. She is also extremely good company and a loyal friend to those she learns to trust.



Your Tiedling Friend...

Ysandre is in hiding in Gullet Cove. Well, as close to in hiding as a tall, ferocious Tiedling pirate captain gets. Prior to turning up at the Home for Retired Pirates, Ysandre was involved in a raid on an extremely well-guarded ship she was certain contained enough gold for both her and her crew to retire on. She was right about one thing. The ship was well guarded. Ysandre's ship was devastated by magic and advanced weaponry, most of her crew killed, and she barely escaped with her life. Since then, she has travelled throughout the land, trying to shake off the dogged bounty hunters sent after her. The Home for Retired Pirates has proven a good hiding place for the last few months but Ysandre is increasingly convinced that she's been discovered, her location given away. Strange figures stalk her when she wanders the streets at night — stifled footsteps echo down empty alleyways. Strong and focused as she is, even Ysandre's will is beginning to fragment. She needs help and anyone who spends enough time to develop a bond with her quickly identifies this. Ysandre also adores animals, and, since she fled, has missed her cat, Rinaldo, dreadfully.

🐾 Ysandre is being tracked. But not by anything human. An Invisible Stalker has been set on her trail and is preparing itself to strike. How can it be stopped, and how can its summoner be found before they send another?

🐾 The person Ysandre attempted to steal from is Verskol Hammersson — a sorcerer of formidable power. He's recently arrived in town, accompanied by a bodyguard consisting of some of the nastiest, meanest killers in the oceans and is intent on finding Ysandre. Can he be scared off? Bribed? Or are things going to get ugly?

🐾 The Home for Retired Pirates has taken good care of Ysandre, and she's determined to take good care of them in return. One of their number, the ever-charming Captain Pog the Pug, has been robbed. Ysandre is going to find the thief and make them return what they took. But she wants back-up...

9 Temple of the Good Mother

There are many Temples of the Good Mother found throughout the land; the example located in Gullet Cove is like many of them - warm, protected, and with a vast kitchen at its centre. The temple is built in the remains of the former Council Chambers. Before the construction of Grimmsmouth Hall, and the creation of the current Council Chambers, the various rulers of the town met here to debate, argue, and occasionally fight their way to a consensus. It's a large, well-made house, though plainly adorned and sturdy. Made of timber and brick, the building has stood up to the storms and squalls which sweep in from the ocean regularly, and even the roof is remarkably intact, its tiles still firmly lodged in place. Plainly, the Good Mother watches over her children and her places of worship. The sanctuary is always open to any who need sustenance and help. Around the central kitchen are baskets and benches in which exhausted dogs - and, less regularly but no less welcome, humanoids and cats - can sleep and recover. Food is always available, as is healing - the temple is run by a redoubtable cleric of the Good Mother, a spaniel called Father Gwyn. He is ageing now, but is renowned for his wit, wisdom, and inability to be phased. Father Gwyn has seen everything. Twice. He can't be shocked and, while he'll never directly contribute to a crime, he also won't turn away anyone. That doesn't mean he can be taken advantage of. A few of the less honourable denizens of the town tried to manipulate or dupe Father Gwyn. One particularly insalubrious elven pirate attempted to take the venerable priest captive. But venerable doesn't mean vulnerable, and Father Gwyn's spells are not solely for treating the sick!



Five Main Inns

As in any port town, there are dozens of inns dotted throughout Gullet Cove. These range from rough shanty huts on the dock, where cheap grog can be purchased for a copper coin, to the establishments close to the Council Chamber, where lavish meals prepared with the finest of ingredients can be found along with bottles of wine imported from distant lands. There are however, five inns which are undoubtedly the most popular and widely known of the different taverns - though each attracts a different clientele and has a different reputation.

10 The Scratching Post

The Scratching Post is one of Gullet Cove's most notorious inns, and its owner, the legendarily cheery barkeep, Helga Drumkin, is almost as notorious, albeit for different reasons. The Scratching Post is notorious for its clientele (all the Cove's most formidable pirates, and former pirates, drink there) and for Helga's left hook, which has been known to be capable of felling an Ogre with a single blow. Helga's reputation has, however, helped to make the Scratching Post as undoubtedly popular as it is - bonhomie and brutality, in equal measure. The various authorities are able to leave the place alone, knowing that little violence is going to erupt despite the number of dangerous customers because Helga keeps them in line - despite being warm, welcoming, and possessed of a smile so broad people suggest using her teeth as a beacon for passing ships, she's also capable of becoming the most ferocious tavern brawler in the port. Or any port.

The various pirate captains, none wanting to be added to Helga's dreaded Wall of the Barred, all do their best to keep the peace, everyone enjoying and respecting the sanctity of the Scratching Post. A number of brash young sailors have been quietly, but firmly, smacked over the back of the head with a tankard by their own friends to prevent them jeopardising a welcome at the tavern. This reputation for safety has led to the Scratching Post becoming a neutral place for different pirate factions who can arrange a 'sit-down', to try and achieve a truce in some ongoing feud or other. Helga's ever-watchful eye is considered a guarantee of both good behaviour on the part of the attendees and of neutrality. Helga is utterly incorruptible. In the early days of her stewardship at the Scratching Post, a high-ranking member of the Thieves Guild attempted to buy Helga's fealty and allow the use of her pub as a front. The story goes that he was later found, stripped to his underwear and hanging upside down from the weathervane on-top of the Thieves Guild headquarters, muttering something about 'never having seen someone so angry!' No one has attempted to bribe Helga since. And this is despite the popularity of Helga's Healing Draught - a beer so wholesome that it has been known to cure the dead. While a slight exaggeration of its properties, the beer is a potent tonic for virtually any illness and Helga offers free samples to well-behaved customers. However, anyone hoping for a second drop has to bring the bottle back - unscathed!

While Helga has a punch first and ask questions after you've punched them again attitude towards unruly humanoid customers, she is extremely tolerant of animal foibles. The eccentric spaniel, Colonel Algernon Finlay Rowanson III (or Finn, to his friends), is perhaps the Scratching Post's most recognisable patron. Sought after for his wisdom, his endless supply of jokes, and the fact that he knows *everyone*, the Colonel is as much a draw for Helga as Helga is protection for him. The Colonel has something of a past... one that, occasionally, comes back to nip at his tail.



11 The Speared Hat

Populated almost exclusively by merchants (and merchants of the most well-to-do and successful variety), the Speared Hat is only a few hundred yards from the Council Chambers and, as such, has become known as a sort of preliminary debating chamber. The place is typically filled with traders, merchant explorers, and various ambassadors from different cities, all seeking to curry favour with the Council and using the availability of alcohol and rich food to convince either a Councillor or one of their known advisors of the importance of their suit. This has made the Speared Hat one of the most desirable locations in Gullet Cove and obtaining a table can be difficult. From the outside, the inn is unobtrusive but plainly well cared for. Within, the seating is plush, the tables large and heavily varnished, and the bar mounted with a series of bottles of extremely rare alcohol - all temptingly expensive. The owner of the Speared Hat is an elf with a typically elvish sense of his own importance. Gidleth Veryon, the elf in question, is pompous, egotistical but, if you're prepared to dig down far enough, ultimately good hearted. Those who want to gain influence over the Council, or simply wish to determine what is going on in the upper echelons of Gullet Cove society, typically end up trying to get on Gidleth's good side. This usually requires presents — Gidleth is a collector, and like all collectors is easily swayed by fine examples of the art he treasures. Gidleth's presiding obsession is small water colours, particularly of animals.

12 The Water Bowl

For an inn, especially an inn in Gullet Cove, the Water Bowl is unusually solemn. It is often mistaken for a small church, or even a mortuary...but there's a good reason for that. The Water Bowl is the smuggler's tavern of choice, and, as a result, both keeps a very low profile and often has more patrons carefully moving illegal goods into its cellar than it does filling the tap room. The Water Bowl, at first sight, is the smallest of the main taverns in Gullet Cove — a small, thatched building, its walls a mixture of stone and brick, with crudely fitted windows. The true extent of the Water Bowl is not visible from without. The small cellar of the inn stretches out into a series of tunnels, a network of subterranean passages ultimately leading to the cliffs overlooking the sea. The tunnels also connect to the town's sewers...and the smugglers in the inn whisper stories of strange things seen in the darkness of those foul-smelling passages, of rats grown too large...of rats which whisper in the darkness. But, of course, it's possible that's just a combination of alcohol and sewer fumes. Certainly, that's the opinion of Leila and Foil, the couple who run the Water Bowl. The husband and wife team are known for their utter lack of pretension, their ability to talk their way out of any situation, and their tendency to dismiss anything they haven't seen with their eyes as mere nautical superstition. They're usually right. But not always.

13 The Silver Sovereign

The town's oldest inn, and one which has seen Gullet Cove grow from a pirate enclave to something resembling an outpost of civilization (though civilisation might be stretching it). The building reflects its humble origins; it's half-collapsed in parts, while others are clearly recently added — with the aim of propping up the older parts, or so it appears. Most of the clientele, and the inn's owner, reflect the inn's past rather than whatever future it might possess. Tending to have white hair, some form of beard, and a habit of murmuring fervently that 'they don't know what Gullet Cove has come to...' Precisely what this means, most people aren't sure. It might well mean that the minor amount of law and order now in place in Gullet Cove is still too much...these are ageing pirates after all! The Silver Sovereign is where a person goes when they want to find out about the past of the town. Gullet Cove has little in the way of records (or records available to non-Guild members) and it certainly doesn't have a library. It does possess a lot of pubs whose patrons remember snatches of history, peculiar remnants of lore, or the name of the previous Port Wardens, the last cleric at the Temple of the Golden Collar, or the real name of the old dwarf who lives under the docks. No one is entirely sure who the owner of the Silver Sovereign is — some claim that it belongs to one of the leaders of the Guilds, or to a Councillor. Wilder rumours offer stories of strange wizards, or dogs with red glowing eyes who are the tavern's true masters. Whatever the truth, the burly human barman — Brynn — is the person in charge of the day-to-day running of the Sovereign. Brynn rarely speaks and possesses formidable strength. He is not one to be messed with, but he does pour an excellent pint.



14 The Master's Retreat

While most of Gullet Cove is extremely welcoming to awakened animals, there are those who don't like the presence of 'uppity creatures,' and avoid them whenever possible. This is chiefly the crowd who gather at the Master's Retreat, the very name of which reveals what the owners think of the relationship between animals and humans should be...these owners are a pair of former Thieves Guild members who left once the Guild struck their pact with the Cradle. Opening the Master's Retreat together, Swindell Groan and Buller Croon turned the tavern into a cruel, unpleasant little place. Their beer is watery, and their clientele manage to be unpleasant to other humanoids, let alone animals. Swindell and Buller are responsible for trying to stir up protests and attacks on local awakened animals and, when enough free beer has been given out, their drinkers are prepared to listen. In recent times, however, their attitudes have changed. A strange, shambling dwarf in a coat visited the Master's Retreat and, after a long discussion, left grinning. Since then, the Master's Retreat has ceased to act so aggressively towards awakened animals. Some are even invited inside... they don't always re-emerge.

15 The Poisoned Chop

Extremely difficult to find, the Poisoned Chop is the inn chosen by the Thieves Guild and all those connected to the trade of pilfering, purloining, and otherwise prying items from their original owners' hands. This makes it one of the few inns where beer can be acquired in exchange for an item of antique silverware, rather than coin. The Poisoned Chop's owner, a halfling called Quentin Sharp, is the town's most notorious fence. Capable of taking any item — no matter how recently stolen or how potentially dangerous and selling it on at a profit, Sharp is loquacious, funny, and absolutely not to be trusted. While he has a reputation for dealing honestly with those who bring items for his professional attentions, anything else is entirely up for grabs. Coins vanish from every wallet in Sharp's vicinity, as does jewellery. But, to the regular drinkers at the Poisoned Chop, that's just the inevitable consequence of their chosen tavern. And what kind of Thieves Guild members would they be if they couldn't steal their goods back from Sharp's pockets?

Sharp is also known for funding the most outrageous heists he can conceive of — apparently, just for the fun and the intellectual exercise. His office at the back of the tavern is festooned with maps of major cities, with their banks and treasure houses all scrupulously marked, potential escape routes noted, and estimates of what might be found in the well-protected vaults scrawled alongside. Quentin Sharp is an interesting figure in Gullet Cove's underworld. Who knows what you might make of him? Or what insane scheme he might involve you in! Finding the Poisoned Chop usually requires a guide, but it is worth the effort. Hidden at the back of a shop called Ma Glimmer's Motes of Magic, the Poisoned Chop is cramped, noisy, and surprisingly friendly. Not unreasonably, few people cause trouble in a place frequented by thieves, cutthroats, and other ne'er-do-wells. Indeed, so crammed with Thieves Guild members is the Poisoned Chop now that a great deal of Guild business is conducted within its heavily-graffitied walls, making it an excellent place to find out what the Guild is up to. Of course, you don't want to be seen eavesdropping but, for those who are careful, there's much to be learned.

Swindell and Buller: Kidnappers!

The pair aren't exactly stupid. But the scheme to lure awakened animals (or any animals, at a push) into their inn and then sell them on definitely isn't one they came up with. Swindell and Buller are now in league with the Cunning Man. A dwarf possessed of little conscience and a great deal of twisted charisma, the Cunning Man is the kind of merchant that a place like Gullet Cove occasionally attracts. The kind who prefer money to anything else (for more on the Cunning Man see page 119). Swindell and Buller are just one of the Cunning Man's ways of capturing awakened animals he can then sell on as pets to the very wealthy, or to circuses and carnivals. It's a profitable business and he has managed to employ a small group of Goblin 'Nappers who specialise in pinching awakened animals off the streets and spiriting them away. Swindell and Buller lure animals in with the promise of food, friendship, and reconciliation. Then they bundle them into the cellar and wait for the Cunning Man's goblin friends to arrive. It's making them a great deal of money and they are starting to branch out into new avenues. Someone needs to stop them, and soon...





The Gutterings

Found throughout the town, the gutterings are a network of rooftop passageways used exclusively by cats to navigate Gullet Cove at a speed that borders on the supernatural. Discovered and created in equal measure by the Cradle, the feline Thieves Guild, the gutterings are an open secret. No cat ever expressly admits the existence of the gutterings, but anyone involved in the town's underworld knows of them — just not how to find them.

There are two varieties of guttering: some are merely planks, placed over the gap between buildings, others are carefully hidden away, obscured with meticulous care. The unhidden gutterings are used by all felines and even some smaller dogs. A rooftop community has grown up around the unhidden gutterings. Small market stalls sell food to those making their way over the rooftops. Feline merchants offer discount rates for those willing to purchase from merchants 'in the sky' as opposed to 'on the ground'. There are even unofficial repair teams who venture across the rooftops fixing the broken boards, the listing tiles, and anything else which is in danger of falling.

Only certain roofs have the cunningly reinforced gutter runs, the hidden gutterings, which those cats who know of them use. They race along these tunnels at incredible speeds, aided by the fact that the Cradle keeps them lightly greased. This does lead to a few minor accidents, with various cats colliding in the cramped confines of the gutterings — but most cats are sufficiently dextrous to leap out of the way or avoid their fellow felines, even as they surge along the tunnels. The Cradle uses the gutterings as a means of keeping itself informed of what is going on in the town — pretty much anywhere can be accessed from the gutterings and this ensures that information can be acquired quickly and easily. Once it's been gathered, its jotted down in pawsword (the Cradle's secret language). These messages are sent along the gutterings, ensuring that the cat Thieves Guild is one of the best informed in the town. This led to the Thieves Guild officially recognising the Cradle as a cousin; in order to get access to the detailed information the Cradle always has on hand (or paw). A few animals who aren't members of the Cradle are also offered the privilege of utilising the gutterings, typically other cats but a few small dogs are also told the secrets of inveigling themselves into spaces which seem implausibly small. For those lucky enough to be allowed in, there's no safer or quicker way to travel.

16 Shipyard & Old Timory's Venerable Shipwrights Office

Pirates and merchants need ships. And someone needs to make them. That's why there are shipyards. The shipyard in Gullet Cove is small and run by the cantankerous gnome referred to on the sign outside the shipyard as Old Timory. To those who have to deal with him more regularly, however, he has a host of other, much less polite sobriquets. Timory both owns the shipyard and is the eponymous venerable shipwright. While he is an extremely awkward and obstreperous old man, Timory is a shipwright of rare skill. The issue is, of course, that very few are prepared to endure either his perfectionism or the barbs he directs at anyone he deems to be of inferior intellect to him. Which is, of course, everyone. As a result, the shipyard is, for the most part, a mass of unfinished hulls, begun and abandoned. The place is also littered with Timory's various inventions for the improvement of sea travel; these bizarre contraptions are formed from scraps of copper and iron, wood and string... and all now sit streaked with rain and gradually decomposing. Timory's shipyard is essentially defunct now; the gnome is so infamously difficult that even the most desperate seafarer would rather travel up the coast than engage with him. None doubt his peculiar genius or the magnificence of the ships he built, but bar a few commissions from other shipwrights who request specially designed compasses to be installed within the helm of a ship they are in the midst of constructing, Timory is rarely employed these days. Timory resents working for such inferior talents, but, as the shipyard moulders around him, can't in all good faith deny his need for money! If you can withstand the viciousness of his tongue, Timory is the greatest shipwright in the land and, currently, extremely affordable. He is, however, likely to test even the most patient and forbearing people to the limits of patience.

Unfinished Experiments!

Old Timory is a genius. An obstreperous one, sure, but a genius. If he hadn't been quite such a difficult, cantankerous person, he'd likely be extremely rich. As it is, he has a shipyard filled with junk and his incomplete experiments. Some of these are purely for helping onboard navigation, or bailing out the hull...others are bizarre, dangerous, or simply odd. Venturing into Timory's shipyard is something of a risk (he really doesn't like trespassers...or anyone, really), but it might just pay off.

🐾 An orb, encrusted in copper, that hums and rumbles whenever it is touched. At certain times it emits bright rays of light which scorch unusual patterns on the wall. Even Old Timory doesn't know why.

🐾 A wand, fashioned from the figurehead of a long since scuppered vessel, Timory intended this to become part of a device for tracking the position of the stars. What it is now, he isn't sure, except that when waved near water, peculiar things seem to happen...

🐾 A leather satchel Timory has long since buried beneath a pile of heavy wood and iron. Because it won't stop singing.

For more on these items, see page 159. You just never know when they might be useful for!





17 Master Pettifer's Emporium of Exotic Wonders and Divers' Objects of Interest

Located in the heart of the town, Pettifer's is a shop in the loosest sense of the word. A sprawling assortment of shelves, items, cabinets, glass cases, cupboards...all crammed with the strangest and apparently useless assortment of bric-a-brac conceivable, Master Pettifer's possesses an inescapable lure for the curious. What might be found in the deeper recesses of the place? The answer is *anything*. Pettifer's has been here a long time, and Gullet Cove has always attracted merchants who specialise in the obscure and unusual varieties of artefact. While his shelves may indeed be crammed with vials of sand, crumpled balls of ribbon, or verdigris-stained lumps of copper, they are as likely to be stocked with daggers steeped in magical energy, a coin that can buy the inattention of the gods for an hour, or a book which contains a list of the hidden numbers between 0 and 1.

The outside of the shop is fairly ordinary, a few tables are erected displaying a host of ephemera, and the windows are dusty and smeared with hand prints where prospective buyers pressed have against the glass, unable to restrain their curiosity. Master Pettifer is a somewhat mysterious figure, rarely seen within the shop itself though he is occasionally found pottering around somewhere deep in the endless ranks of shelves.. The money for items is usually taken by an old awakened dog, at the small counter near the front of the store. When he is seen, Master Pettifer is usually clad in a specially tailored maroon smoking jacket and cap from

which dangles a long and worn tassel. He is a slender hairless cat, forever leafing through the pages of a large, leather-bound volume in which he records each item for sale in the Emporium. This book is Pettifer's most beloved item and he never allows anyone to glance within its pages — leading many to believe that its contents are something more than simply the shop's inventory. This is also true of his shop. It is...*too big*. From without, the shop seems to be a small, cramped place. And it is. But it keeps stretching back. And back. And still further. The shelves stretch on and on, miles of shelves, formed into a clumsy labyrinth of stock and storage. There are some who claim that the Emporium is infinite, and that that Master Pettifer is a god, exiled from the heavens to earth. Others that Pettifer is simply an eccentric wizard who created a shop to contain all the curios and other trinkets that fascinate him. Still others insist that the dog, Rufus, who sits at the entrance and counts the coins, is the true owner of the shop and that Master Pettifer is merely his faithful assistant and stock taker. Who knows what is true? For those prepared to spend their time looking, just about anything can be found in Master Pettifer's Emporium. Just don't try and steal it. Master Pettifer has been known to deal very harshly with thieves (or at least, very few of them emerge from his shop unchanged though they won't talk about what they experienced) and even the Thieves Guild has declared the Emporium 'valueless'...the most dire warning the Guild can apply to a place.



Beware what you might find...

There are many shops like Master Pettifer's scattered throughout time and space. Mysterious shops, shops that no one can remember ever *not* being there. Shops that people sometimes enter and never emerge from. There are corners in such shops which even the owners don't go in. You never know where they might lead...but despite the risks, places like Master Pettifer's are always filled with opportunities for those who know the risks. The place is filled with forgotten magic and potential paths to adventure...

🐾 The eye of a dead demi-god, still moist with brain fluid. Some say it can be used to see into the past. Others, that looking into it can drive you insane but grant astonishing strength. Still others claim that it's a manky old eye that should be thrown away. Want to find out which is right?

🐾 A bag filled with teeth...and someone is stealing them one at a time. Master Pettifer can't work out who it is, or what they're doing with the teeth. He does believe that the sudden spate of ancient skeletal warriors raging around town might be linked to it though. He's prepared to offer money if you can apprehend the thief.

🐾 Right at the front of Pettifer's shop is a chest. Even Master Pettifer doesn't know where it came from, or what's inside it. He won't allow anyone to open it...but there are a number of prominent citizens who believe they know what's kept within. And they want it for themselves. They'll do anything to get hold of the chest — or just prise the lid open. Will you help them, or thwart them?

For more information on items found in Master Pettifer's Emporium, check page 159.

18 Watch House

Every town has one. A Watch House where those who enforce the law within the town limits can equip themselves, secure prisoners, and generally organise, ready to do their duty. Gullet Cove's Watch House is a large, resolute building, constructed in the earlier days of the port and built with the notion that it might one day have to repel an attack from the sea. This ultimately proved unnecessary — Gullet Cove instead found a strange balance between civilisation and lawlessness, an equilibrium which continues to this day. A balance, indeed, which has left the job of the Watch, and the purpose of the Watch House, a little ambiguous. Most of the thievery in the town is unpoliced, save by the Thieves Guild themselves. Murders and kidnapping are rare, but, while the Watch investigates them thoroughly, few arrests are made. Most of the perpetrators simply disappear...and so, often, do the victims.

The Watch is thought of fondly by most of the inhabitants of Gullet's Cove, in much the way one thinks of an inept friend. They don't expect the Watch to be of any assistance should some incident befall them, but it is nice to see them all the same. Usually, when redress for a grievance is required, or something dreadful has befallen someone, they visit the Guilds or the Order of the Golden Collar. The Watch House is now mostly a kind of cafe...friends of the members of the Watch pop in from time to time and the occasional arrests the Watch do make are kept in the back and treated with mild disdain. The Watch House consists of a series of small cells at the back, in front of which are a series of small offices and an armoury, which is poorly stocked and left unprotected most of the time as a result.

The most well-maintained area of the Watch House is the kitchen, where the Watch personnel all make endless cups of tea, waiting for something to do. The current head of the Watch, the stern but thoroughly decent dwarf, Filamena Gruth, has long ago accepted the essential irrelevance of the Watch in the current age. As a result, though she chafes against her inactivity, she spends most of her time trying to avoid upsetting any of the entrenched political blocs within the town and ensuring that the officers under her command are safe. Sometimes from themselves. Despite this, Filamena is ready to embrace any opportunity to restore the Watch's reputation and to undermine the grip of the Guilds on power within the town. Wherever she goes, Filamena is accompanied by her self-appointed bodyguard — the small, white-haired terrier called McKenzie. McKenzie is always angry and always convinced that Filamena is in danger; determined to defend his captain to the death. He thus far hasn't had an opportunity to demonstrate quite how deep this dedication runs, but he remains ever hopeful he might get the chance to one day. A committed and determined group of adventurers might well be able to persuade Filamena to return to the streets to fight crime and make the Watch a force for good in Gullet Cove. If McKenzie lets them get close enough, that is...

Forlyth's Blacksmith

The best smithy in Gullet Cove is Imelda Forlyth. A dwarf with forearms almost as wide as her anvil, Imelda comes from a long line of dwarven crafters and artists. She came to Gullet Cove after a long spell at sea, working as the onboard carpenter for a merchant company. Upon landing in Gullet Cove and seeing the dire need for a blacksmith with a modicum of skill, Imelda decided to use her shares from the ship's latest venture to buy a small outhouse at a run-down tavern on the fringes of town. Within three months of beginning to work metal, Imelda was the most sought-after metal worker in the town. Within six, she had bought the rest of the inn and converted it into a full-scale blacksmith's and taken on a number of apprentices. The metal work produced by Forlyth's Blacksmith is superior in virtually every way to that found elsewhere in Gullet Cove. Produced using ancient dwarf techniques, along with Imelda's particular individual flair, anyone who can afford Forlyth's expensive rates always pays them. Forlyth's weapons remain sharper, their nails are stronger, their anchors rust more slowly. The other blacksmiths in the town might have been jealous, if it weren't for the fact that Imelda is happy to share expertise; her arrival resulted in an improvement in metal working throughout the town. Despite this, Forlyth's is still the best, no one possesses the same combination of technical competency and flair that she does.



19 The Dredge Entrance

The sewer system beneath Gullet Cove is extensive, spreading out beneath every street and every house, in a vast, spiderish sprawl of tunnels. Surrounding these are the dredges, smaller tunnels designed to filter off excess sea water when the tide is high during the winter. These dredges are dangerous, but, for creatures of the right size, make an excellent means of making their way around the town without being detected. Of course, the dredges are also used by thieves and smugglers for stashing their various illicit goods and by the drunk for sleeping in. There are a number of entrances to the dredges located around the town, nominally for maintenance, though, in truth, the Thieves Guild saw to this; recognising that the dredges, while they might be cramped, would provide a decent hiding place for their more incautious members fleeing from angry property owners!

The dredges also lead into the larger and deeper sewers, making these entrances a means of navigating the undertown, perfect for a thief to escape their pursuers — as long as they don't mind dealing with the stench of the sewers or the onerous task of dragging themselves along the narrow, low-roofed confines of the dredges. In recent times, however, the thieves avoid the dredges and the sewers. Strange things are transpiring down there, they claim. There are stories of battles between creatures which should have died long ago, of sinister voices whispering through the tunnels, of a vast beast that preys on anyone foolish enough to cross its path. The Thieves Guild has sponsored a few expeditions into the sewers but all return claiming to have seen nothing...only the dank walls of the sewer and the chittering of rats. But what else would one expect?

The sewers are also notable for the remnants of the old towns and fortifications which can be found scattered throughout their length. Some of this is merely crumbling brickwork, but there are tales of strange inscriptions carved into ancient walls, of tablets on which are forgotten runes, even of treasure just waiting to be discovered. Of course, how far anyone believes any of these stories is dubious, but that there is something more in the sewers than waste is almost certainly true. And the only way in is via the dredges...



Beware the Rat King!

The sewers and the dredges are indeed home to thousands of rats. But some of them are...*a little different*. Several years ago now, a talented but foolish wizard attempted to create a new form of awakened animal — a hyper-intelligent rat. The experiment worked...but too well. The rat in question was not simply smart, he possessed powerful psionic gifts. Hypnotising his creator, the rat escaped into the sewers. Crowning himself the Rat King, he soon began to compel other rats to follow his commands, but soon, as his power began to spread, others joined willingly. Wererats tired of having to hide their true nature, giant rats that recognised an opportunity for a free meal and others...all drawn by the Rat King's powers of persuasion. And his vision of a world where rats rule over humans. Just as the Rat King rules over his creator and former master...the unfortunate wizard is now only known as Gripe and is treated as a pet by the Rat King. The Rat King controls the entire sewage system of Gullet Cove and uses this network of tunnels to infiltrate anywhere in the town, utterly unsuspected and utterly untraceable. The Rat King waits to unleash his brilliant strategies upon the surface world, convinced of his inevitable victory. Given the hideous abominations he has managed to create in the stinking darkness, he may achieve his aim. Only the truest of heroes could stand against the mighty Rataclysm and live.

20 The Town Council Chamber

Considering its prominence in Gullet Cove, the Council Chamber is somewhat unimposing, though that is at least in part due to the size and extent of Grimmsmouth Hall which stands so close to it. The outside of the Council Chamber is carefully crafted but made chiefly from brick. The only touch of opulence is the town's symbol, carved into marble and mounted above the Chamber's entrance. A short flight of stone steps leads to the large, wooden doors, which in turn gives way to an impressive welcome chamber. Furnished with highly polished wood, the entrance hall is everything the outside of the Chambers is not. Ludicrously grand, with twin curving staircases covered in red carpet, sumptuous couches for those forced to wait for the Council to hear their pleas and grievances, and a fountain depicting the town's first mayor — Septimus Mugluk — being blessed by the sea, it is ostentatious in every respect. The same is true of the Council Chamber proper, reached by climbing the flight of stairs.

The Council Chamber is large, wood-panelled, and contains a vast table lined with seats for the Councillors and their various aides, advisors, and amanuenses. There is also a chair set back from the table upon which the light from the room's largest window shines uncomfortably; this is the Seat of the Supplicant...any member of the public may petition the Council for their case to be heard and judged. There is always an extensive waiting list to be heard by the Council, though few are pleased by the outcome.

The Council may express disappointment or support for the supplicant but avoid any judgement which requires them to do anything. That would be going too far... unless, of course, the supplicant is from a Guild in which case, things tend to happen rather quickly. Very few Guild members ever sit in the Seat of the Supplicant, however. That is the spot for those without connections. And who listens to them?

Beyond the Council Chamber, there's the mayoral offices. The mayor be a role with little more than symbolic power, but maintaining the symbol is important. Marble, silk, velvet...the mayor's office is decorated in all of these. The furniture is studded with gold, the art exquisite, and the quills used by the mayor to sign various meaningless statements of goodwill and general friendship to all are plucked from a griffin. Luxury is the Council's (and mayor's) main concern, and they are more than capable of maintaining themselves in a state of almost excessive comfort.

The current mayor is Leurner Abbrux, an elvish minstrel who was once famed for his singing and for his talent when it came to seducing the wives of the land's most powerful aristocrats (and, on several occasions, the aristocrats themselves). Deciding that his easy charm and good looks might not last forever (he was nearing three hundred at the time), he opted for politics. A slightly feckless but ultimately good-natured elf was ideal for the Council's purposes and Abbrux was soon enjoying the comfy seats and finery that comes with being mayor. There is, however, an ongoing tension between Leurner and the Council who put him in his position — Leurner is determined to help people, rather than simply preserve the Guild's status quo. The Council has attempted to dissuade him from this approach, growing increasingly frustrated with Abbrux's determination to involve himself in the affairs of the town. Currently comprising Mervynner the Frozen, from the Guild of Wizards, Ingenious Sorcerers and Practitioners of Eldritch Ritual; Boris Byeldun, the representative of the Thieves Guild; Alexin One-eye, head of the Adventurers Guild; the Port Warden (when sober enough); Shriill, chief priestess of Urbaste; and Morganna Veries, the leader of the Seafarers Guild; the Council is weighing its options and debating whether to remove Abbrux before his term is over. It is risky, the mayor is increasingly popular among the populace of Gullet Cove, but the Council much prefers a quiet life, so that they can get on with the real business of running the town from their Guild Houses...





The Lair of the Necromastiff

Grimmsmouth Hall is haunted. And was haunted. It's complicated. When Septimus Mugluk died, his spirit stayed in his house — the house he had poured so much of himself, and his money, into. He drove the first few families out with a combination of throwing books around and some hideous shrieking. All fairly generic phantom tricks. Mugluk, even as a spirit, cares about people and his town. The stories of a haunted mansion attracted the attention of an extremely dangerous being — the Necromastiff (for more on the Necromastiff, see page 115). A dog of exceptional intelligence, even for an awakened animal, the Necromastiff recognised an opportunity. Sneaking into Grimmsmouth Hall, he quickly trapped the spirit of Septimus Mugluk in a black bottle.

Using various minor illusions, the Necromastiff kept up the house's reputation for being haunted and built himself a laboratory, deep in the bowels of huge manor. From here, he has begun to create a force capable of taking over Gullet Cove and making it into the haven for the undead that the Necromastiff has always dreamed of. Skelly cats, the Necromastiff's chosen servants, are starting to roam abroad and the doggie master of death is readying the next stage of his plan...but who is going to stop him?

21 Temple of Urbaste

Less grand than the spectacular edifices dedicated to the Good Mother, or to the Order of the Golden Collar, the Temple of Urbaste is the chief point of worship for felines in the town. As is typical of those locations designed for praying to the typically disinterested Urbaste, the temple is understated and quiet. Converted from an old and once half-ruined market hall, the temple has been carefully designed for cats. Old packing crates can be found everywhere, ramps leading to elevated perches crisscross the open space where the small but beautifully carved statue of a cat head sits, functioning as the only point of obvious religious iconography.

All are welcome to enter the temple, though it is certainly not as inviting or welcoming as the Temple of the Good Mother. It is, however, a warm and safe place and there is always food to be found — though it is usually concealed behind chairs, secreted on top of a pile of furs and blankets, or tucked into tiny gaps. Whoever makes the food ensures that those who want to eat work for it. And of course, no one is sure who does make the food. The Temple of Urbaste is full of such little mysteries. Who cleans it? There are none employed to do so, but every morning it has been rendered immaculate. None of the cats (or the small number of dogs and humanoids who occasionally spend the night there) were awoken or noticed anyone. The same is true of the gifts which each visitor receives but which are never purchased or distributed. They simply appear in the pockets or satchels of anyone who visits the temple and offers up a quiet and sincere prayer — they are not extravagant gifts, just small items of minor interest: a ball of yarn, a small image of a cat, a bell on a string.

The high priestess of Urbaste in Gullet Cove is Shrill, a tortoise-shell cat of extreme age. Shrill is a member of the Council, and as such commands respect throughout the town; she is known for her wit, her individual approach to politics, and her commitment to Urbaste. Though being committed to Urbaste is not a hard task. The god doesn't require much in the way of displays of faith. Just the odd quiet word and small tribute of a bowl of water or a scrap of

food every now and then. The Gullet Cove temple is perfectly in keeping with Urbaste's faith and its followers; quiet, safe, and ever so slightly strange, such things remain.

22 Grimmsmouth Hall

Built by Septimus Mugluk, the “Old Hall” or “Grim House”, as it is usually called by Gullet Cove residents, was once the most beautiful home in the town. The half-orc mayor poured gold into the place, seeking to create a residence that would both suit his particularly grandiose tastes and situate Gullet Cove firmly as a place for the wealthy, for those of taste and refinement. Mugluk died before Grimmsmouth Hall was completed, and, while a number of occupants attempted to dwell in the hall since its eventual completion, all left shortly after. The reason? The place is haunted. Obviously.

It's a gigantic manor house on a cliff top. How was it not going to end up haunted? Unless, of course, that was the point; Septimus Mugluk intended for the hall to stand as a monument to his achievements, to the way he had formed Gullet Cove, shaping it from a collection of huts and shacks to a real town. Now his enormous house rests over the town, gazing down upon it, its huge cracked windows like shadow-sunken eyes, its doors reeling on rusted hinges, as though the hall were Mugluk himself, keeping careful — and not altogether benevolent — eye on the consequences of his efforts, now so long ago.

Tales of strange events, of sinister creatures crawling across the ceiling, of noises emerging from the cellar, of lights blazing from empty rooms...such things drove four different sets of occupants from the house. Since the last family of wealthy aristocrats were sent running in terror from the place it has stood entirely empty. But that hasn't put a halt to the stories. Much of the furniture and fittings installed, at enormous expense, by Septimus Mugluk still remains in place, and, so goes the reasoning, might be Mugluk's famous treasure horde. Hundreds of thieves and explorers have attempted to explore the hall. All encountered something horrifying there. Most returned terrified and shaken, a few returned with their minds broken, and a few haven't returned at all. Clerics of most major faiths attempted to cleanse the house of its unquiet spirits, driving out whatever creatures might reside there. None have succeeded and, over the years, the hall has become accepted as a 'place to avoid'.

The mystery surrounding the hall has increased over the years, and recently there have been notable signs of dark magical activity there. Red light streamed from the windows, a rain of eviscerated fish splattered the hall in guts, stumbling undead creatures seen stumbling through the long grass. When this has been tentatively investigated by the Watch, no traces of such things remain. Only rumours, memories, and fear.



Guild Houses

Guilds hold the power in Gullet Cove. They dominate the Council, control the flow of money, and watch over the port. Sure, they are always squabbling amongst one another, trying to earn a few more scraps of power and prestige, but, as most of the inhabitants of the Cove say, they keep things running smoothly. Most people in the town work for the Guilds in one way or another. It's just how things are. Most businesses pay some form of tithe, whether it's to avoid being burgled by the Thieves Guild, or to ensure that they get first pick of the loot.

23 The Guild of Seafarers Guildhall

The most prominent and wealthy Guild in the town, the Seafarers Guildhall is the most ostentatious building in Gullet Cove. As it would be, of course. The Seafarers Guild consider themselves the real rulers of the town; benevolent guides shepherding the various groups of pirates, thieves, and merchants towards a bright future. Most of the pirates, thieves, and merchants see the Seafarers as a group of arrogant, pompous idiots who haven't set foot on a boat in years. Certainly, the upper echelons of the Seafarers are far more comfortable in a large armchair, with a brimming glass of brandy and the first of seven or eight courses laid out before them. But that doesn't mean that a large number of honest merchant sea-goers don't rely on the Seafarers to look after their interests — ensuring that wages or shares are properly apportioned, and that onboard conditions are kept as habitable as possible...even on the longest of sea voyages. The Seafarers is an old Guild (though not as ancient as the Thieves Guild which, so they say, is as old as the gods) and, over the years, it has evolved. In the past, it fought against pirates, seeking to protect those who pledged themselves to the Guild. This proved, ultimately, an insurmountable wave to crest. Sink one ship, there were always others to take its place. The Seafarers almost conceded defeat, until they realised that pirates could be brought into the Guild with the lure of money...and that the best people at catching and dissuading other pirates from attacking ships were other pirates.

Visiting the Seafarers Guildhall is a daunting affair. It is usually guarded by a handful of toughs, wielding knives or cutlasses and directing piercing looks at anyone who so much as glances in their direction. Getting through the large doors — built with timber taken from the Guild's first ships — requires notes of guarantee, a deposit (usually 3 gold pieces per person), and the turning over of all weapons. And that simply leaves you in the waiting room. There, a small army of assistants crowd around to ensure that all visitors are left thoroughly confused; no matter how simple the visitor's request, or how short the meeting they hoped to

conduct, everything has to be looked-over and ratified by a dozen different assistants, secretaries, and factotums. Then, if all the paperwork is correct, then you might, *might*, be ushered into a meeting room. The Seafarers Guildhall is a twisting labyrinth of different meeting rooms, sitting rooms, small libraries, and archives. If you can manage to get inside the Seafarers Guild, it contains the only true record of the history of Gullet Cove. And the history of Gullet Cove contains many secrets — where the treasure of the legendary pirate Bloody Billy is buried; or why won't giants draw near to the town; or what actually happened to the elven town that once stood on this spot? It is claimed that the records of the Seafarers contain answers to these questions, or, at least, fragments which might lead the curious to a solution.

The current head of the Seafarers is the relentlessly ambitious dragonborn, Morganna Veries. At least, this is the name she is known by now. Not too many years ago, she was dubbed Grim Morgan and was reputed to be the most feared pirate on the coast. With a boatful of plunder and a head for intricate politics, she bought her way into the Seafarers and soon rose to the top. Not least as a result of her ability to cow those few freebooters who refused to give up piracy and throw in their lot with the Guild. Morganna Veries is the most powerful individual in Gullet Cove, its leader, and more than willing to use her power to preserve the dominance of the Seafarers and the almost endless flood of money which their pre-eminence in Gullet Cove guarantees them. Morganna is always accompanied by a fierce chihuahua, who lost an eye in a frenzied fight with a bulldog. A fight the chihuahua won. Some rumours claim that Morganna's dog — Little Bleeder — is secretly awakened and one of her owner's most reliable advisors. Other rumours insist that Little Bleeder has been somehow corrupted...that he advises Morganna but takes his orders from a darker master. But who credits such ludicrous notions? Only those jealous of the Seafarers power.

24 The Thieves Guild Safe Houses

No, of course the Thieves Guild doesn't have a single Guild House. They might be a venerable institution (so venerable that several deities are claimed as founding members), but that doesn't mean they aren't thieves... Instead, the Thieves Guild has a series of safe houses and dead drop points where messages can be left for the attention of the Guild's leaders. Of course, no one is sure who those leaders *are*. The Guild's representative on the Council is Boris Byeldun...but Boris is no thief. Or, at least, he hasn't been for some considerable time. No one is quite sure who Boris is, except that he speaks with the floridity and eloquence of a highly paid lawyer. He is also not a man to cross — Boris has conducted more than one vendetta against Council members and their aides who snubbed him. Most end up being removed and replaced by their Guilds. The Thieves Guild is a valuable ally and an extremely irritating enemy — something which the other Guilds learned many years ago and remembered ever since. So long as their demands are not exorbitant, the Thieves Guild tends to gain the little perquisites it requests. Better than having half your treasury suddenly vanishing...

Who precisely heads up the Thieves Guild is one of the organisation's most closely guarded secrets. Is it a group of skilled burglars, a council of sorts? Perhaps. Or perhaps it is a single man or woman. Or dog. Or cat. Who knows? It's entirely

possible that the head of the Gullet Cove's Thieves Guild has never set foot in the town, conveying messages through various carefully appointed deputies. With the Thieves Guild, everything is a game, a test. Secrecy is vital — if not for those members in Gullet Cove, where thieving is almost a respected profession, than for those in places where it is strictly punished. No two safe houses or dead drops are quite the same, and, once they have been used two or three times are abandoned. The Guild puts out word that the system is being reset, that a certain place is now 'drowned' and that a new site is to be used instead. These new locations are carefully encoded, and only Guild members are given the means to break the cipher.

Gaining induction into the ranks of the Guild is extremely difficult and requires being recommended by at least two existing members, and thieves don't go throwing such recommendations around. The Guild has a strict code of secrecy, and anyone thought to be a risk of breaking that code is often...dealt with, quietly. Employing freelancers to take on certain jobs that thieves aren't suited to is common policy, so that, while joining the Guild might be extremely difficult, many work closely with the thieves without ever being a true member. Who knows when you might be called upon to do a little favour for the criminals whose influence touches every facet of Gullet Cove life? Well, at least the money's good!





25 Guild of Adventurers and Associated Heroes Training Ground

Those who perform might and daring deeds need somewhere to go to recover and, most importantly, boast about their might deeds. It's vitally important, if you're a hero, that everyone knows you're a hero, isn't it? Why else go into those horrible dungeons or face those horrible sea beasts if you won't get a good seat at an inn and a pint of ale afterwards? Why sail the world's tempestuous seas and discover lost civilisations if a room full of people don't sit and listen attentively to your stories when you get back? The problem is that adventurers tend to get quite annoyed when people aren't listening...and that leads to tavern brawls.

The Guild of Adventurers and Associated Heroes was founded by an increasingly disgruntled tavern keeper. Having his inn trashed every night by drunken heroes needed to be stopped. So, he invented the Guild of Adventurers. With donations from dozens of other tavern owners, he bought a building in Gullet Cove and refurbished it with great paintings of epic battles and the mounted heads of manticores, giant snakes, and dragons. Then, he installed a bar and opened for business. Since then, the Guild has become one of the most widespread in the world, with locations open in dozens of major cities.

Each night, heroes crowd into the Guild House and take it in turns to regale each other with their most extraordinary stories, stupendous feats, and improbable victories. This is accompanied by drinking and various fights...because too many heroic egos in a single room is likely to result in a scrap.

Since its foundation, the Guild of Adventurers in Gullet Cove has grown. It now includes a large training ground, equipped with mechanical contrivances designed to simulate dragon attacks, goblin raids, and other common hazards of the adventuring life. This is extremely popular with younger and less experienced adventurers who flock to Gullet Cove to hone their skills and pick up tips from those who've fought orcs and killed trolls for real. These hardened veterans are only too pleased to be bought drinks and listened to with the rapt attention they know is their due. The Adventurers Guild is regularly employed by the other Guilds when some dirty work is required. Does WISPER need an artefact recovering? The Thieves Guild worry about its members being attacked in the sewers? Send in the Adventurers! This means that despite the fact the Adventurers Guild is considered a nuisance — too many Council meetings get disrupted by recounting of various minor duels between heroes and other trivialities — they are also indispensable.

The current head of the Guild is Alexnin One-Eyed. Despite the name, he is no great hero or adventurer. In fact, the Guild has never appointed a hero to lead it...they always opt for excellent bartenders who know when to dodge once punches (and arrows, axes, knives, swords, and spears) start flying. While Alexnin is regarded as one of the sanest and one of the most competent Guild leaders the Adventurers have ever had, he wasn't quite quick enough to dodge *all* the various projectiles during one of the more energetic brawls. Hence the name. He is, however, approachable, and willing to listen to those who need help. Just don't mention the lost eye. He *really* doesn't like that.

26 Guild of Wizards, Ingenious Sorcerers, and Practitioners of Eldritch Ritual (WISPER) Library

The decision of magic-users to group together into a Guild was a difficult one. Wizards tend to dislike sharing their research (what if a rival makes a breakthrough first?) and warlocks tend to be too paranoid to join any group at all. That's before you get to sorcerers, spending most of their time looking in a mirror and trying to decide exactly how charismatic they should be today? After the creation of the Guild of Adventurers, most magic-users concluded it was probably necessary to have some kind of representation of their might when it came to influence in the town. And so, the Guild of Wizards, Ingenious Sorcerers, and Practitioners of Eldritch Ritual was founded. Or, as it's usually called, WISPER. It contains, in its very name, all of the most typical characteristics of the three kinds of magic-user who make up its membership. It's an acronym — a typical little wizardly joke; it flatters sorcerers; and warlocks aren't mentioned directly. It took six months of hard negotiation to settle on the name. This is fairly typical of WISPER...things move slowly if they move at all. There are far too many people all trying to prove their cleverness at a WISPER meeting, far too many voices all vying to be heard and all striving to make the most articulate and effective point. Listening to the endless rhetoric is enough to put even the most attentive scribe to sleep.

WISPER's Guild House is everything you'd expect a place exclusively occupied by wizards and sorcerers to be. It is arrayed with vast stone gargoyles and other sinister gothic imagery without; the windows are draped in cobwebs and the doors open and close by themselves. The door knockers — grotesque creatures holding the opening rings

in clawed hands - make cruel remarks about the physical appearance of those passing through. Within, however, the place is warm, comfortable and lined with books on every conceivable subject. The food served at the WISPER Guild House is also without compare in the town, and, as a result, other Guild members often find excuses for lengthy meetings at the place. This is one of the reasons the door knockers were enchanted to be so relentlessly unpleasant — WISPER members are extremely protective of their cuisine.

WISPER is relatively unconcerned with the politicking that usually consumes the Guilds. It still takes part in it all, of course, but most of its members are more interested in their own, strange arcane studies than they are with working out how to gain the highest share of the various merchant taxes. This disinterest is countered by the fact that a large group of people flinging around fireballs tends to pose quite a threat...so that even if they don't really care what's going on in the town it's best not to upset them too much!

The head of WISPER is Mervynner the Frozen, a respected dwarven wizard who does his very best to look like the head of a wizard guild should. As a young wizard, he somehow managed to enchant himself so that he exudes an aura of constant, icy cold. This renders him extremely unpopular as a regular visitor to the Guild House (where people tend to like the warm) but effective as a negotiator. Only Morganna Veries, head of the Seafarers Guild, is willing to sit in a room for hours with the perpetually chilly WISPER representative. There's a reason she's the *de facto* head of the Council.



Minor Guilds

Those Guilds listed above are Gullet Cove's major Guilds. They are the organisations which shape the future of Gullet Cove, which bend the town to their will. There are others, though. Far smaller, perhaps, but still with their own but the town is home to many others. While these may be small, they can wield impressive influence and authority, capable of forcing the bigger Guilds to, at the least, pay attention to their requirements, and at the most, alter plans and policies to suit them. Guilds are always being formed, dissolved, merged, bought out, or otherwise changed. It's what such organisations do... One such Guild is discussed in more detail on the right.



The Goldsmiths

A lot of money flows into Gullet Cove in one form or another. Some of it is even via legal means! The Guilds each keep their own accounting staff, of course, but there needs to be someone impartial. Someone to oversee the apparently limitless supplies of bullion being brought in by pirates, cash from merchants, and gold from the various business shenanigans of the Guilds themselves. This resulted in the foundation of the Goldsmiths. Or, as the Goldsmiths themselves have it, their recognition by the major Guilds. For the Goldsmiths claim they are the most ancient of Guilds, conceived of and founded by a goddess. Some claim the goddess Ernutet created the Goldsmiths; others, that it was the deity called Melody. None are quite sure, and the Goldsmith protect their secrets with all the rigour of the bigger Guilds. They do claim that the goddess gave them their symbol, seen emblazoned on every building they own: a knotted, golden ring.

The Goldsmiths are one of the few truly neutral Guilds in Gullet Cove. They treat every Guild in precisely the same fashion, expecting their fees to be paid in a timely fashion and, beyond this, caring little for the political games and machinations which so consume the major Guilds of the town. They supervise all monetary payments from one Guild to another, ensure that all coins in use in Gullet Cove are legal, and, most importantly, offer the use of their enormous and heavily guarded vault as a bank. They are invaluable and indispensable to all businesses in Gullet Cove. Despite this, they seek little power, and less acclaim. Indeed, quietly fulfilling their function is all the Goldsmiths seek to do. They are a deeply religious organisation, and to seek to gain power for themselves would be to betray these principles.

These principles are, so it is claimed, more than simply good business sense. They are part of a mystical bond the Goldsmiths share with their goddess. Each head of the Guild is chosen, marked with a secret and invisible birthmark, the symbol of the goddess Ernutet herself. Of course, none believe this...who would believe such a story? But nevertheless, the tale persists. The current head of the Guild is the elderly Lady Rhanda Yrestalle. She is a woman of remarkable perspicacity, and beloved by those who work for her. She is, however, extremely ill and has yet to name a successor. This is deeply troubling to much of Gullet Cove.

So, there you have it. That's the place you've found yourself in. Plenty to explore, eh? Plenty to poke your nose into. Though you'll want to do that carefully. Even cute little dog noses like the one I've got aren't always welcome...can't think why! Anyway, there's enough to keep you out of trouble (or plunge you deeper into it) for a little while at least. You run out of things to do, you come find me. Stand me a drink at the Silver Sovereign and I'll tell you whatever you want to know!

The Gullet Cove Year

Every town has its festivals, its feast days, and time set aside for revelry. Gullet Cove is certainly no exception. The Guilds each hold their own holiday, as do most of the major temples. Festivals in Gullet Cove are always extremely well attended and, most importantly, well-funded. The Guilds each attempt to offer the most generous donation, or to bedeck the town in the most ostentatiously expensive decorations. The people of Gullet Cove, very sensibly, encourage such lavishness in the Guilds, and any Guild failing to provide food, gifts, and excitement to the various festival goers is likely to find its windows smashed. Or at the very least, find fewer applicants for membership. Below is a table of major Gullet Cove festivals and events...who knows what might happen on such an occasion?

Event Name	Season	Details
New Flame Day	Spring	The first event of the new year is New Flame Day, when the old fire — left to burn out over the course of winter — is rekindled, three months after Old Fire Night. How long the fire takes to catch is then taken as a prognostication of the year ahead. If it catches quickly, the year is certain to be extremely hot and busy. If the flame catches slowly, the year is to be temperate but successful. If it does not catch at all, the year is to be wild or icy cold, and the town is certain to suffer hardships. How accurate these omens are is debated throughout the year, as all fortune — good or ill — is then attributed to the New Flame. The accompanying festival is usually fairly raucous, even if a flame hasn't kindled. People celebrate the imminence of spring with considerable energy.
Choke Day	Spring	Choke Day is the single biggest event in the town, occupying everyone and filling every street with revellers. For more detail on Choke Day, see page 70.
Feast of the Open Sea	Summer	As summer reaches its height, the Seafarer's Guild hosts the entire town at the edge of the town's most prominent cliff edge. An enormous feast is arranged, vast tables are laden with every sort of food, and entertainers from across the land give performances. The Guild also uses the Feast as an opportunity to do a great deal of business, once its rivals are thoroughly drunk. One of every course of food, and every bottle of drink, is donated to the sea to thank it for its benevolence and for tolerating the existence of Gullet Cove. Places are set at each table for a myriad of sea gods. Very occasionally, one of them even attends.
Hero Watch	Summer	The Guild of Adventurers' Guild day is the least impressive in terms of spectacle of all the Guilds. It might also be the most popular. A series of large tents are set up in the marketplace, and heroes from throughout the land gather to take part in trials of strength and combat in front of large crowds who place bets and howl their encouragement. This takes place over the course of a twenty four hour period, culminating in an almighty feast and party. One which everyone in Gullet Cove attends.
Carnival of Magic	Autumn	Equally impressive, though in a very different way, the WISPER festival is a night of enchantment. Each WISPER member is expected to perform one feat of magic and sorcery, designed to impress and enthrall those watching. Throughout the town, dozens of spontaneous magical performances erupt, drawing the attention of hundreds. This continues throughout the evening, until at midnight the grand spell is woven — a vast illusion that hangs over the town for hours. Sometimes it depicts famous events from the town's history, sometimes ferocious sea battles. Every year, WISPER struggles to top its spectacular illusions of the previous years.
Festival of Masks	Autumn	As the year changes, the inhabitants of the town don ornate masks, reflecting the transition to winter, the dying of the year. The celebrations are initially muted, with a procession through the streets, escorting summer from the town. However, as the night draws in, alcohol and food are consumed in huge quantities and the party starts, welcoming winter in.
Old Fire Night	Winter	The final event of the year is Old Fire Night, when the town gathers to build a vast fire at the entrance to town — welcoming in new visitors who need somewhere to stay during the coldest months of the year and symbolically driving away evil spirits. It is unusually sombre for a Gullet Cove celebration — though there is still music, dancing and drinking. Just less of it.
Steal Day	Winter	The Thieves Guild's festival, Steal Day, is especially looked forward to by children. The Guild sets up various parades and fairs throughout the town, and children are encouraged to try and pick the pockets of the adults there — adults with sweets filling their pockets. Later in the evening, the festival becomes one celebrating the escapades of famous criminals. Large theatrical performances are put on, ale runs freely, and raucous singalongs of ballads fill the air.





It is rarely glimpsed, the coastline. A jagged shore, strewn with sand. Beyond that, the pine forests gesture upwards, obscuring the strange remnants of the island's past. This is the Isle of Dogs. Dangerous, strange, isolated...it resides on the edges of reality, caught between the physical fact of its existence and its perpetual absence. Its mysteries remain wreathed in the whirling eddies of an eternal tempest, hidden save for a brief window, once a year.

History

The Isle of Dogs once belonged to the mainland, forming part of the landscape that would become Gullet Cove. Part of the ancient elven city that once dominated this area of the coast was constructed here. The precise details of what the elves built upon this piece of former shoreline has never been determined. A few brave (or, at least, sufficiently reckless) scholars make their way to the island during the week in which it is accessible. Those few who return recount buildings which scarcely seem real; fractured walls float upwards and apart, floors detach themselves from the ground and bob, listlessly up and down, as though suspended in water. These bizarre effects have led to the rumours that the island once housed the elven city's tower of mages. There's little proof of this, but the rumours persist, and, to most residents of Gullet Cove, the Isle of Dogs is, and was, a locus of elven wizardry and power. Certainly, whatever tore the island from the mainland and cast it into the sea was intensely powerful, but the myth claiming that it was the result of elven sorcery grown corrupt and decadent is just that: a myth. Whatever truth the myth might contain is impossible to determine. There are other tales; that the elves incurred the ire of a passing god of war who cracked the earth with his flail —

the distinctive shape of Gullet Cove is attributed to the impacts of the flail. Other claims include that the elves refused to pay the giants who built much of their city for them. In revenge, the giants ripped off the most beautiful part of the city and dragged into the midst of the sea. The most plausible explanation is that, when the elven city began to crumble, magic was used to attempt to save part of it. The attempt both failed and succeeded, preserving the land but leaving the city to fall into utter ruin. Such is the nature of magic.

Since it was flung into the sea, the island has remained a place of mystery. Pirates used the island to hide from their rivals and from the authorities hunting them, leading to yet more tales accreting around the place. Claims of vast mounds of gold and jewels, chests stuffed with doubloons and the looted relics of forgotten gods can be heard in every inn in Gullet Cove. There is, however, some truth to these claims, outlandish though they may be. Such stories are the lure for most who visit the place — ineluctably drawn by the promise of wealth. Even if the tales of gold are coupled with tales of spectral protectors, pirates dragging themselves from shallow graves, and creatures too terrible to describe.

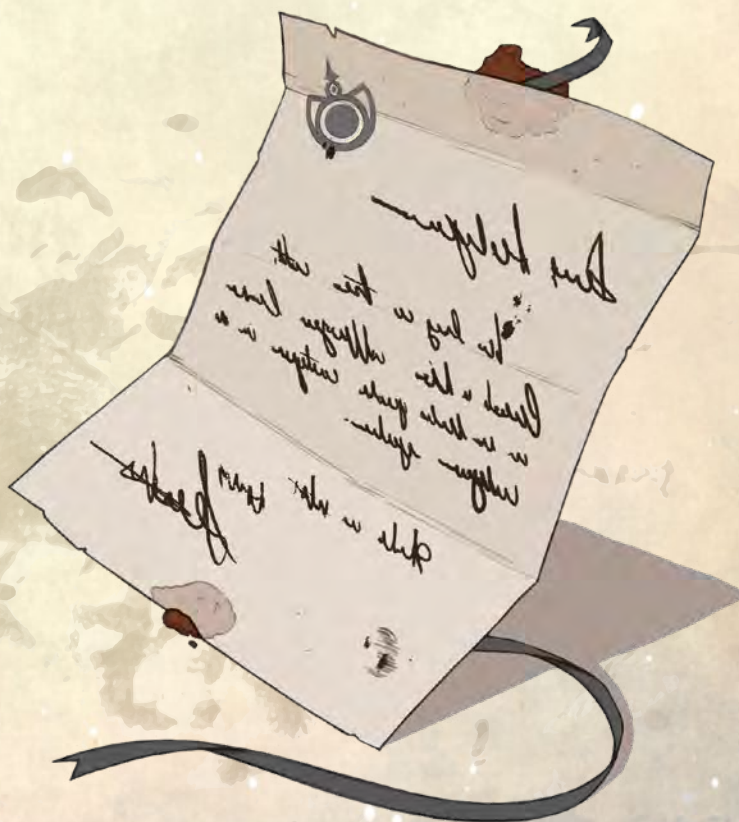
The island's name derives from the two animals who proclaimed themselves its rulers. Some fifty years before Gullet Cove reached its current size and mercantile influence, two rottweilers journeyed to the island, hunting for gold. They never returned, but letters written by the pair did. They declared that the island was now a place for canines only. That it had become a kingdom of the dogs, a kingdom over which the pair would rule. There was some shock at this amongst the whole of Gullet Cove; the two dogs had been keen followers of the Good Mother, never sought power or office for themselves. An expedition — mainly consisting of awakened animals — set out to discover what had driven two such creatures to make such drastic behaviour. Neither were found, having entirely disappeared. The expedition recovered a series of other letters, penned to the leaders of the land's major nations, declaring the independence of the Isle of Dogs from Gullet Cove, and inviting the rulers of the mainland to a grand coronation. These peculiar missives were found at the bottom of two enormous statues — statues of the two rottweilers, carved from onyx, each forty feet high. Impossibly big, the mystery of their creation remains unsolved. But the inexplicably large statues have remained one of the island's most striking sights (it says something of the nature of the Isle of Dogs that they aren't the most striking sight) and they give the strange place its name.

Inhabitants

There are almost no creatures on the Isle of Dogs with human, or near human, levels of intelligence. While the occasional warband of ogres or ettins roams the Grendel Wood, in the main only unawakened animals live on the island. The majority are docile, unafraid of the infrequent visitors who arrive each year. There are a large number of savage predators who stalk the island's interior, making little distinction between their typical prey and the newcomers entering their domain once a year. There are also rumours, almost constant rumours, of elvish survivors of millennia before — beings of pure spirit, or of implausible physical dimensions, or creatures now more tree than flesh. None of these claims have ever been verified but they persist. One more enigmatic feature of the endlessly strange island.

Conditions

Given the almost permanent and extremely violent storms circling the island, many visitors are surprised to find that once they make it past the coast, the weather is temperate and often much warmer and more pleasant than on the mainland. Even when the sun is obscured in Gullet Cove, it still seems to filter through the canopy of Grendel Woods. Rain is fairly common, but usually light. It sparkles in the air, dropping to the ground and leaving everything kissed with dew. The best way to describe the conditions of the Isle of Dogs is...a little *too* perfect.





Key Locations

Sheltered from the outside world as it is, the geography of the Isle of Dogs is unfamiliar and largely unmapped. Even those who venture there with the intention of compiling charts come back without any true sense of exactly *where* the things they have seen are in relation to the rest of the island. Space seems to contract here or expand there. Things don't remain in the same place; shifting from day to day, hour to hour. People who planned to visit the Isle of Dogs for a single day can find themselves consigned to a year of waiting for the storms to abate once again. The reason for this is simple: magic. The Isle of Dogs is wrapped in magic; the source of the endless storms that keep it hidden, and the other bizarre occurrences that make the island so mysterious. Ancient power courses through its earth. Anyone who places their ear to the ground on the Isle of Dogs can hear the deep, rhythmic thrum of the energy bound within the island itself. It seethes in every particle of soil, every scintilla of sand, every mote of pollen. Even the sunlight twists, filtering through leaves as though through water, refracted by the magic permeating everything.

The Elven City

The oldest part of the island is also one of the strangest. Perhaps that should be no surprise. The magic woven into this place is older, has had longer to mature and deepen its hold. The remains of the elven city are steeped in this magic. The stones themselves spark and coruscate with energy. When approaching the ruins of the city, the air is thick with glinting iotas of magical discharge and flecks of ethereal gold, vanishing the moment one reaches out a hand.

Most of the ruins themselves are too dilapidated to provide any clues about their previous uses — temples, palaces, libraries...who can tell? Mostly, they're rubble or isolated walls protruding from the earth like the sails on the backs of lizards. Even so, the level of sophistication and skill in the architecture is obvious; the meticulously inscribed whorls in each stone are evidence of the level of artistry invested in even the least significant aspects of each structure. The ancient elves who built this place did so with care and astonishing skill.

Most visitors to the city pay little attention to these aspects of the city. It's hard to really care about these architectural features when time and space is collapsing all around you. The remnant fragments of the city shift and fluctuate constantly. Walls detach themselves from the ground and drift upwards into the sky, trailing tendrils of moss. Other chunks of stone simply vanish for weeks at a time before re-manifesting on an unfortunate visitor's foot. Sometimes it seems as though these disappearances are orchestrated by a mischievous intelligence, pranking those who explore the ruins seeking something other than floating splinters of stone. Stones materialise just at the right moment to trip the unwary. Gaps between walls are suddenly blocked up by a rock-fall that won't happen for another hundred years but is suddenly transported backwards in time, seconds before an explorer attempts to walk through.

This is rarely malicious — a few bruises and scrapes are the worst injuries received — but it is nevertheless disconcerting. Some claim that the ghosts of the city's inhabitants remain here as protectors. Others that this is the paranoid superstition of the clumsy. There are even some who insist that the original elven inhabitants of the place evolved, becoming beings of pure spirit who still live in the city undetected. Or that the city is now sentient — the magic saturating the place coalescing into something like thought. Who knows what is true in such a place? Perhaps some particularly dedicated adventurers might be able to uncover an answer.

There is only a single edifice from the elven city still largely intact. An enormous dome rises from the earth, its crown stretching 60 feet into the air. Formed from obsidian, its outer surface interlaced with seams of gold, outlining what seems to be paths between the stars, the dome is a vast astral map — though where it leads, none dare to guess. There are a number of entrances into the dome; some once formal doorways, others are fissures in the rock grown big enough to allow ingress. The inside of the dome is a mass of passages, rooms, and antechambers. The rooms themselves are peculiar; few have any uniform shape or repeated features and whatever contents they possessed were long ago taken, leaving behind only gleaming black walls. For those who venture into the temple at night, things are radically different. When moonlight strikes the dome, the interior is suffused with light. Images of the past spring from the walls. These images move, recreating strange scenes in solemn, ritualised fashion. Few stay to witness these shimmering phantoms undertake their ancient roles. Perhaps they should...perhaps, in the eternal recurrence of these blue-tinted living memories, there is some clue as to what this dome was used for. It merely requires courage...

The Statues

Huge, carved from ancient stone, and unbearably cute, these canine statues are some of the strangest artefacts on an island filled with such things. How Pubriel and Eglert (the two rottweilers depicted in the statues) carved these exquisite things, who can possibly guess? What did the dogs experience and encounter on the island that sent them both mad — so mad they sought to make themselves kings, so mad that they created 30-foot-tall statues of themselves in the midst of a forest. Another mystery.

As for the statues themselves, they are beautifully crafted. Where you might expect to find roughness or chisel marks, there is only smoothness. The likeness of the dogs is captured with exquisite skill and accuracy. The state of Pubriel — the large onyx statue on the left — has a look of genuine canine happiness, tongue lolling and big eyes staring out in delight. The statue on the right, carved in the likeness of Eglert is just as lifelike, though the expression on Eglert's face is more confused than delighted.

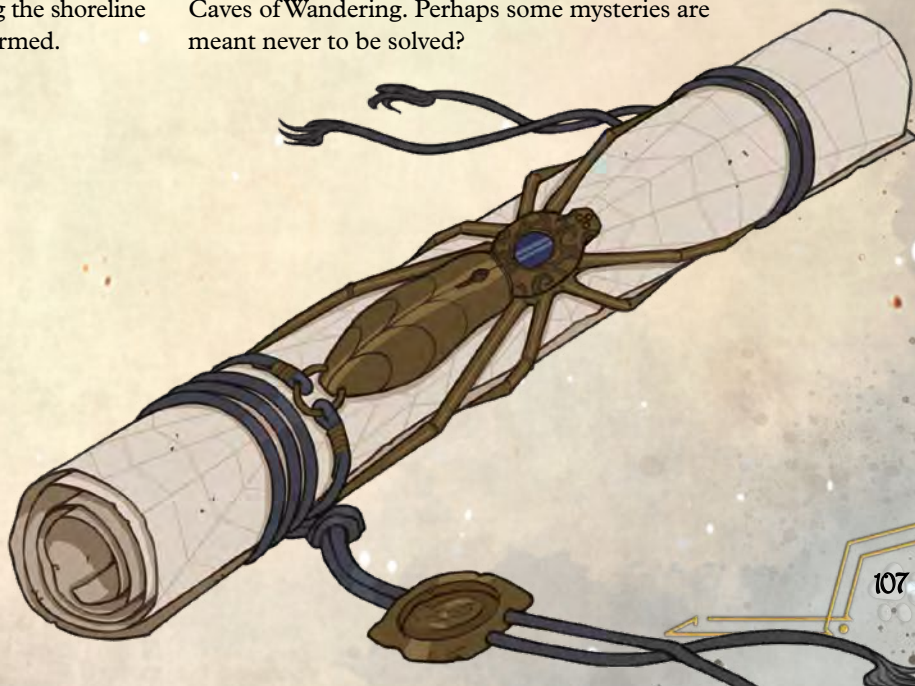
The bases of the statues are always covered in flowers, but not plants that have sprouted naturally. Great bouquets of aromatic flowers are placed with care and delicacy. Huge bunches of bluebells, crocuses, orchids, picked and assembled as offerings. The Isle of Dogs is renowned for the verdancy of its plant life, and here, some of its most beautiful examples are carefully arranged, as though in tribute. No one is sure where these flowers come from, why they are placed so carefully, or who or what arranges them. But they are always there, replaced when they begin to fade. Some have opined that perhaps the followers of the two self-appointed rulers of the Isle of Dogs revere their leaders still...it is possible, though there is no other sign of such intelligent life on the island. The oddest of all the theories claim that the statues aren't in truth statues at all. That these towering stone animals are the two canines themselves. They found something, goes the story, capable of suffusing them with power, rendering them immortal. The stories claim the statues animate when not watched, venturing through the island, watching the shoreline of Gullet Cove to ensure that no animals are harmed.

The Caves of Wandering

Few, if any, people live on the Isle of Dogs. A few pirates or careless adventurers get stranded there for a year, but soon leave once the storms relent. The creatures making their homes on the island do so in remote areas, seeking shelter whenever and wherever they can. These caves, located not far from the remnants of the elven city, are home to dozens of different species. The network of caves runs throughout the island, describing a parallel world of half-light just beneath the surface. The creatures living here are locked into their own bizarre eco-system, feasting on each other amidst the underground chambers.

There are, it is said, other things to be found in the Caves of Wandering. As long as you're prepared to actually wander in them. Like much of the Isle of Dogs, the magical energies pervading the island render the space virtually illimitable. Corridors twist in upon one another, rooms blend into walls blend into sudden openings in the exposed earth below. Despite their incredible depth and expanse, it is never hard to find an exit. The caves seem to respond, in some strange way, to the thoughts and feelings of those wandering them. Whenever an exit is needed, one seems to materialise. This is one of the odd paradoxes of the Caves of Wandering; it is extremely difficult to become lost in them, and it's only through becoming lost that the treasures concealed within them can be found. This renders exploring them a peculiar experience, with adventurers desperately trying not to think of the fact that they're lost, even though they are — just in case their minds then turn to leaving.

Large predators stalk the passages of the Caves of Wandering. Fungi in astonishing colours and unsettling shapes erupts from every wall. Earth elementals stumble along the passages speaking in their ominous, guttural language. The array of creatures found in the tunnels has led some to suppose that they were once some form of ancient, elven zoo. This explanation doesn't account for the strange relics sometimes found hidden in the deepest recesses of the Caves of Wandering. Perhaps some mysteries are meant never to be solved?





Grendel Wood

Most of the Isle of Dogs is obscured by the thick Grendel Wood, sprawling across the centre of the island and making journeying through the interior difficult and exhausting. Most of the trees in Grendel Wood are conifers, dark-trunked and dense with foliage. It is often difficult to see more than a few feet ahead, so tight is the press of branches. Despite this, for those prepared to shove their way through the outstretched fronds, the wood is filled with things that draw adventurers to an area.

The first of these are the springs of water pouring from the oldest and tallest of the trees. There are no rivers on the Isle of Dogs, but fresh water pours from the boughs of certain trees. Others ooze a delicious syrup. Still others exude thick unguents which heal even the worst of wounds, or cure poison. There are tales of some trees that emit a substance which guarantees immortality...or removes it. There are claims that, from time to time, gods visit the Isle of Dogs in order to forsake their divinity. Of course, the direct opposite is also claimed; that some who have come to the island and never returned drank the broth of godhood, ascending to the heavens. Truth or falsehood, it hasn't stopped many from visiting the woods in search of these elixirs.

There are also the stories that the elves who created the city still inhabit the wood but are now merged with the trees. To those who press their ears to the trunks of the trees, it's possible to commune with the spirits of the ancient elves. Sometimes, the elves still detach from the trees they now inhabit and walk through the woods. If discovered, they are capable of offering impossibly accurate prophecies of the future. Or knowledge of the world hidden to all but them — the location of the king's lost heir, the answer to the riddle of the dying silver sphinx, the best way to prepare a starling for a cat's dinner. Again, the veracity of such claims is unclear, but many attempt to have their questions about the world answered by elves who have become part of the earth itself.

The forest is far from idyllic, though. Ogres and ettins hunt there in small bands. Even hill giants are occasionally found forcing their way through the trees. It's not clear where these beasts come from, certainly they don't seem to belong on the Isle of Dogs. Does the island itself bring them here? Or is there a sinister intelligence buried within the forest, perhaps whatever caused the island to be torn from the shoreline. There are scholars who suggest that the elves magic called something dark and cruel to the earth... perhaps it survives here, trying to gather an army to itself. Or perhaps these beasts simply stumble out of the Caves of Wandering.

Mewling Pits

One of the most peculiar places on the island can be found on its southern coast. The Mewling Pits are so-called because of the noise that emanates from them constantly. A high-pitched, distinctive mewling noise, like a cat seeking to be picked up and cuddled. No one knows what lies at their bottom, though when objects are dropped into the pits the mewling stops for the briefest of moments, before starting again with redoubled urgency. The peculiar noises, and the pits' apparent hunger, have led to some opining that these are the dimensional throats of several vast cats who exist between universes, always hungry but placated, momentarily, by whatever falls into the pits.

The pits are routinely visited by adventurers and especially by treasure seekers who abseil down the insides of the pits to collect the various treasures thrown into them. These frequently end up lying on an outstretched rocky ledge or twisted up in the creepers and vines winding their way up the interior of the pit. To those without much concern for their own lives, or for those who *really* like treasure, these make extremely rich pickings. Again, it's not entirely clear who hurls so much gold, jewellery, and other valuable trinkets into the pit, but to those willing to swing from rope over an illimitable fissure in the earth, such things don't really matter.

Some are concerned by the fact that, on an apparently empty island, an endless supply of treasure is hurled into a series of holes in the ground. As ever, some opine that the spirits of the ancient elves who first inhabited the place are responsible. Others claim, without a hint of irony that the Isle of Dogs was ripped from the mainland by the spirits of several vast cats who are now constrained within the heart of the island and placated through regular sacrifices of treasure. Others insist that the pits themselves manifest this treasure in order to try and convince those crazed by the lure of gold to lower themselves down, where the pits can draw on their essence, or their greed.

It is said that a few of the bravest souls have let themselves fall into the pits, using magic to soften their landing. That, while their companions never saw them again, they still receive cryptic messages from them. Messages referring to strange worlds concealed in the centre of the earth, just waiting to be explored. These tales are treated with extreme scepticism, even by the most gullible of the Isle of Dogs' visitors. But some still wonder, just a little, whether or not there might be some hint of truth to the claims.

Adventures on the Isle of Dogs

Mutt and Bailey Need Some Help!

Everyone knows who Mutt and Bailey are, right? But sometimes even they need a bit of assistance. Chasing the Golden Crab is the main reason they're going to the Isle of Dogs, but they've got a lot of other things to do while they're there. They intend to try and map the island for a start—everyone knows how difficult that can prove to be—and then they want to explore the ruins. So, like all sensible adventurers, Mutt and Bailey are looking for companions. They need to be tough, courageous, willing to hunt for giant crabs, and, most of all, able to put up with Bailey's constant bad jokes. In Mutt's opinion, that last part is likely to be the hardest part of the entire trip. So, what do you say? Are you in?

Mutt & Bailey and the Legend of the Golden Crab

What have our favourite adventurers been up to exactly? Well, answering that would take too long. Let's just say that, right now, they're pursuing the rumours of a vast haul of purloined gold...gold a canny pirate protected with his pet crab. Easy pickings? Not exactly. The crab in question is supposed to be gigantic, its pincers capable of snipping a limb off with a quick flex. And there's that other thing. The thing no one seems to realise.

The golden crab of legend isn't just the guardian of a vast treasure chest. The treasure chest and the crab are one and the same. The treasure chest forms part of the crab's impenetrable carapace, a bejewelled shell studded with gold and iron and wood. The crab roams across the Isle of Dogs, bearing its hoard with it everywhere, cutting apart any other creature approaching too closely, nibbling at what's left over once it has chopped them apart. Dozens of foolish, gold-hungry adventurers chase the golden crab each year, descending on the Isle of Dogs in the week when the storms recede. None have come close to claiming the motherlode, perching atop the furious crustacean. Hunting the crab is a difficult matter; the creature hides amidst a network of jagged rocks, tidal pools much deeper than they appear, and sea weeds which sometimes strike out, wrapping themselves around the limbs or throat of an unfortunate passer-by. The golden crab navigates this treacherous coastline with an impossible dexterity, its six legs scuttling over apparently sheer drops, clinging to shale slopes, clambering over seams of granite.

But when has danger ever stopped Mutt and Bailey? That's right. Never. So the intrepid pair are on the trail of the golden crab. They'll pursue it to the ends of the earth. Or the ends of the Isle of Dogs anyway. They aren't sure how much further they can realistically chase it anyway. Nevertheless, the two are on the trail. They've never failed before. They aren't going to do so now. For more on Mutt, Bailey, and the golden crab, see page 109 of Chapter 6!

So, you want to take your player characters off the shore line...get them out of town for a bit, show them something different. The Isle of Dogs is an ideal location for some high fantasy expeditions; there's something new and strange every few feet, any creature you want can be hidden in the endless caves and shifting forest, any treasure you can dream of can be awaiting discovery in the ruined city. On the next page are a few ideas for how to get your players characters to the Isle of Dogs!





Cave Diving

In need of a strange elven artefact of extreme antiquity? Well, the Caves of Wandering are the place to find it. Pursuing a criminal fleeing to the Isle of Dogs and hiding? Chances are they're concealing themselves in the endless caverns. Yep, it's that kind of place. The magical flux of the Isle of Dogs has made what might once have been a small network of passages and rooms into an island-spanning maze of shifting geology. Finding your way through such an impossible morass of tunnels and passageways is a laborious process, forcing you to delve deeper into a labyrinth you can't map and can't control...and spits you out whenever you think about it too hard. The problem is, whatever (or whoever) you're searching for can manipulate the tunnels. They aren't subject to its rules in the same way as you; this makes your life that much more difficult. Now factor in that something is stalking you through the halls, something big and hungry and terrifying. Welcome to the Isle of Dogs! What are you going to do and how are you going to do it? It's worth getting this sussed out before you get crunched between the teeth of the hideous thing stalking you through the winding tunnels that don't want you there...

We Need Answers!

There's something you need to know, desperately. What it is doesn't matter, save that it's important and urgent. And hidden. Perhaps it's a secret to preserving the realm. Perhaps it's the identity of your true parents. You need to hunt out the truth but at every turn you're denied. But then you hear the rumour, the rumour of a place where all your answers might be supplied — if you can get there: the Grendel Wood on the Isle of Dogs. So, you've waited, you've travelled there, and now you need to find a way of asking your question. Much easier than it sounds. First you must avoid the patrols of ogres and trolls, who really don't know how they ended up in this forest and are looking to eat someone in order to assuage their confusion. Then you need to find a way of luring the sleeping spirit of an ancient elf out of a tree. If it lives in the tree. It's not exactly a nice relaxing walk in the forest, is it?





The background of the page is a dark, atmospheric illustration. In the foreground, a small wooden boat is on dark, choppy water. A character with light skin and dark hair, wearing a dark, textured tunic, is in the boat, looking forward with a concerned expression. To the left, a cat with orange and black fur is partially visible. The background features a dark, rocky shoreline with some red glowing points. Above the boat, a large, ornate blue rectangular frame with gold borders and paw prints at the corners contains the title text. A bright star with a long, glowing comet-like tail streaks across the top right of the blue frame. A small gold hexagonal icon with a paw print is centered below the frame.

NPCs and Bestiary: Villains and Minions



The Rat King & Gripe

SMALL BEAST (RAT), LAWFUL EVIL

Bloated almost to the point of erupting from his furry little skin, the Rat King is both truly obnoxious and truly dangerous. Vain, pompous, and utterly convinced of his own genius, the Rat King rides around on the back of his faithful (read thoroughly hypnotised) jester, Gripe. From the howdah on Gripe's back, the Rat King orders around his horde of giant rats and dispatches the wererats he has won to his side through promises of one day ruling the surface world. And having all the cheese they want. It's a powerful message — after all, who doesn't like cheese? The Rat King has orchestrated a number of the strange goings on in Gullet Cove in recent years; filching from the Temple of Urbaste and kidnapping several sailors from the docks...who knows to what end? All that is certain is that the Rat King has plans for the town of Gullet Cove, and that these plans are unlikely to spell anything good for its inhabitants!

Armor Class AC: 12 (matted fur)

Hit Points (HP): 93 (17d10)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	20 (+5)	15 (+3)	15 (+3)

Saving Throws: Dexterity +6, Intelligence +8, Wisdom +6

Skills: Arcana +8, Deception +6, Insight +6, Stealth +7

Languages: Common, Rat, Canine, Feline

Damage Immunities: Poison

Condition Immunities: Exhausted, Poisoned

Senses: Darkvision 60 ft, Passive Perception 16

Challenge: 5 (1,800 XP)

Abilities

Aid me!: The Rat King can call on 2d4 swarms of rats at any time. The creatures arrive in 1d4 rounds and act as directed by the Rat King.

Gripe: The Rat King's mount is a thoroughly hypnotised jester — the wizard who granted the Rat King his intelligence and powers. The Rat King is always mounted on Gripe in combat, and all attacks are considered to hit Gripe and the Rat King equally. They share a pool of hit points.

Hypnotise: Possessed of powerful hypnotic abilities, all creature enemies within 15 ft of the Rat King must pass a DC 15 Wisdom test or suffer from the Charmed condition until they succeed on a subsequent test.

Spellcasting

The Rat King has learned a handful of spells. He is not truly a wizard but has some magical gifts which he deploys when and where he can.

Cantrips (at will): Chill Touch, Dancing Lights, Mage Hand, Minor Illusion

1st level (3 slots): False Life, Venomous Ray

Actions

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6+3) piercing damage.

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

Wererats

MEDIUM HUMANOID (HUMAN, SHAPECHANGER), LAWFUL EVIL

The Rat King's minions aren't simply the various vermin of the sewers. The Rat King gathers many different people to his side who find the promise of power and acceptance is a powerful lure. So it is with the wererats. During the day, these men and women wander undetected through the streets of the town. Some have well-paid jobs, some wander the halls of the Council able to access the records of the town entirely unsuspected. Wererats are cursed to become twisted rat-creatures when exposed to moonlight, but otherwise they appear human, or dwarfish, or elvish. And the Rat King has drawn many to his sewer kingdom ('the under empire' as he terms it...he likes the sound of that), assuring them that when he and his minions finally pour through the streets of Gullet Cove, the wererats will be granted positions of power and respect, no longer forced to conceal their true nature, but free to embrace it and to indulge their ratty natures. That's a powerful lure. The Rat King holds influence over several different small gangs of wererats. Some, such as the Mauger Gang (for more on the Mauger Gang see page <?>), are well known and widely feared, winning themselves quite a reputation for their foppishness, willingness to be seen on the streets and utter disregard for authority. Others are utterly invisible; never mentioned, never discussed.

Armor Class AC: 13 (padded leather)

Hit Points (HP): 33 (6d8+6)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws: Strength +5, Intelligence +6

Skills: Perception +2, Stealth +4

Languages: Common, Dwarf, Goblin, Canine, Feline

Damage Immunities: Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing From Nonmagical Attacks Not Made With Silvered Weapons

Senses: Darkvision 60 ft (Rat Form Only), Passive Perception 12

Challenge: 4 (1,100 XP)

Abilities

Shapechanger: The wererat can use its action to polymorph into a rat-humanoid hybrid, into a giant rat, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Keen Smell: The wererat has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Actions

Multiattack (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). The wererat makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite.

Bite (Rat or Hybrid Form Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* (1d4 + 2) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with wererat lycanthropy.

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

Hand Crossbow (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 30/120 ft, one target. *Hit:* (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.



Effervescent Ooze

LARGE OOZE, UNALIGNED

There are many oozes in the world, hideous suppurating things dragging themselves ever onwards in search of sustenance, in search of something that their proto-brains require. The effervescent ooze is another grotesque example of these things; a bubbling roiling mass of sort-of-life. As with everything unusual in Gullet Cove, the theory is that a member of WISPER accidentally created the effervescent ooze while attempting to make a magical cocktail...or something equally ridiculous. Whatever the truth, you definitely don't want to be absorbed by the effervescent ooze; the seething bubbles of the ooze fill your lungs and detonate inside you long before you drown...

Armor Class AC: 10

Hit Points (HP): 45 (6d10+12)

Speed: 15 ft

Climb: 10 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	6 (-2)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	6 (-2)	1 (-5)

Damage Resistance: Acid

Languages: N/A

Damage Immunities: Fire, Slashing

Condition Immunities: Blinded, Charmed, Deafened, Exhaustion, Frightened, Prone

Senses: Blindsight 60 ft (Blind Beyond This Radius), Passive Perception 8

Challenge: 2 (450 XP)

Abilities

- Amorphous:** The ooze can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.
- Spider Climb:** The jelly can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.
- Fizzy Good Make Feel Nice:** The bubbles from the effervescent ooze occasionally rupture, giving off an intoxicating aroma. Whenever the effervescent ooze suffers 15 hit points of damage in a single attack, any creatures in melee combat with the ooze must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom save or be charmed by the creature.

Actions

- Pseudopod.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage.
- Smother.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3). Whenever this attack is successful, the target creature is grappled and cannot move. They may try to escape by making a DC 12 Strength check. The grappled target suffers 5 damage per turn it is grappled.

Reactions

- Split:** When the ooze is subjected to lightning or slashing damage, it splits into two new jellies if it has at least 10 hit points. Each new ooze has hit points equal to half the original, rounded down. New oozes are one size smaller than the original.



Necromastiff

MEDIUM CANINE (MASTIFF), CHAOTIC EVIL

What makes a bad dog? In the Necromastiff's case, the answer is power. Born with the gift of magic coursing through his veins, the Necromastiff quickly realised that fear was a much more effective inducement than friendliness. So, he cultivated his abilities with the aim of producing fear. And what is more terrifying to mortal kind than the promise of death? The Necromastiff has become death's master. He has it firmly leashed, forcing it to release the spirits of those creatures the Necromastiff intends to use for his own purposes. What precisely the Necromastiff's plans are is hard to say. Sometimes, he seems intent on conquering Gullet Cove and using it as a base for a much grander scheme...bringing the world under his sway. At other times, the Necromastiff is more concerned with ridding the world of cats. Yes, the Necromastiff really doesn't like cats. Not even slightly. There's a reason all of his undead minions are feline... 'one does not use an animal as dignified as a dog as a mindless thrall,' as the Necromastiff once put it. Yep, that's how he talks. He's a classic, and entirely theatrical, villain.

Armor Class AC: 12 (padded robes)

Hit Points (HP): 82 (15d8+15)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	19 (+4)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws: Int +8, Wis +6

Skills: Arcana +8, Deception +5, History +8, Perception +6, Religion +8

Languages: Common, Canine, Feline, Draconic, Abyssal

Damage Immunities: Necrotic

Senses: Passive Perception 16

Challenge: 6 (2,300 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Brave:** The Necromastiff has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

🐾 **Keen Sight:** The Necromastiff has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Spellcasting

The Necromastiff is a 9th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save: DC 16, +8 to hit with spell attacks). The Necromastiff has the following spells prepared:

🐾 **Cantrips (at will):** chill touch, dancing lights, mage hand, mending, minor illusion

🐾 **1st level (4 slots):** false life, venomous ray

🐾 **2nd level (3 slots):** blindness/deafness, ray of enfeeblement, web

🐾 **3rd level (3 slots):** animate dead, bestow curse, counterspell

🐾 **4th level (3 slots):** blight, dimension door, fire shield

🐾 **5th level (2 slots):** arcane hand

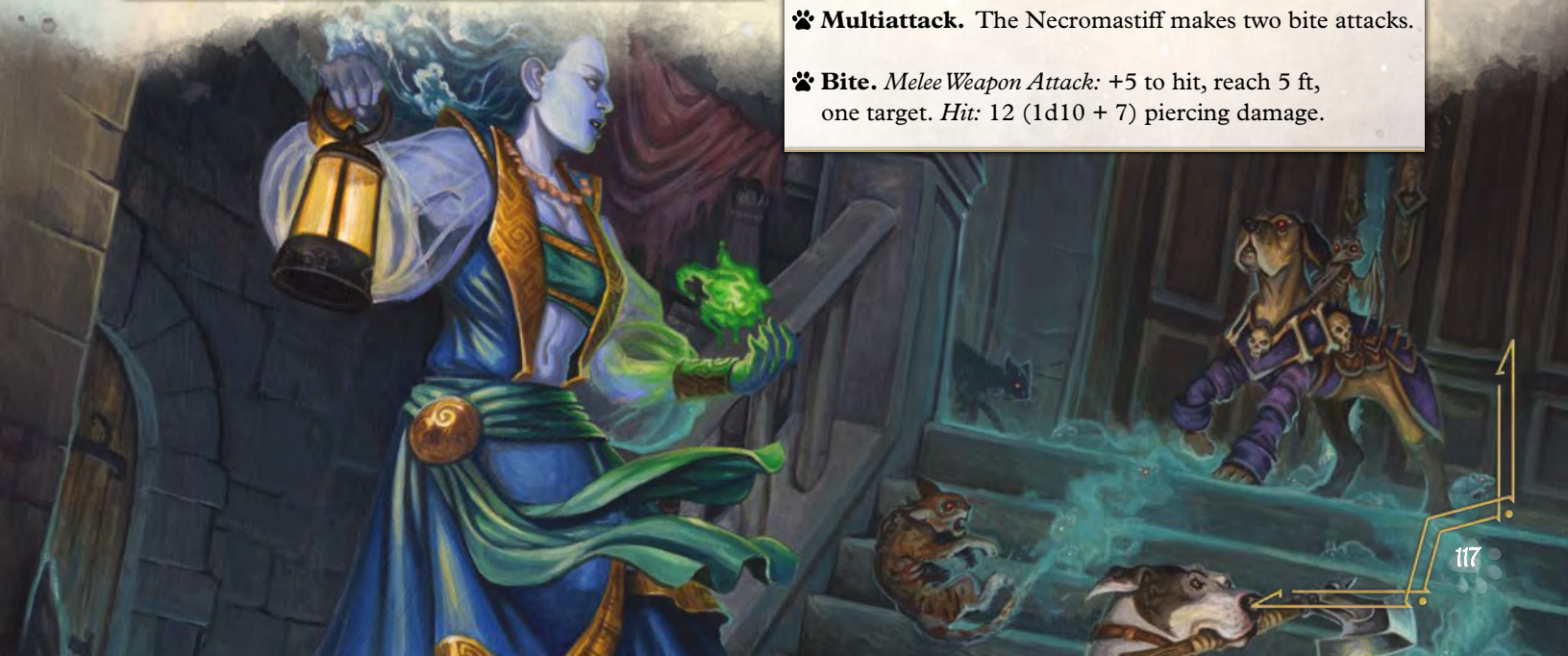
🐾 **Grim Harvest (1/Turn):** When the Necromastiff kills a creature that is neither a construct nor undead with a spell of 1st level or higher, the Necromastiff regains hit points equal to twice the spell's level, or three times if it is a necromancy spell.

🐾 **Hatred of Cats:** The Necromastiff really doesn't like cats; he gains advantage on all attacks against feline creatures.

Actions

🐾 **Multiattack.** The Necromastiff makes two bite attacks.

🐾 **Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 12 (1d10 + 7) piercing damage.



Malbatross

SMALL BEAST, UNALIGNED

Sailors fear albatrosses. They claim they are unlucky. Probably, the true cause of these superstitious fears is the malbatross. A vast spirit bird, torn from the breasts of drowning sailors as they struggle upwards, the malbatross haunts ships as they draw near the coast — the coast the dead sailors were denied their return to. The malbatross draws energy from sailors' fear, growing stronger and more capable of carrying away the living to the location of their drowned progenitor's watery grave. The only way a malbatross can be killed forever is to recover the corpse of the sailor that birthed them and return them to land. Otherwise, while the malbatross can be driven off, it eventually returns sterner and more dangerous than ever.

Armor Class AC: 12

Hit Points (HP): 3 (1d6)

Speed: 10 ft

Fly: 60 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	2 (-4)	14 (+2)	7 (-2)

Skills: Perception +4

Languages: N/A

Senses: Passive Perception 14

Challenge: 2 (250 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Aid me!:** Keen Sight: The malbatross has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

🐾 **Etherealness:** The malbatross enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane, or vice versa. It is visible on The Material Plane while it is in the Border Ethereal, and vice versa, yet it can't affect or be affected by anything on the other plane.

🐾 **Horrifying Visage:** Each non-undead creature within 60 ft of the malbatross that can see it must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or be Frightened for 1 minute. If the save fails by 5 or more, the target also ages 1d4x10 years. A Frightened target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the Frightened condition on itself on a success. If a target's saving throw is successful or the effect ends for it, the target is immune to this malbatross's Horrifying Visage for the next 24 hours. The aging effect can be reversed with a Greater Restoration spell, but only within 24 hours of it occurring.

Actions

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



Rataclysm

LARGE ABOMINATION, CHAOTIC EVIL

An amalgamation of sorcery, and the Rat King's particular brand of insanity, the Rataclysm is the first step in a plan that might just bring the world to its knees. Or result in another mound of shapeless, pulchulating flesh. The Rat King has spent a long time perfecting the Rataclysm (Gripe came up with the name...the Rat King was going through an extended period of pun obsession), but most of the experiments he conducted were unsuccessful. A lot of boneless skin blobs ended up in the sea, pulled in by unsuspecting fishermen who thought they'd caught a particularly ugly jellyfish. And then merely wished they'd caught a particularly ugly jellyfish. The finished Rataclysm, however, is very different from these pulpy masses. Enormous, with three slavering mouths sprouting from a body sagging with flesh, the Rataclysm feels little pain. Its main emotion is anger, closely followed by hunger. And it does whatever it can to satiate those needs. This usually involves tearing apart any creature unfortunate enough to come within grabbing distance of its claws, which has resulted in the Rat King's careful plans being disrupted more than once. At least one of the Rat King's carefully won allies has been swallowed whole by the Rataclysm. Best hope it doesn't decide that you'll make an excellent next meal...

Armor Class AC: 15 (natural armor)

Hit Points (HP): 114 (12d12+36)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	17 (+3)	2 (-4)	11 (+0)	6 (-2)

Saving Throws: Str +8, Con +7

Languages: N/A

Damage Immunities: Bludgeoning, Piercing, Slashing From Non-Magical Attacks

Condition Immunities: Charmed, Exhausted, Frightened, Poisoned

Senses: Darkvision 60ft, Passive Perception 13

Challenge: 8 (3,900 XP)

Abilities

🐾 Terrifying Visage: The Rataclysm is a horrifying melding of flesh and sorcery. Before attacking, each player character must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom save or become frightened, until they succeed on a subsequent Wisdom save.

🐾 Too Many Heads: The Rataclysm has more than one murine head sprouting from its fleshy body. The Rataclysm cannot be surprised.

🐾 Unwholesome Spew: The Rataclysm is formed from hundreds of rats, all bound together. As an action, the Rataclysm can vomit forth 1d3 giant rats. The Rataclysm must make a DC 12 Constitution check each time it uses this ability or suffer 1d4+1 damage.

Actions

🐾 Multiattack. The Rataclysm makes two bite attacks and one Wild Blow attack per turn.

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

🐾 Wild Blow. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +1 to hit, reach 10 ft, up to two targets if adjacent to each other. *Hit:* 15 (4d8+3).



Dinsdale Requin

MEDIUM HUMANOID (HUMAN, SHAPECHANGER), CHAOTIC EVIL

Little is known of Dinsdale Requin's past. Where his metamorphic powers come from remains a mystery. The only verifiable facts about Requin are his enormous strength, bloodlust, and loyalty to the Cunning Man. The bond between Requin and the Cunning Man is in itself something of a mystery. They met, so rumours claim, when the Cunning Man was brought before a local crime lord he defrauded, and for whom Requin was acting as a brutish enforcer. What, precisely, the Cunning Man offered the enormous wereshark to convince him to join himself to a bedraggled dwarven exile, no one knows. What is known is that from an inn filled with low-life toughs, only Dinsdale Requin and his new employer walked out again. Since then, whenever the Cunning Man has practiced his various schemes, Dinsdale Requin has been alongside him — or at least, somewhere close, lurking in the shadows. Requin is especially good at lurking. And anyone foolish enough to cross the Cunning Man is likely to find themselves confronted by an enormous set of teeth. The teeth are bad enough, but they're in the mouth of a brutal killer. And that killer is always hungry.

Armor Class AC: 15 (padded leather, toughened hide)

Hit Points (HP): 52 (8d8+16)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)

Skills: Perception +2, Stealth +4

Languages: Common (Can't Speak In Shark Form)

Damage Resistances: Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing From Nonmagical Attacks Not Made With Silvered Weapons

Senses: Blindsight 60 ft (Shark Form Only), Passive Perception 12

Challenge: 4 (1,100 XP)

Abilities

Shapechanger: Requin can use its action to polymorph into a shark-humanoid hybrid, into a great white shark, or back into its true form, which is humanoid. Its statistics, other than its size, are the same in each form. Any equipment it is wearing or carrying isn't transformed. It reverts to its true form if it dies.

Keen Smell: Requin has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Relentless (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest): If Requin takes 14 damage or less that would reduce it to 0 hit points, he is reduced to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

Multiattack (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only). The Requin makes two attacks, only one of which can be a bite.

Bite (Shark or Hybrid Form Only).

Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target.

Hit: (1d8+4) piercing damage. If the target is a humanoid, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be cursed with wereshark lycanthropy.

Anchor (Humanoid or Hybrid Form Only).

Melee Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target.

Hit: (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.



The Cunning Man

MEDIUM HUMANOID (DWARF), LAWFUL EVIL

Two kinds of people have a title like the 'Cunning Man': the extremely arrogant or the exceptionally mysterious. In this instance, the subject is both. The Cunning Man is a new visitor to Gullet Cove, arriving with a gang of goblins in tow, and a particularly unpleasant plan for earning money. The Cunning Man considers himself a businessman. Or, more correctly, a business dwarf. He's smart, conniving, and he's recognised a gap in the market. The rich love their pets, that's well-known. How much more would they pay for an animal who can talk? Sure, it might mean depriving a few creatures of their freedom, but...well, he's got a gang of goblins to pay, and they aren't known for their friendliness when money isn't forthcoming. Immediately recognisable in his scruffy mackintosh and the flock of birds which congregate around him at all times, the Cunning Man is never anything less than friendly, reasonable... even caring. But he's also utterly ruthless when has to be. Don't turn your back on him and never, ever underestimate what he'll do and who he'll gladly sell out to save his own hide.

Armor Class AC: 12 (leather coat)

Hit Points (HP): 65 (10d8+20)

Speed: 30 ft

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

Saving Throws: Strength +5, Intelligence +6

Skills: Deception +5, History +8

Languages: Common, Dwarf, Goblin, Canine, Feline

Senses: Darkvision 60 ft, Passive Perception 10

Challenge: 4 (1,100 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Brave:** The Cunning Man has advantage on saving throws against being frightened.

🐾 **Friends in Strange Places:** If the Cunning Man's allies are all incapacitated, he can summon 1d4+2 goblins as an action. They arrive at the start of his next turn.

🐾 **Slippery Customer:** If the Cunning Man makes a dash action, he incurs no attacks of opportunity. In addition, if, when being pursued, he gains a lead of 40 ft or more over his pursuers, he has escaped.

Actions

🐾 **Multiattack.** The Cunning Man makes two attacks, one with his umbrella and one with his hefty punch attack.

🐾 **Umbrella.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d10 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

🐾 **Hefty Punch.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6+5) bludgeoning damage.

Giant Rat

SMALL BEAST, UNALIGNED

It's big. It's furry. It has a pair of particularly ugly teeth jutting from its mouth. It's a giant rat. Entirely under the sway of the Rat King, the giant rats are unpleasant enemies, chittering hideously as they prepare to attack. No one is quite sure whether these rats are so large because the sewers of Gullet Cove are particularly hideous or because of the Rat King's strange experiments. And who wants to do that research?

Armor Class AC: 12 (matted fur)

Hit Points (HP): 7 (2d6)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
7 (-2)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)

Languages: N/A

Senses: Darkvision 60 ft, Passive Perception 10

Challenge: 1/8 (25 XP)

Abilities

Keen Smell: The giant rat has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

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

Actions

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



Rat Swarm

MEDIUM SWARM OF TINY BEASTS, UNALIGNED

Lots of rats. Swarming all over you. Crawling up your trouser leg, scratching at your face and hands...that's no one's idea of a good time. So the Rat King's habit of sending vast hordes of mind-controlled rats at those who infiltrate his underground lair is not exactly popular. Not that the Rat King cares about that.

Armor Class AC: 10 (straggly fur)

Hit Points (HP): 24 (7d8-7)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Languages: N/A

Damage Immunities: Bludgeoning, Piercing, Slashing

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

Senses: Darkvision 30 ft, Passive Perception 10

Challenge: 1/4 (50 XP)

Abilities

Keen Smell: The swarm has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

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

Actions

Bites (swarm has more than half HP). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 0 ft, one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* (2d6) piercing damage.

Bites (swarm has half HP or less). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 0 ft, one target in the swarm's space. *Hit:* (1d6) piercing damage.



Glass Spiders

MEDIUM BEAST, UNALIGNED

One of the Necromastiff's most curious creations, the glass spiders haunt his mansion; a tinkling crystalline menace, emerging from cracks in the ceiling, their mandibles gnashing at their prey in a crazed frenzy. How the Necromastiff creates these sinister, delicate creatures none have managed to divine. Perhaps they were always a part of the house, just waiting to be awoken. Perhaps the Necromastiff found them, in some lost oasis in a desert and brought them to Gullet Cove. Perhaps they are ripped from some other dimension, relentlessly hungering for the soft flesh they cannot enjoy on their home plane. Whatever the truth, they are ruthless, ravenous creatures and best avoided by any who wish to keep their fingers, limbs, or internal organs, in the correct place.

Armor Class AC: 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points (HP): 26 (4d10+4)

Speed: 30 ft

Climb: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	2 (-4)	11 (+0)	4 (-3)

Damage Vulnerabilities: Bludgeoning

Skills: Stealth +6

Languages: N/A

Damage Resistance: Fire

Senses: Blindsight 10 ft, Darkvision 60 ft, passive Perception 10

Challenge: 1 (200 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Spider Climb:** The glass spider can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

🐾 **Web Sense:** While in contact with a web, the glass spider knows the exact location of any other creature in contact with the same web.

🐾 **Web Walker:** The glass spider ignores movement restrictions caused by webbing.

🐾 **Glass Shards:** Whenever a glass spider is killed, it shatters into a hail of glass shards. Any creature within 5 ft of the glass spider takes 1d4 piercing damage.

Actions

🐾 **Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft, one creature. *Hit:* 2d8 + 3 piercing damage

🐾 **Web (Recharge 5-6).** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 30/60 ft, one creature. The target is restrained by webbing. As an action, the restrained target can make a DC 12 Strength check, bursting the webbing on a success. The webbing can also be attacked and destroyed (AC 10; hp 5; vulnerability to fire damage; immunity to bludgeoning, poison, and psychic damage).



Skelly Cats

SMALL UNDEAD, LAWFUL EVIL

If you don't like cats, refuse to resurrect dogs, but require some undead thralls to do your bidding, skelly cats are a pretty solid choice. Certainly that's the Necromastiff's attitude. He has a small army of revenant felines, stumbling and yowling in the darkness of Grimmsmouth House. Despite the crumbling bones and mouldering flesh, they're still pretty cute. But they bite a lot more frequently than your average cat. And once those jaws are shut, they aren't likely to open again. Beware!

Armor Class AC: 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points (HP): 10 (1d10+5)

Speed: 40 ft

Climb: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)

Damage Vulnerabilities: Bludgeoning

Skills: Perception +3, Stealth +4

Languages: N/A

Damage Immunities: Poison

Condition Immunities: Exhaustion, Poisoned

Senses: Passive Perception 13, Darkvision 60 ft

Challenge: 4 (1,100 XP)

Abilities

Keen Smell: The skelly cat has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Actions

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

Zombie Cat

SMALL UNDEAD, LAWFUL EVIL

Sometimes, you get something fresher than a skeleton. A clever necromastiff can make use of such corpses...even if the smell of reanimated cats is much worse to a canine nose than to a humanoid one. Grand stratagems require such sacrifices, and olfactory contentment must sometimes be one of them. Zombie cats are usually the necromastiff's first line of attack, shambling towards their targets as though wanting to play. The game is rarely much fun for the unfortunate victim!

Armor Class AC: 12 (natural armor)

Hit Points (HP): 10 (1d10+5)

Speed: 40 ft

Climb: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Saving Throws: Widsoms +0

Languages: N/A

Damage Immunities: Poison

Condition Immunities: Poisoned

Senses: Passive Perception 13, darkvision 60 ft

Challenge: 1/4 (50 XP)

Abilities

Undead Fortitude: If damage reduces the zombie cat to 0 hit points, it must make a Constitution saving throw with a DC of 5 + the damage it has taken, unless the damage is radiant or from a critical hit. On a success, the zombie drops to 1 hit point instead.

Actions

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



Goblin 'Nappers

MEDIUM HUMANOID (GOBLINOID), NEUTRAL EVIL

Got an unpleasant little job that needs doing? Sure, you can find mercenaries and hirelings of all sorts. But how much are they going to cost? A lot, more than likely. So, got an unpleasant little job that needs doing and a limited budget? Good job there're goblins around, right? Certainly that's the case with the Goblin 'Nappers — a group of entirely dishonest kidnappers who happily make their money taking away innocent animals. And not so innocent animals. And sometimes not even animals. They don't really care so long as there's some gold in it for them. And they found the ideal paymaster in the Cunning Man.

Armor Class AC: 15 (leather armor and equipment)

Hit Points (HP): 7 (2d6)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	8 (-1)

Skills: Stealth +6

Languages: Common, Goblin

Senses: Darkvision 60 ft, Passive Perception 9

Challenge: 1/4 (50 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Nimble Escape.** The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

Actions

🐾 **Napping Stick.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit; reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 4(1d4+2) or Grab. Immobilise target until target makes a DC 14 STR save at the start of their turn.



The Soaker

MEDIUM HUMANOID (HUMAN, SHAPECHANGER), CHAOTIC EVIL

The scholarly consensus on the soaker is that the ancient elves created it as a form of trap designed to snare anyone trying to sneak into their city. The city might have collapsed a millennium ago, but the soaker continued to thrive, springing on the unfortunate and unsuspecting alike and seeking to smother them, before gradually dissolving them for nutrients. The soaker most commonly appears like a huge clump of kelp, but one that doesn't quite move correctly in the wind, doesn't quite stir in the water. For those who don't spot such signs, the Soaker often proves a fatal surprise.

Armor Class AC: 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points (HP): 78 (12d10+12)

Speed: 10 ft

Fly: 40 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+4)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills: Stealth +5

Languages: N/A

Damage Resistance: Bludgeoning

Senses: Darkvision 60 Ft, Passive Perception 11

Challenge: 8 (3,900 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Damage Transfer:** While attached to a creature, the soaker takes only half the damage dealt to it (rounded down), and that creature takes the other half.

🐾 **False Appearance:** While the soaker remains motionless without its underside exposed, it is indistinguishable from a mass of kelp or seaweed.

🐾 **Light Sensitivity:** While in bright light, the soaker has disadvantage on attack rolls and Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.

Actions

🐾 **Multiattack.** The soaker makes two attacks: one with its bite and one with its fountain spray.

🐾 **Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft, one creature. *Hit:* (2d6+3) piercing damage. If the target is large or smaller, the soaker attaches to it. If the soaker has advantage against the target, the soaker attaches to the target's head, and the target is blinded and unable to breathe while the soaker is attached. While attached, the soaker can make this attack only against the target and has advantage on the attack roll. The soaker can detach itself by spending 5 ft of its movement. A creature, including the target, can take its action to detach the soaker by succeeding on a DC 16 Strength check.

🐾 **Fountain Spray.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 20 ft, one creature. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) bludgeoning damage. On a successful attack, the target must succeed on a DC 12 Strength save or be knocked prone.

🐾 **Moan.** Each creature within 60 ft of the soaker that can hear its moan and that isn't an aberration must succeed on a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or become frightened until the end of the soaker's next turn. If a creature's saving throw is successful, the creature is immune to the soaker's moan for the next 24 hours.



Bilge Grick

MEDIUM MONSTROSITY, UNALIGNED

Angry...and hungry. That best describes the bilge grick. Covered in sewage, the bilge grick is an ambush hunter lurking in the sewers of Gullet Cove and waiting for anything it can construe as a morsel of food to pass nearby. Functionally blind, the bilge grick hunts by sensing the footfall (or paw-fall) of its prey, waiting until they are nearly on top of it to erupt from the grime, mouth agape and feelers stretching. The bilge gricks are a constant threat in the sewers of the town, as well as in the deep ocean; loathed as much by sailors as by those forced to unblock the sewers, they are rapacious, and very deadly.

Armor Class AC: 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points (HP): 27 (6d8)

Speed: 30 ft

Climb: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	3 (-4)	14 (+2)	5 (-3)

Languages: N/A

Damage Resistance: Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing From Nonmagical Attacks

Senses: Darkvision 60 ft, Passive Perception 12

Challenge: 2 (450 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Ocean Camouflage:** The bilge grick has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks made to hide in oceanic terrain, like a beach or salt marsh.

🐾 **Bilge Water Shower:** The grick hoses their prey with a concentrated jet of sea water. The target creature must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity save or be stunned during their next turn.

Actions

🐾 **Multiattack.** The grick makes one attack with its tentacles. If that attack hits, the grick can make one beak attack against the same target.

🐾 **Tentacles.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* (2d6+2) slashing damage.

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

Golden Crab

MEDIUM BEAST, UNALIGNED

The ferociously powerful creature wandering the Isle of Dogs is a terrifying opponent, capable of ripping off an arm with a single snip of its claws. It's also deceptively fast, and curiously intelligent. Of course, the huge treasure hoard on its back means that the crab is rarely at peace, constantly hunted, pursued, and desired. But that's the way of things on the Isle of Dogs...

Armor Class AC: 18 (natural armor and treasure hoard)

Hit Points (HP): 78 (12d8+24)

Speed: 30 ft, swim 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	9 (-1)	3 (-4)

Skills: Stealth +4

Senses: Blindsight 30 ft, Passive Perception 9

Damage Resistance: Bludgeoning, Force

Challenge: 4 (1100)

Abilities

🐾 **Amphibious.** The crab can breathe air and water.

🐾 **Treasure Hoard.** The glinting of sun on gold, and the constant jingling of coins, render fighting the Golden Crab extremely difficult. All melee attacks against the Golden Crab are made at disadvantage.

Actions

🐾 **Multiattack.** The golden crab may make two claw attacks per turn.

🐾 **Claw.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d12 + 5) bludgeoning damage. The target is grappled (escape DC 15) The crab has two claws, each of which can grapple only one target.





NPCs and Bestiary: Denizens of Gullet Cove





Master Pettifer

SMALL FELINE (TABBY), NEUTRAL

An old cat with a very particular sense of style, Master Pettifer is recognised throughout Gullet Cove, not that he often leaves his shop. But Master Pettifer was one of the first awakened animals to come to Gullet Cove and, in the many years since, his emporium has been one of the few constants in the ever-shifting townscape. His background is almost entirely mysterious; he simply plies his particular trade — buying strange items and selling others, all while wearing his faintly shabby maroon smoking jacket and cap. There are many rumours about Master Pettifer's powers, rumours of his divinity or immortality. Some have even claimed, he is the original awakened animal, blessed by the universe's creator. Pettifer listens to all of these stories with the quizzical half-smile of the very wise. Of course, whether this is all an act you'd have to find out for yourself...if you're prepared to offend a creature who might be a god. Or might not.

Armor Class: 14 (with mage armor)

Hit Points: 130 (20d8 +40)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Skills: Stealth +7, Arcana +10, History +10, Investigation +10, Persuasion +9

Saving Throws: Intelligence +10, Charisma +9

Languages: Common, Feline, Canine, Dwarfish, Elvish, Infernal, Abyssal, Draconic

Challenge: 14 (11,500 XP)

Spells

- 🐾 **Spellcasting:** Master Pettifer is an 20th-level wizard. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 18, to hit with spell attacks +10)
- 🐾 **Cantrips (at will):** Ray of Frost, Acid Splash, Poison Spray, Fire Bolt, Chill Touch,
- **1st level (4 slots):** Fog Cloud, Protection from Evil and Good, Mage Armor
 - **2nd level (3 slots):** Cloud of Daggers, Knock, Misty Step, Magic Mouth
 - **3rd level (3 slots):** Animate Dead, Fear, Sleet Storm, Lightning Bolt, Sending
 - **4th level (3 slots):** Otiluke's Resilient Sphere, Fire Shield, Banishment
 - **5th level (3 slots):** Contact Other Plane
 - **6th level (2 slots):** Sunbeam, Globe of Invulnerability
 - **7th level (2 slots):** Mirage Arcane
 - **8th level (1 slot):** Dominate Monster
 - **9th level (1 slot):** Prismatic Wall, Imprisonment, Astral Projection

Arcane Recovery: During a short rest, Master Pettifer can recover one 6th level spell slot and one 4th level slot, or, three 3rd level spell slots.

The Book of the Emporium: The exact content of Master Pettifer's book is unknown, but along with the entire contents of his apparently infinite shop, it seems to contain many of the spells Pettifer uses if he is attacked. He's never without the book, and, if it is taken from him, it immediately vanishes and reappears in Pettifer's paws within one turn.

And...gone!: Master Pettifer is a master at evading harm. He hasn't survived this long without some gifts. Whenever Master Pettifer would be reduced to 0 hit points, he automatically teleports away to an unspecified location.

Incredibly Old, Incredibly Wise: Master Pettifer has lived for many, many years and filed away endless, esoteric knowledge. He makes all Intelligence and Wisdom saving throws at advantage.

Actions

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

🐾 **Multiattack:** Master Pettifer makes three melee attacks.

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

Old Timory

MEDIUM HUMANOID (HUMAN), CHAOTIC NEUTRAL

Irascible, cantankerous, and thoroughly difficult, Old Timory is nevertheless indispensable to the rise of Gullet Cove as a chosen port for sailors and pirates. Or at least, sailors and pirates who value ship building of the highest quality over and above customer service. Old Timory was brought to Gullet Cove as a boy by his mother who ran one of the toughest inns in the town for many years. Timory was quickly infatuated with ships, watching them come in at the dock. He soon earned himself a job running tools to the various shipwrights, before his particular genius for designing the ships themselves led to him being taught by the then-shipwright, a dwarf. Timory learned all he could from the dwarf and quickly surpassed them in terms of skill and aptitude. Since then, he has continued to create inspired designs for new ships and new technology. Indeed, as work as a shipwright has slowed, due to Old Timory's infamous temper, so his mind has begun to wander, creating objects and artefacts which even he doesn't fully understand.

Armor Class: 11 (padded armor)

Hit Points: 27 (5d8 +5)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	21 (+5)	17 (+3)	15 (+2)

Skills: History +6, Religion +6, Arcana +6, Investigation +7

Saving Throws: Intelligence +7, Wisdom +5

Language: Common

Challenge: 1/8 (25 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Inspired Items:** Timory's magic is strange, often manifesting itself in ways unknown even to him. He channels his ferocious intelligence into everything he touches. Whenever Timory picks up a weapon, it automatically becomes a magical +2 weapon for as long as he is holding it.

🐾 **Easily Angered:** If Old Timory suffers more than 15 damage in a single attack, he flies into a fit of temper. He immediately gains 3d8 additional hit points for the duration of the combat, and gains advantage on all subsequent attacks.

Actions

🐾 **Multiattack:** Old Timory makes two melee attacks.

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

Orlan

MEDIUM DOG (ROUGH COLLIE), LAWFUL GOOD

Orlan is both adored by those who seek help and feared by those who have made the mistake of crossing her — like any true Warden of the Golden Collar should be. And Orlan is one of the truest and most dedicated to the cause of the Golden Collar the organisation has ever possessed. She is brave, resourceful, and resilient, never retreating no matter how daunting the odds or dreadful the foe she must confront. Most of her time is spent within the perimeter of Gullet Cove, keeping an eye on the various criminal activities which are too numerous to quash entirely but which need to be kept in line. Things tend to get extremely ugly for any who are cruel to animals or children, should Orlan learn of their deeds. Despite her immense responsibilities, and her reputation as an implacable avenger, Orlan is also excellent company, so much so that several bards have stolen jokes from her for their various performances. This is the only kind of theft Orlan lets slide.

Armor Class: 18 (full plate armor)

Hit Points: 97 (13d8 +39)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	11 (+0)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Skills: Religion +2, Athletics +6, Persuasion +4, History +2

Saving Throws: Strength +6, Constitution +5

Languages: Common, Canine

Challenge: 5 (1800 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Eminent Exemplar:** Orlan is beloved throughout Gullet Cove, as a result, she makes any interpersonal test at advantage.

🐾 **Relentless Warrior:** Relentless, inexhaustible, impossible. As a bonus action, Orlan may regain 2 hit dice worth of hit points. She can use this ability twice per combat.

🐾 **Holy Servant:** Once per short rest Orlan can conjure, as a bonus action, the spell Healing Word (1d4 + CHA, range 60 ft).

Actions

🐾 **Multiattack:** Orlan makes three melee attacks with their greatsword.

🐾 **Greatsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 +4) slashing damage.

Morganna Veries

MEDIUM HUMANOID (DRAGONBORN), NEUTRAL

Calculating and brilliant, Morganna Veries is also an excellent fighter, a charismatic leader, and capable of the kind of political manoeuvring which many royal viziers would be jealous of. Beginning as a pirate, her intelligence quickly proved too much for the pirate ship she joined. When the captain attempted to throw her off, for once again pointing out how stupid his plan was, she instigated a mutiny and was unanimously proclaimed the ship's new leader (Morganna tells this story fairly often, though never mentions what she did with the ship's previous captain). Morganna's intellect, however, soon meant that the repetitiousness of pirate life bored her. She needed a new challenge. Stopping in at Gullet Cove to fence her latest load of booty, she became intrigued by the opportunities the town's political situation afforded someone with a bit of money and the gumption to cut through the Guild's bureaucracy. With her profits from pirating, she quickly installed herself in the Seafarers Guild and, without too much resistance, was soon the town's leader. How long will this position occupy her before she sets her sights on an even loftier position?

Armor Class: 17 (leather armor, shield)

Hit Points: 85 (10d10 +30)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	19 (+4)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)

Skills: Acrobatics +6, Athletics +4, Sleight of Hand +6, Stealth +6

Languages: Common, Draconic, Canine, Feline, Dwarfish, Elvish, Thieves' Cant

Saving Throws: Dexterity +6, Constitution +5

Challenge: 4 (1100 XP)

Abilities

- Dervish:** Morganna's high prowess with the sword means she can use a bonus action to take the Dash or Disengage action.
- Leadership (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest) (must be able to speak):** For 1 minute, Morganna can utter a special command or warning whenever a nonhostile creature she can see within 30 ft, makes an attack roll or a saving throw. The creature can add 1d6 to its roll provided it can hear and understand her. A creature can benefit from only one Leadership die at a time.
- Breath Weapon:** Morganna can exhale a potent gout of fire in a 15 ft cone. Any creature immersed in the fire may make a Constitution save of 13. A failure results in the victim taking 3d6 fire damage. A successful test halves the damage received.

Actions

- Multiattack:** Morganna makes two weapon melee attacks or two ranged attacks.
- Scimitar:** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 +4) slashing damage.
- Shortbow:** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, range 80/320 ft, one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 +4) piercing damage.



Swindell

MEDIUM HUMANOID (HUMAN), NEUTRAL EVIL

A cruel but cunning man, Swindell conducted an unremarkable career as a pirate before taking the shares from his last voyage and throwing in his lot with his stupider, but bigger and stronger, crewmate, and buying an inn. Swindell always loathed animals, even as a child, and used to spend much of his time chasing them away or hurling sticks at them. The presence of so many awakened animals, animals far cleverer than Swindell himself, has compounded his hatred. He's going to do something about it, and he'll be taking Buller along for the ride.

Armor Class: 12 (leather armor)

Hit Points: 30 (4d10 +8)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills: Intimidation +2, Perception +3

Languages: Common

Challenge: 1/2 (100 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Buller! Help!:** What's the point of having a huge bully as a best friend if they aren't going to help you out? Swindell has advantage on attack rolls against an enemy if Buller is within 5 ft of the enemy.

Actions

🐾 **Dagger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 20/60 ft, one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 +3) piercing damage.

Buller

MEDIUM HUMANOID (HUMAN), LAWFUL EVIL

Big, brawny and none too bright, Buller happily allows Swindell to take the lead when deciding what to spend their money on, and what sinister schemes to get into next. Even if it does involve hunting defenceless animals. Buller has nothing against animals, really, but he's not going to gainsay Swindell. Swindell is his friend, and Buller is nothing if not loyal.

Armor Class: 14 (hide armor)

Hit Points: 45 (7d10 +14)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	11 (+0)	9 (-1)

Skills: Athletics +5

Languages: Common

Challenge: 1 (200 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **What Should I Do?.** Buller isn't the brightest, but that's what Swindell is for. When Swindell is within 5 ft of Buller, Buller is immune to all spells and conditions which affect the mind.

Actions

🐾 **Dagger.** *Dagger. Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 20/60 ft, one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4 +3) piercing damage.





Helga Drumkin

MEDIUM HUMANOID (MOUNTAIN DWARF),
CHAOTIC GOOD

A punch that could fell an ox and a smile that could charm a dragon. That's what everyone knows Helga Drumkin for. She also runs a fine tavern, brews a great beer, and cooks an excellent meal. She's very very good at her job. There's a pretty sharp mind behind the smile too, and Helga Drumkin keeps her ear to the ground. That's not to say she's a font of information...she's not. She keeps things close to her chest, like any tavern keeper who wants to keep her clientele coming. Far too many of Helga's regulars are involved in various dodgy dealings for her to start giving out tips. But keeping an eye on Helga's business deals are a pretty good indication of what's about to go down. If she suddenly starts buying up salt or bacon, there's a good chance that a shipment of those things has been robbed or lost at sea. Helga isn't a talker but she's informative. Plus, she runs the best bar in the town.

Armor Class: 11 (padded armor)

Hit Points: 52 (8d10 +8)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	15 (+2)

Skills: Insight +4, Persuasion +5, Deception +5, Investigation +3

Languages: Common, Dwarfish

Challenge: 1/2 (100 XP)

Abilities

🐾 The First to Know: Helga knows and hears everything. All gossip comes through her inn!

🐾 Formidable Punch. Famed for her punch, Helga could stop a rampaging elk. Whenever she is fighting unarmed, Helga scores a critical hit on a 19 or 20.

Actions

🐾 Multiattack: Helga makes two weapon melee attacks

🐾 Unarmed. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.



Gaius Vandel

MEDIUM HUMANOID (HUMAN), CHAOTIC NEUTRAL

A man of many talents — most of them of somewhat dubious legality — Gaius was a merchant sailor for a long time, before becoming a dock tough for one of the town's many gangs). But Gaius' preference for peace over violence endeared him to the town's authorities. When he decided that having his face punched wasn't much of a living, Gaius was able to get work for the Guilds, keeping an eye on the ports, tracking those who came in, and ensuring that the various Guild levies and taxes were paid... within reason. Of course, Gaius took his own cut, but that's just one of the perks of the job. When the job of Port Warden came up, Gaius was chosen for the role and has continued to combine his daily tasks with low level espionage on behalf of whoever is prepared to pay. It's a pretty good living. The only issue is whether he'll be able to keep living if anyone finds out that he's spying on them all...

Armor Class: 13 (padded armor)

Hit Points: 42 (6d8 +18)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)

Skills: Stealth +4, Sleight of Hand +4, Deception +1, Performance +1

Languages: Common

Challenge: 1 (200 XP)

Abilities

🐾 Always Drunk. There's more rum in Gaius than blood. He has resistance to all poison damage.

🐾 I Know You: Gaius knows something about everything in the town. And everyone knows it. He has advantage on all Charisma tests when talking with a Gullet Cove resident.

Actions

🐾 Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 6 (2d4 +1) bludgeoning damage.

Filamena Gruth & McKenzie

Enforcing law and justice is a calling. It's one Filamena Gruth felt very strongly. She joined several Watch forces, in several different cities and many different kingdoms. Always scrupulously honest, Filamena was born to be a Watch Captain. In one of these many nameless cities, she encountered McKenzie. Scruffy, but loyal and intelligent, McKenzie was shocked that his awakened nature didn't faze Filamena at all. If anything, she seemed to quite like it. The two of them formed a partnership of sorts — McKenzie spied on the criminals and Filamena arrested them. After a while of being the most successful (and commensurately hated) pair of Watch officers in the town, it became clear that they needed to move. The pair settled on Gullet Cove — a new head of the Watch was required and, as McKenzie said, how could anywhere so small be full of crime? They soon found out, of course, but, despite initial naivety, Filamena adjusted to the nature of her role in Gullet Cove. McKenzie hasn't quite grasped how irrelevant the watch truly is and remains ferociously protective of Filamena and relentless in pursuit of criminals. But most criminals are linked to the Guilds and are quickly let go. The few crimes Filamena and McKenzie do get to pursue are more serious, and, while they remain as dedicated (and dogged) as ever, for much of the time they remain consigned to the Watch House, quietly watching town life proceed without them.

Filamena Gruth

MEDIUM HUMANOID (DWARF), NEUTRAL GOOD

Armor Class: 16 (ring mail, shield)

Hit Points: 45 (6d10 +12)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
17 (+3)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)

Skills: Athletics +5, Intimidation +2

Language: Common, Dwarfish, Canine

Challenge: 2 (450 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Stubborn Copper.** Filamena doesn't take no for an answer when it comes to doing her job properly. All Charisma tests against her are made at disadvantage.

🐾 **Boots.** A good Watch Captain walks everywhere, walks until they know the feel of the cobbles beneath their feet. Filamena knows everywhere in Gullet Cove and is never lost.

Actions

🐾 **Multiattack.** Filamena makes two melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

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

🐾 **Light Crossbow.** *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft, one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d8 +1) piercing damage.

McKenzie

SMALL CANINE (TERRIER), CHAOTIC GOOD

Armor Class: 16 (ring mail, shield)

Hit Points: 22 (4d6 +8)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)

Skills: Athletics +5 Intimidation +1

Languages: Common, Canine, Dwarfish

Challenge: 1/2 (100 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Guard Dog.** McKenzie is devoted to his boss. Once per round, if Filamena is hit by an attack within five ft of him, McKenzie may make an attack against the attacker as a bonus action.

Actions

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



Mervynner the Frozen

MEDIUM HUMANOID (DWARF), LAWFUL NEUTRAL

Not many wizards enchant their own legs so that, ever afterward, they are capable of drastically reducing the temperature of an entire room. Not many wizards manage to survive such a ludicrous accident and work their way to a position of respect and esteem in one of the most famously competitive magical guilds in the world. Mervynner the Frozen managed it. Mainly, his success was achieved through his possession of genuine magical skill and his friendliness. Mervynner is one of the few pleasant, personable wizards in the whole of WISPER. Perhaps it was the humility granted by making his own legs into icicles (not literally but in terms of effect...identical), but Mervynner is polite, witty, and relatively kind. He still obsessively hoards information and hates sharing spells, but, other than that, he's almost normal. Almost. Of course, there are rumours that Mervynner is in fact plotting some form of coup, turning the town into a haven devoted to the pursuit of magical study and driving out all other residents. But who could believe such things about such a reasonable, pleasant person?

Armor Class: 15 (specially designed padded robes)

Hit Points: 90 (12d8 +36)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)

Skills: Arcana +5, Intimidation +8, Perception +4, Stealth +6

Saving Throws: Charisma +8 Constitution +7

Challenge: 7 (2900 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Stay Frosty:** Mervynner's misfortune when it comes to his legs has had some benefits. He's immune to all cold damage.

🐾 **Guild Protected:** Mervynner is the representative of his Guild. He has advantage on all Charisma checks when dealing with Gullet Cove inhabitants.

Spells

- 🐾 **Spellcasting:** Mervynner is a 12th-level sorcerer. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 16, to hit with spell attacks +8)
- 🐾 **Cantrips (at will):** Prestidigitation, Shocking Grasp, Friends, Minor Illusion, Chill Touch,
- **1st level (4 slots):** Comprehend Languages, Mage Armor,
 - **2nd level (3 slots):** Alter Self, Spider Climb, Levitate, Suggestion, Enlarge/Reduce, Hold Person, Crown of Madness
 - **3rd level (3 slots):** Counterspell, Blink, Clairvoyance,
 - **4th level (3 slots):** Conjure Minor Elementals, Ice Storm, Stoneskin, Wall of Fire,
 - **5th level (2 slots):** Dominate Person, Scrying,
 - **6th level (1 slots):** Circle of Death, Globe of Invulnerability,

Actions

- 🐾 **Quarterstaff.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6 +0) bludgeoning damage.



Alexin One-Eyed

MEDIUM HUMANOID (HUMAN), NEUTRAL GOOD

Despite being tall, broad, and powerfully built, and despite what his name might suggest, Alexin One-Eyed has never been adventuring. He's always been a tavern keeper and he's proud of it. Which is fair enough; he's extremely good at it. He lost his eye in an unfortunate incident involving a throwing axe, the steel hoop of a beer cask, and a particularly drunk barbarian. This has just made him look more at home in the environs of the Adventurers Guild, which is mainly populated by people with more scars than teeth left. Alexin is conscientious, reliable, and as good a fighter as you'll meet. He's defeated more than one highly experienced warrior in a fist fight when it comes to closing time.

Armor Class: 11 (padded armor)

Hit Points: 27 (5d8 +5)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Skills: Insight +3, Persuasion +4

Challenge: 1/8 (25 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **He's Our Bartender.** Alexin might not be much of a fighter himself, but he always has adventurers and heroes ready to back him up. Alexin can call on 1d4+2 mercenaries to assist him as a free action, once per combat. These reinforcements arrive within one combat round, and use the same statistics as Alexin.

Actions

🐾 **Dagger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 20/60 ft, one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 +2) piercing damage.



Boris Byeldun

MEDIUM HUMANOID (HUMAN), NEUTRAL

His exact background might be unclear, but his present purpose is absolutely fixed. Boris Byeldun represents the Thieves Guild at the Council meetings. He conducts himself with the cool, clear rationality of a highly trained lawyer but, as Morganna Veries has said, he moves with the speed and grace of a thief. Or an assassin. In conversation, Boris is curt but never rude. He doesn't laugh but does smile, tightly, his lips whitening over yellow teeth. He is also known to smoke a pipe during meetings though never outside of them...leading most of his Council colleagues to see this as an attempted distraction. Whatever the truth, Boris is a skilled political operator and a man who inspires no little degree of fear.

Armor Class: 14 (hide armor)

Hit Points: 49 (9d8 +9)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	17 (+3)	13 (+1)	19 (+4)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Skills: Deception +6, Persuasion +6, Stealth +5, Insight +5, Intimidate +5

Saving Throws: Charisma +6, Dexterity +6

Challenge: 5 (1800 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Too Fast for You.** Boris is an expert fighter. He gains advantage on all attacks made using Dexterity.

🐾 **Formidable Reputation.** Everyone has heard of Boris Byeldun. He has advantage on all Intimidate and Persuade tests.

🐾 **Strategist.** Byeldun is always a few steps ahead, planning his next move. Once per combat, he may reroll one failed test, having already anticipated the consequences of his failure and prepared a contingency.

Actions

🐾 **Multiattack.** Boris makes three weapon melee attacks or two ranged attacks.

🐾 **Concealed Rapier.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, range 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d8 +5) piercing damage, finesse.

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

Shrill

SMALL FELINE (TABBY), CHAOTIC NEUTRAL

The priests of Urbaste are usually enigmatic, and Shrill — small, tortoise-shell, and ancient — is no exception. Despite her advanced years, she spends little time in the temple she's ostensibly in charge of, preferring to slink her way through the gutterings. There she bestows blessings and helps where she can. But she also visits the Cradle, explores the dredging...Shrill is curious about the town she watches over. None are quite sure what she does with the information she gathers in her wandering. Certainly, in Council, she makes no reference to it, often pleading ignorance. But a cat as wise and watchful as Shrill is certainly up to something. Has she merely waited for adventurers capable of using the information she possesses, avenging the wronged and destroying the wicked? Who knows?

Armor Class: 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points: 78 (12d6 +36)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	15 (+2)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)	19 (+4)	13 (+1)

Skills: Nature +4 ,Survival +8, Animal Handling +8, Medicine +8

Saving Throws: Wisdom +8 Constitution +7

Challenge: 7 (2900 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Chosen of the Cat God.** Shrill is Urbaste's representative in Gullet Cove and she walks the streets and gutterings completely sure of her god's attention. Shrill is resistant to all damage types.

🐾 **Untouchable.** Swift even by the proverbial standards of cats, Shrill makes all Dexterity tests at advantage.

Spells

🐾 **Spellcasting:** Shrill is an 12th-level druid. Her spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 16, to hit with spell attacks +8)

🐾 **Cantrips (at will):** Druidcraft, Guidance, Produce Flame, Shillelagh, Poison Spray,

• **1st level (4 slots):** Create or Destroy Water,

• **2nd level (3 slots):** Spider Climb, Mirror Image, Locate Object, Locate Animals or Plants,

• **3rd level (3 slots):** Haste, Speak with Plants, Gaseous Form, Water Breathing,

• **4th level (3 slots):** Grasping Vine, Dominate Beast, Conjure Minor Elementals,

• **5th level (2 slots):** Insect Plague, Greater Restoration,

• **6th level (1 slots):** Wind Walk

Actions

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



Ysandre

MEDIUM HUMANOID (TIEFLING), CHAOTIC GOOD

Legendary for her exploits with a cutlass in hand, Ysandre has long been considered a terror of the sea. Some of her greatest (and most outrageous) feats are now the kind of stories fellow pirates and sailors know by title alone: 'The Frost Fur Reach Robbery', for example, or 'The Great Doubloon Heist'. Amongst awakened animals, however, she's known for her kindness and her willingness to offer a way to escape the confines of restrictive towns or unpleasant homes to those animals needing them. In some way, Ysandre is a one-woman passage to Gullet Cove; she has delivered dozens of animals to better lives in the port town. Now, she hides there, waiting for her chance to deal with those pursuing her. Only truly at home onboard a ship at full sail, Ysandre chafes against the restrictions of a land-dweller's life, but at least there's always something going on in Gullet Cove for her to get involved in!

Armor Class: 15 (padded armor)

Hit Points: 105 (14d8 +42)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	19 (+4)	17 (+3)	11 (+0)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)

Skills: Acrobatics +6, Deception +4, Athletics +3, Perception +2

Saving Throws: Dexterity +6 Constitution +5

Challenge: 4 (1100 XP)

Abilities

- 🐾 **Dirty Fighting:** If Ysandre's attacks hit the enemy, she can choose as a bonus action to trip or disarm the target. She may use this ability once per combat.
- 🐾 **Sea Prowess:** Ysandre has advantage on acrobatics and athletics checks that involve movement on a ship and swimming checks.
- 🐾 **Go On, Lads!:** An experienced captain, Ysandre is capable of exhorting a crew to the limits of their ability. As a bonus ability, Ysandre can grant a friendly creature within 60ft of her, who can hear her, a bonus 1d6 which can be used as a bonus to one subsequent ability check or save. This bonus die cannot be carried between combats.

Actions

- 🐾 **Multiattack:** Ysandre makes three melee attacks.
- 🐾 **Scimitar.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 +4) slashing damage. one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.



Galert

MEDIUM DOG (WOLF HOUND), NEUTRAL GOOD

Scarred, taciturn, and capable of hacking his way through just about any opponent placed in front of him, Galert is one of the Watchers. Once part of the Order of the Golden Collar, the Watchers eventually broke away from the constraints of their parent organisation, and now form their own, highly secretive society. The Watchers exist to defend awakened animals against the evil that festers in the dark corners of the earth. And Galert is an expert at providing such protection. Tracking a necromancer of considerable power, Galert has followed the trail of a group of goblins and their dwarven master, who kidnap awakened animals to sell on as amusements for the wealthy. Vengeance is coming, and it takes the form of a white wolf hound with a blade between his teeth.

Armor Class: 15 (chain shirt)

Hit Points: 60 (8d8 +24)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Skills: Intimidation +2, Athletics +6, Animal Handling +3, Survival +3

Saving Throws: Strength +6, Constitution +5

Languages: Common, Canine

Challenge: 3 (700 XP)

Abilities

- 🐾 **Hmmmm.** The Watcher has seen it all. He is immune to the frightened condition.
- 🐾 **I'm Here to Kill Your Monster.** The Watcher specialises in hunting down and killing monsters. When fighting any enemy with the Monstrosity or Aberration tag, the Watcher deals double damage on any successful attack from his silver blade.
- 🐾 **I Prefer Not to Choose.** The Watcher has fought many foes, often outnumbered. Whenever the Watcher is engaged by more than one enemy creature, he may make a free bonus attack.

Actions

- 🐾 **Multiattack.** Galert makes two melee attacks, one with his long sword and the other with his silver blade.
- 🐾 **Long sword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d12 +4) slashing damage.
- 🐾 **Silver Blade.** *Melee Weapon Attack.* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d10 +4) slashing



Imelda Forlyth

MEDIUM HUMANOID (DWARF), LAWFUL GOOD

A relative newcomer to Gullet Cove, Imelda Forlyth quickly established herself as the town's most skilled blacksmith. This made her extremely wealthy and extremely influential. Most of the Guilds attempted to persuade her to join them but, stubborn to the end, Imelda refused. So superior is her metal craft, however, that the Guilds eventually had to accept these terms, leaving her free to ply her trade without their interference. More or less. Imelda is not one to be intimidated. She is obstinate and knows her own worth absolutely.

Armor Class: 11 (padded)

Hit Points: 38 (7d8 +7)

Speed: 25 ft (7, 5m / 5 sqr)

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

Skills: Insight +5, Persuasion +4, Investigation +3, History +3

Saving Throws: Wisdom +5, Charisma +4

Languages: Common, Dwarfish

Challenge: 1/4 (50XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Best at What I Do:** Imelda is one of the finest artisans in the land. Her work is impeccable. Any items brought to her for repair are restored to full working order, as though they were new. Imelda charges 5gp for each item she repairs or improves.

Actions

🐾 **Light Hammer.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, Light, one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 +1) bludgeoning damage.



Adora Torthé

MEDIUM UNDEAD, NEUTRAL

One of Septimus Mugluk's greatest rivals, Adora Torthé was a rogue, scoundrel, and sometime pirate, who was one of the first to recognise what Gullet Cove might become. And what Septimus Mugluk was in danger of becoming. Adora spent most of her life as a trader of one sort or another — collecting information, favours, and gold, before using those commodities to purchase what she always really wanted: power. She combined a ruthless ambition with a charming nature, so much so that most of her most devoted enemies could be persuaded to forgive her trespasses. Of course, it helped that, when Adora decided to change her profession, those she worked alongside typically made a lot of money. And who can hold a grudge when there's money involved? Adora's death was a result of a minor miscalculation — believing she had cornered Septimus, and would be able to blackmail him into granting her more influence within his town, Adora visited Grimmsmouth Hall. Unfortunately for Adora, she had underestimated her opponent, for once. But Adora wasn't able to simply pass on, from one life to another. She is trapped in Grimmsmouth Hall, unaware of her death, and slowly becoming more and more ethereal, less and less herself...

Armor Class: 13

Hit Points: 67 (9d8+27)

Speed: 0 ft (fly) 60 ft (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)

Damage Resistance: Acid, Cold, Fire, Lightning, Thunder; Bludgeoning, Piercing, and Slashing From Nonmagical Attacks That Aren't Silvered

Damage Immunities: Necrotic, Poison

Condition Immunities: Charmed, Exhaustion, Grappled, Paralyzed, Petrified, Poisoned, Prone, Restrained

Senses: Darkvision 60 ft, Passive Perception 12

Languages: Common

Challenge: 5 (1,800 XP)

Abilities

- ✎ Incorporeal Movement.** Adora can move through other creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain. Adora takes 5 (1d10) force damage if she ends her turn inside an object.
- ✎ Sunlight Sensitivity.** While in sunlight, Adora has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight.
- ✎ Charm Never Dies.** As an action, Adora can turn the full power of her charm on a creature. The creature must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or count as paralyzed until they succeed on a Wisdom saving throw at the start of each of their subsequent turns.

Actions

- ✎ Life Drain.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft, one creature. *Hit:* (4d8 + 3) necrotic damage. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or its hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the damage taken. This reduction lasts until the target finishes a long rest. The target dies if this effect reduces its hit point maximum to 0.



Queenie

SMALL DOG (CORGI), CHAOTIC GOOD

One of the most popular merchants in Gullet Cove, Queenie is also constantly in trouble. Largely because she doesn't like paying Guild tithes and isn't going to be told what to do. Fortunately, with her infectious sense of humour and ability to talk her way out of anything, she's rarely down for long. Which is just as well, because she's usually only ever about ten minutes away from getting involved in another crazy scheme. This particular love for chaos means that Queenie is always vacillating between extreme wealth, and being utterly broke. Whenever she's wealthy, Queenie is seen in every inn in town, buying drinks for anyone who asks. When broke, she's back on the markets, seeking out any opportunity to earn back her fortune. She's never beaten, never down for long, and, aside from a streak of recklessness wide enough to sink her brightly coloured caravan in, the best friend you could ask for. Anyone who knows Queenie counts themselves as lucky.

Queenie is also one of four entrepreneurial siblings, all from the same litter. While she's the only one who comes to Gullet Cove, her brothers and sisters ply their trade in different locations throughout the land.

Armor Class: 14 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points: 52 (8d8 + 16)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Saving Throws: Dexterity +4, Charisma +5

Skills: Perception +3, Performance +5, Persuasion +5

Senses: Passive Perception 13

Languages: Common, Canine

Challenge: 2 (450 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Stick a Pony in my Pocket.** Queenie is a master of selling, buying, negotiating, and haggling. She never lies (not exactly) but she comes real close. She has advantage on all checks related to Charisma, and Persuasion.

🐾 **I Know the Place!** Queenie knows where everyone and everything worth knowing in Gullet Cove is located. She is never lost in the city, and can always find a friendly face, a soft bed, or a warm meal if she needs one.

Spells

🐾 **Spellcasting.** Queenie is a 4th-level spellcaster, and her spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). She has the following bard spells prepared:

- 🐾 **Cantrips (at will):** friends, vicious mockery
- **1st level (4 slots):** charm person, comprehend languages, healing word, thunderwave
- **2nd level (3 slots):** enhance ability, invisibility, suggestion

Actions

🐾 **Bite Attack.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit. Range 5 ft. *Damage:* 1d6+2



Blackmane

MEDIUM FELINE (TOM), CHAOTIC NEUTRAL

One-eyed, ageing, but more than a match for most of the scoundrels in Gullet Cove, Blackmane is unusual in that he elected to remain a member of the Thieves Guild itself, resisting the call to join the Cradle. This, in and of itself, indicates the particular cast of his mercenary intelligence. Blackmane has made a comfortable little niche for himself, as the Thieves' Guild's go-between with the Cradle. His skill at negotiation has also led to him being sent to deal with any delicate situations involving the law. While Blackmane's exterior might be rough, he's the smoothest of talkers. The slightly battered appearance isn't a total misnomer, though. He's extremely handy in a fight. As many have learned to their cost.

Armor Class: 14 (toughened skin)

Hit Points: 55 (10d6+20)

Speed: 30 ft

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

Skills: Deception +6, Persuasion +6

Saving Throws: Dexterity +5, Charisma +6

Languages: Common, Feline, Canine, Dwarfish, Elvish

Challenge: 3 (700 XP)

Abilities

🐾 Silver-tongued: Blackmane is a masterful diplomat, using language with the same care and precision a surgeon wields a scalpel. Blackmane makes all Charisma related checks at advantage.

Actions

🐾 Multiattack: Blackmane makes two melee attacks or ranged attacks.

🐾 Bite: *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 +3) piercing damage.

🐾 Dagger: *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d4+3)



Rat Queen

MEDIUM MONSTROSITY, LAWFUL NEUTRAL

Many years ago, several powerful awakened rats decided to tend to their rat kin. Weaving their tails together, they joined their consciousness, becoming a single creature. The Rat Queen. They looked after those other rats inhabiting the Gullet Cove sewers, and, over time, drew others to their side. Wererats, seeking sanctuary, were granted it. And then, the Rat Queen made a mistake and took in the creature now known as the Rat King. Where that tyrannical creature thirsts for power, glory, dominion, the Rat Queen is peaceable. Indeed, where she was more concerned with aiding her subjects, and making their sewer home as safe and comfortable as possible, the Rat King sought dominion and power. This was a far more attractive prospect for many of the ambitious and angry wererats, who the Rat King was able to win over to his side. In a vicious coup, the Rat Queen was quickly overthrown and now lies imprisoned, waiting to be rescued or killed.

Armor Class: 14 (natural armor)

Hit Points: 76 (9d8 + 36)

Speed: 30 ft

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

Skills: Stealth +5

Damage Resistances: Bludgeoning, Piercing, Slashing

Damage Immunities: Necrotic, Poison

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

Senses: Darkvision 60 ft, Passive Perception 12

Languages: Common, Canine, Feline, Thieves' Cant

Challenge: 5 (1,800 XP)

Abilities

🐾 **Keen Smell.** The rat king has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

🐾 **Peaceful aura.** The rat queen is a peaceful creature. It does not seek to hurt or maim. It only wishes to look after its many children. Any creature attempting to attack the Rat Queen must pass a DC 16 Charisma check, or make all attacks against the Rat Queen at disadvantage.

Actions

🐾 **Multiattack.** The rat queen makes four bite attacks.

🐾 **Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft, one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 4) piercing damage. A bitten creature must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned. The creature takes 1d6 poison damage for each turn it is poisoned. A creature may make an additional DC 14 Constitution saving throw at the start of each of its turns, to see if it resists the poison.

🐾 **Summon Swarm (1/Day).** The rat queen summons three swarms of rats. The swarms appear immediately within 60 ft of the rat queen. They can appear in spaces occupied by other creatures. The swarms act as allies of the rat queen. They remain for 1 hour or until the rat king dies.

Reaction

🐾 **Regeneration.** When the rat queen does damage to a creature, it absorbs some measure of the creature's vitality. The rat queen may restore lost hit points to itself each round, equivalent to half the total damage it has inflicted on creatures.







NPCs and Bestiary: New Heroes



Luna DOG REGULAR, LABRADOR

Drawing her power from both the moon and the sea, Luna's abilities make her one of the most sought after awakened animals in Gullet Cove. Name a sailor who doesn't want a druid capable of quelling the tides on their payroll? Especially when that druid is an adorable black Labrador! Luna is more than simply cute. She's extremely powerful and more than capable of bringing the sea under her sway, for a little while at least. She's a loyal and devoted friend not simply to her closest companions but to all animals and the whole of nature. She seeks any chance to help the creatures of the wild, and woe betide anyone who seeks to harm or corrupt the creatures Luna has sworn to help.

Class: Druid

Alignment: Chaotic good

Background: Awakened dog

Hit Points: 26

Hit Dice: 3d8

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Passive Perception: 13

Languages: Common, Canine

Initiative: +2

AC: 13

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)

Features:

Keen Senses
Ritual Casting
Wild Shape
Natural Recovery
Wild Cat
Stubborn



Spells

Spell Attack Modifier: +5

Spell Save DC: 13

Cantrips Known: Guidance, Resistance

Prepared Spells:

- 1st Level (4 slots):** Detect Magic, Cure Wounds, Faerie Fire, Animal Friendship
- 2nd Level (2 slots):** Mirror Image*, Misty Step*, Barkskin, Lesser Restoration

Actions

Bite Attack. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +1 to hit. Range 5ft.
Damage: 1d6+1

Carried Gear

Leather Armor
Belt Pouch
Rope (silk, 50 feet)
5 Rations
23 gp in various pockets

Saving Throws

-1 Strength Saves
+2 Dexterity Saves
+2 Constitution Saves
+2 Intelligence Saves*
+5 Wisdom Saves*
+1 Charisma Saves

Passive Perception. 15

Skills

+2 Acrobatics (DEX)
+3 Animal Handling (WIS)
+0 Arcana (INT)
-1 Athletics (STR)
+1 Deception (CHA)
+0 History (INT)
+3 Insight (WIS)
+1 Intimidation (CHA)

+0 Investigation (INT)
+3 Medicine (WIS)
+2 Nature (INT)*
+5 Perception (WIS)*
+1 Performance (CHA)
+1 Persuasion (CHA)
+0 Religion (INT)
+2 Sleight of Hand (DEX)

+2 Stealth (DEX)
+5 Survival (WIS)*

*** Prof. bonus added**

Roger DOG REGULAR, BULL-TERRIER

Small, compact and muscular, Roger is a skilled fighter. Awakened late in life, Roger occasionally forgets that he can speak, answering those who challenge him with a growl that's more than eloquent enough. Despite this habit, Roger never forgets his skill with blade or teeth, capable of carving through even the toughest and most resourceful of foes with ease. Roger attributes the lateness of his awakening to the Good Mother having a purpose for him — a quest that only he can fulfil. He isn't sure what it is yet, but knows that when he does, he'll fling himself into it with the courage that marks him out as unique.

Class: Fighter
Alignment: Chaotic good
Background: Awakened dog
Hit Points: 32
Hit Dice: 3d10
Size: Medium
Speed: 30 ft
Proficiency Bonus: +2
Passive Perception: 11
Languages: Common, Canine
Initiative: +3
AC: 14

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	9 (-1)

Features:

Keen Senses
 Assistance Dog
 Fangs of the Wolf
 Fighting Style (Sword)
 Second Wind
 Improved Critical



Actions

- 🐾 **Bite Attack.** +4 to hit. Range 5ft. *Damage:* 1d6+4.
- 🐾 **Scimitar.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. *Hit:* 1d6+3 slashing damage

Carried Gear

Leather Armor
 Scimitar
 Longbow and 20 arrows
 Collar pouch containing 15gp
 Set of common clothes
 Map of Gullet Cove

Saving Throws

+4 Strength*
 +3 Dexterity
 +4 Constitution*
 +0 Intelligence
 +1 Wisdom
 -1 Charisma

Skills

+5 Acrobatics (DEX)*
 +1 Animal Handling (WIS)
 +0 Arcana (INT)
 +2 Athletics (STR)
 -1 Deception (CHA)
 +0 History (INT)
 +1 Insight (WIS)
 -1 Intimidation (CHA)

+0 Investigation (INT)
 +1 Medicine (WIS)
 +0 Nature (INT)
 +3 Perception (WIS)*
 -1 Performance (CHA)
 -1 Persuasion (CHA)
 +0 Religion (INT)
 +5 Sleight of Hand (DEX)*

+5 Stealth (DEX)*
 +1 Survival (WIS)

* **Prof. bonus added**

Reximus DOG BIG, DOBERMAN

Reximus found his calling as a young puppy, when he defended a human child against a pack of hungry street dogs. Despite being outnumbered, Reximus stood his ground and drove the street dogs back. Ever since, he has dedicated himself to protecting the innocent; no matter how great the peril he faces, Reximus does so unafraid. He's just that kind of dog. Kind, thoughtful, and, when necessary, utterly ferocious. Unlike most canine paladins, Reximus isn't a servant of the Good Mother. Instead, he prefers not to serve any one god, preferring to devote himself to the ideal of universal good, universal harmony. Reximus endeavours to realise such an idyll, whether through good deeds or at the edge of a blade. The innocent fear nothing from Reximus. The same certainly can't be said for the guilty.

Class: Paladin (Oath of Devotion)

Alignment: Lawful good

Background: Awakened dog

Hit Points: 32

Hit Dice: 3d10

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Passive Perception: 11

Languages: Common, Canine

Initiative: -1

AC: 18

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	9 (-1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)

Features:

Divine Sense

Lay On Hands

Divine Smite

Channel Divinity

Divine Health

Round 'em Up!

Bark of Protection



Spells

🐾 **Spell Attack Modifier:** +4

🐾 **Spell Save DC:** 12

🐾 **Cantrips Known:** No Paladin cantrips

🐾 **Prepared Spells:**

- **1st Level (3 slots):** Cure Wounds, Wrathful Smite, Bless, Divine Favor

Actions

🐾 **Greatsword.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft.
Hit: 2d6+3 slashing damage

🐾 **Bite Attack.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit. Range 5 ft.
Damage: 1d6+5.

Carried Gear

Plate Armor

Greatsword

Belt pouch

Set of common clothes

Iron pot

Shovel

Saving Throws

+3 Strength Saves

-1 Dexterity Saves

+2 Constitution Saves

+0 Intelligence Saves

+3 Wisdom Saves*

+4 Charisma Saves*

Skills

-1 Acrobatics (DEX)

+3 Animal Handling (WIS)*

+0 Arcana (INT)

+5 Athletics (STR)*

+2 Deception (CHA)

+0 History (INT)

+3 Insight (WIS)*

+2 Intimidation (CHA)

+0 Investigation (INT)

+1 Medicine (WIS)

+0 Nature (INT)

+1 Perception (WIS)

+2 Performance (CHA)

+4 Persuasion (CHA)*

+0 Religion (INT)

-1 Sleight of Hand (DEX)

-1 Stealth (DEX) (Disadv.)

+3 Survival (WIS)*

* **Prof. bonus added**

Bartolomy

DOG

REGULAR, BASSET HOUND

Basset hounds are known for their lugubrious nature and this is certainly true of Bartolomy. With his long ears occasionally catching in his mouth as he recites his poems, Bartolomy works the crowd expertly — drawing laughter one moment, tears the next. Unfortunately for the usually timid poet, his talents make him a favourite for the ambitious adventurer who reckons an epic ballad recounting his exploits might be just the thing to boost his fame. This has resulted in Bartolomy becoming engaged in a few terrifying expeditions into dark dungeons, caverns of ice, and deserts infested with manticores. Bartolomy's poems as a result of these escapades are magnificent, but he's not sure how much more running from danger his legs have got in them. Well...maybe one more adventure. Or two. And then, back to the comforts of the library.

Class: Bard (Bard of Amity)
Alignment: Chaotic good
Background: Awakened dog
Hit Points: 26
Hit Dice: 3d8
Size: Medium
Speed: 30 ft
Proficiency Bonus: +2
Passive Perception: 11
Languages: Common, Canine
Initiative: +3
AC: 13

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)	15 (+2)

Features:

Ritual Casting	Jack of All Trades
Incessant Barking	Song of Rest
With a Little Help for Your Friends	Combat Inspiration
Bardic Inspiration (d6)	Expertise (prof. noted with **)
(3 uses per day)	Spellcasting



Spells

- 🐾 **Spell Attack Modifier:** +4
- 🐾 **Spell Save DC:** 12
- 🐾 **Cantrips Known:** Blade Ward, Vicious Mockery
- 🐾 **Prepared Spells:**
 - **1st Level (4 slots):** Charm Person, Detect Magic, Faerie Fire
 - **2nd Level (2 slots):** Hold Person, Enhance Ability, Phantasmal Force

Actions

- 🐾 **Bite Attack.** +0 to hit. Range 5ft. Damage: 1d6.

Carried Gear

Reams of Paper
 A book of own poems (self-published)
 A bottle of ink
 An ink pen
 A lamp
 2 flasks of oil
 5 sheets of paper
 A vial of perfume
 15 gp in your beret

Saving Throws

+5 Dexterity Saves*
 +2 Constitution Saves
 -1 Intelligence Saves
 +0 Wisdom Saves
 +4 Charisma Saves*

Skills

+4 Acrobatics (DEX)+1/2
 +1 Animal Handling (WIS)+1/2
 +1 Arcana (INT)+1/2
 +1 Athletics (STR)+1/2
 +4 Deception (CHA)*
 +2 History (INT)*
 +2 Insight (WIS)*

+3 Intimidation (CHA)+1/2
 +2 Investigation (INT)*
 +2 Medicine (WIS)*
 +1 Nature (INT)+1/2
 +1 Perception (WIS)+1/2
 +6 Performance (CHA)**
 +3 Persuasion (CHA)+1/2
 +1 Religion (INT)+1/2

+4 Sleight of Hand (DEX)*
 +6 Stealth (DEX)**
 +1 Survival (WIS)+1/2

* **Prof. bonus added**
 ** **Expertise added**
 +1/2 **Jack of All Trades added**

Zoe DOG BIG, SHEEPDOG

One of the Good Mother's truest and most committed servants, Zoe wanders the world searching for adventure, aiming to help her appreciate the mysteries of the gifts she possesses. Kind, decent, and gentle with those who seek her aid, she is occasionally underestimated by those who take her goodness for weakness. It most decidedly isn't. Indeed, when riled Zoe becomes a ferocious warrior, weaving magic to strengthen her allies and flinging herself into battle with as much joy as she comforts a puppy having a bad dream. Zoe is much older than she appears, and those who study such things opine that she may be one of the first awakened animals ever. Which might explain why she's so good at cards. She's had a long time to practice.

Class: Cleric
Alignment: Lawful good
Background: Awakened dog
Hit Points: 26
Hit Dice: 3d8
Size: Medium
Speed: 30 ft
Proficiency Bonus: +2
Passive Perception: 13
Languages: Common, Canine
Initiative: +0
AC: 14

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	11 (+0)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)

Features:

Keen Senses	Undead
Ritual Casting	Channel Divinity:
Divine Domain:	Invoke Companionship
Companion Domain	Bloodhound
Aspect of the Amicable	
Channel Divinity: Turn	



Spells

- 🐾 **Spell Attack Modifier:** +5
- 🐾 **Spell Save DC:** 13
- 🐾 **Cantrips Known:** Light, Sacred Flame, Spare the Dying
- 🐾 **Prepared Spells:**
 - **1st Level (4 slots):** Guiding Bolt*, Healing Word*, Cure Wounds, Command, Bless
 - **2nd Level (2 slots):** Flaming Sphere, Scorching Ray, Lesser Restoration, Hold Person, Spiritual Weapon

*Domain Spells

Actions

- 🐾 **Bite Attack.** +5 to hit. Range 5ft. *Damage:* 1d6+5.

Carried Gear

Scale mail (AC 14)
Mace
Gaming set (playing card set)
Belt pouch
Lantern

Saving Throws

- +3 Strength Saves
- +0 Dexterity Saves
- +2 Constitution Saves
- 1 Intelligence Saves
- +5 Wisdom Saves*
- +3 Charisma Saves*

Skills

- +0 Acrobatics (DEX)
- +3 Animal Handling (WIS)
- 1 Arcana (INT)
- +5 Athletics (STR)*
- +1 Deception (CHA)
- 1 History (INT)
- +3 Insight (WIS)
- +3 Intimidation (CHA)*

- 1 Investigation (INT)
- +5 Medicine (WIS)*
- 1 Nature (INT)
- +3 Perception (WIS)
- +1 Performance (CHA)
- +1 Persuasion (CHA)
- +1 Religion (INT)*
- +0 Sleight of Hand (DEX)
- +0 Stealth (DEX) (Disadv.)
- +3 Survival (WIS)

* Prof. bonus added

Eduardo

CAT

REGULAR, TABBY

Never look too hard at Eduardo's face. That's the first lesson when dealing with this particular tabby. Once you've looked at his face, well, let's just say you won't be getting your purse back. Eduardo is an extremely talented thief who combines extremely dextrous paws with a face so cute that it does most of his pickpocketing for him. The wide eyes, the slight purr, even the scar across his face makes him that little bit more adorable. Works a treat on even the hardest and most brutal of back-alley toughs. Of course, occasionally, this approach does tend to get him into trouble. But that's what being capable of disappearing up a wall and over a roof top in a few seconds is for...

Class: Rogue
Alignment: Chaotic neutral
Background: Awakened cat
Hit Points: 25
Hit Dice: 3d8
Size: Medium
Speed: 30 ft
Proficiency Bonus: +2
Passive Perception: 10
Darkvision: 30 ft
Languages: Common, Feline
Initiative: +3
AC: 14

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)

Features:

Expertise (prof. noted with **)	Fast Hands
Sneak Attack (2d6)	Second-Story Work
Thieves' Cant	Light on Your Paws
Cunning Action	Good Luck Cat



Actions

Bite Attack. +1 to hit. Range 5ft. Damage: 1d6-1.

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

Carried Gear

Leather armor
 Rapier
 Collar pouch with 15gp
 Set of common clothes
 Favour of an admirer (*a letter complimenting you on your daring escapades.*)
 A vial of perfume
 15 gp in your beret

Saving Throws

-1 Strength Saves
 +5 Dexterity Saves*
 +1 Constitution Saves
 +4 Intelligence Saves*
 +0 Wisdom Saves
 +1 Charisma Saves

Skills

+3 Acrobatics (DEX)
 +0 Animal Handling (WIS)
 +2 Arcana (INT)
 +1 Athletics (STR)*
 +1 Deception (CHA)
 +2 History (INT)
 +2 Insight (WIS)*
 +1 Intimidation (CHA)

+2 Investigation (INT)
 +0 Medicine (WIS)
 +2 Nature (INT)
 +0 Perception (WIS)
 +3 Performance (CHA)*
 +1 Persuasion (CHA)
 +2 Religion (INT)
 +7 Sleight of Hand (DEX)**

+7 Stealth (DEX) **
 +2 Survival (WIS) *

* **Prof. bonus added**
 ** **Expertise added**

Coral

CAT

REGULAR, SAVANNAH

Exceptionally intelligent, even by the standards of awakened animals...even by the standards of wizards...Coral is an unusual cat. She eschews any form of meat, eating only small biscuits she makes herself. Small animals are always safe near Coral, and, indeed, her familiars always take the form of mice, living in specially designed pockets on her harness. Coral thinks of her familiars as family, looking after each one and, when she has the time, designing them little outfits which best reflect their personality. Most other awakened cats think of her as borderline deranged for such behaviour but never mention it. Don't annoy anyone who can cast spells; it's a good lesson for life.

Class: Wizard – Illusion tradition
Alignment: Chaotic neutral
Background: Awakened cat
Hit Points: 20
Hit Dice: 3d6
Size: Medium
Speed: 30 ft
Proficiency Bonus: +2
Passive Perception: 11
Darkvision: 30 ft
Languages: Common, Feline
Initiative: +2
AC: 12

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	11 (+0)

Features:

Hit the Lights!
 Ritual Casting
 Arcane Recovery (regain spell slots totalling 2 levels after short rest once per day)
 Life in the Shadows

Illusion Savant (copy such spells in half the time)
 Improved Minor Illusion (Minor Illusion cantrip does image and sound simultaneously)



Spells

- 🐾 **Spell Attack Modifier:** +5
- 🐾 **Spell Save DC:** 13
- 🐾 **Cantrips Known:** Dancing Lights, Fire Bolt, Minor Illusion, Prestidigitation
- 🐾 **Prepared Spells:**
 - **1st Level (4 slots):** Mage Armor, Find Familiar, Disguise Self, Detect Magic, Fog Cloud
 - **2nd Level (2 slots):** Phantasmal Force

Actions

- 🐾 **Bite Attack.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +1 to hit. Range 5ft. *Damage:* 1d6-1.

Carried Gear

Belt pouch
 Set of fine clothes
 Specially designed harness
 Supply of mouse food
 Cat biscuits

Saving Throws

+1 Strength Saves
 +2 Dexterity Saves
 +2 Constitution Saves
 +5 Intelligence Saves*
 +3 Wisdom Saves*
 +0 Charisma Saves

Skills

+2 Acrobatics (DEX)
 +1 Animal Handling (WIS)
 +5 Arcana (INT)*
 -1 Athletics (STR)
 +2 Deception (CHA)*
 +3 History (INT)
 +1 Insight (WIS)
 +0 Intimidation (CHA)

+5 Investigation (INT)*
 +1 Medicine (WIS)
 +3 Nature (INT)
 +1 Perception (WIS)
 +0 Performance (CHA)
 +0 Persuasion (CHA)
 +3 Religion (INT)
 +4 Sleight of Hand (DEX)*
 +2 Stealth (DEX)
 +1 Survival (WIS)

* Prof. bonus added

Denira

CAT

LAPCAT, PERSIAN

Denira looks like you might expect a warlock to look, but she's far from ruthless and power hungry. She made a deal with a creature of the outer world, yes. But she did it to save her parents. Having signed her name in the black book of the great old one, he-who-dwells-in-the-deep, Denira expected her life to change. And it did. But no way near as much as she had thought it would. Yes, she gained magical powers but, realistically, that's about it. So, she sought adventure on her own. And that's led her into some very unusual places; but it's also made her some very good friends, some equally steadfast enemies, and taught her some valuable lessons about controlling the powers she possesses. And about unleashing them on those who push her that little bit too far...but sometimes, sometimes, she hears the sea whispering to her, calling her. Sometimes, she has dreams of drowned cities. Of formless shapes. Sometimes, she regrets the deal she made. Until she hears her parents' voices and remembers why it was all worthwhile.

Class: Warlock - Great Old One Pact

Alignment: Lawful good

Background: Awakened cat

Hit Points: 26

Hit Dice: 3d8

Size: Medium

Speed: 30 ft

Proficiency Bonus: +2

Passive Perception: 11

Darkvision: 30 ft

Languages: Common, Feline

Initiative: +3

AC: 14

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	15 (+3)	14 (+2)	9 (-1)	14 (+1)	16 (+3)

Features:

Otherworldly Patron (Arch-Fey)
Pact Magic

Awakened Mind
Eldritch Invocations



Pact Boon (Pact of the Tome / Book of Shadows, able to cast Druidcraft, Guidance, and Thorn Whip cantrips)

Life in the Shadows

Cat Nap

Eldritch Invocations

- Agonizing Blast (increased Eldritch Blast damage)
- Devil's Sight (see in all darkness to 120 feet)

Spells

🐾 **Spell Attack Modifier:** +5

🐾 **Spell Save DC:** 13

🐾 **Cantrips Known:** Blade Ward, Eldritch Blast

🐾 **Known Spells (2 spell slots):** Charm Person, Crown of Madness, Hex, Witch Bolt, Sleep

Actions

🐾 **Bite Attack.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +0 to hit. Range 5ft. Damage: 1d6

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

Carried Gear

Leather armor
2 daggers
Belt pouch
Set of common clothes
A sketch drawn of you as a kitten, cracking with dried blood

Saving Throws

-1 Strength Saves
+0 Strength Saves
+3 Dexterity Saves
+2 Constitution Saves
-1 Intelligence Saves
+3 Wisdom Saves*
+5 Charisma Saves*

Skills

+5 Acrobatics (DEX)*
+1 Animal Handling (WIS)
+1 Arcana (INT)*
+0 Athletics (STR)
+3 Deception (CHA)
-1 History (INT)
+1 Insight (WIS)
+3 Intimidation (CHA)

-1 Investigation (INT)
+1 Medicine (WIS)
+1 Nature (INT)*
+1 Perception (WIS)
+5 Performance (CHA)*
+3 Persuasion (CHA)
-1 Religion (INT)
+3 Sleight of Hand (DEX)

+3 Stealth (DEX)
+1 Survival (WIS)

* **Prof. bonus added**

McCoy CAT REGULAR, FOREST

The good thing about a fluffy coat is that it keeps you warm. And, when you're moving through forests covered in snow, or exploring the stony recesses of a mountain pass, you're going to get cold. As a ranger, McCoy gets cold a lot. It comes with the job. Fortunately, McCoy is extra fluffy. He's also a hunter of unparalleled skill, using his natural gifts to explore the wilderness as though born there. Which he wasn't. Or at least, so he hints. He speaks little of his past, except in dark hints. Dark hints in which he mentions grasping fingers stretching up through crumbling earth, of vampiric visages pressed against windows and the rasp of breath through the rib cages of the undead. McCoy is enigmatic, even for a cat, but he remains a stalwart companion, driven by something in his past he refuses to divulge.

Class: Ranger
Alignment: Neutral good
Background: Awakened cat
Hit Points: 31
Hit Dice: 3d10
Size: Medium
Speed: 30 ft
Proficiency Bonus: +2
Passive Perception: 13
Darkvision: 30 ft
Languages: Common, Feline
Initiative: +2
AC: 13

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	15 (+2)	13 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)

Features:

Favored Enemy: Undead	Hunter's Prey: Giant Killer
Natural Explorer: Ice Tundra	Urban Explorer
Primeval Awareness	Light Sleeper



Spells

Spell Attack Modifier: +3

Spell Save DC: 11

Cantrips Known: Poison Spray

Prepared Spells:

- 1st Level (3 slots):** Detect Magic, Fog Cloud, Animal Friendship

Actions

Bite Attack. +3 to hit. Range 5ft. *Damage:* 1d6+3.

Short Bow. +4 to hit. Range 80/320. *Damage:* 1d6+4.

Carried Gear

Leather armor
Short bow + 20 arrows
Signet ring,
Scroll of pedigree
39gp in a purse on belt

Saving Throws

+3 Strength Saves*
+4 Dexterity Saves*
+1 Constitution Saves
+1 Intelligence Saves
+1 Wisdom Saves
+0 Charisma Saves

Skills

+2 Acrobatics (DEX)
+3 Animal Handling (WIS)*
+1 Arcana (INT)
+1 Athletics (STR)
+0 Deception (CHA)
+3 History (INT)*
+1 Insight (WIS)
+0 Intimidation (CHA)

+1 Investigation (INT)
+1 Medicine (WIS)
+1 Nature (INT)
+3 Perception (WIS)*
+0 Performance (CHA)
+2 Persuasion (CHA)*
+0 Religion (INT)
+3 Sleight of Hand (DEX)

+4 Stealth (DEX)*
+3 Survival (WIS)*

* Prof. bonus added

Pearl

CAT

LAPCAT, TORTOISESHELL

To her friends, Pearl is called 'Tiny'. Pearl isn't actually that small but, as a kitten, she kept a host of tiny things to play with. She still has all her first toys, stowed away in a small bag. These aren't just nostalgic mementoes, they are also elements of her power. It was in staring through miniature glass baubles that Pearl (or Tiny) began to see the weave of magic in the world around her, and began to realise that, stretching out a paw, she could manipulate it. Her parents encouraged her in her first fumbling steps towards magical competence...Pearl is the kitten of two awakened cats. Or was...until they vanished. Pearl has dedicated herself to finding them, whatever it takes.

Class: Sorcerer – Wild Magic
Alignment: Chaotic good
Background: Awakened cat
Hit Points: 20
Hit Dice: 3d6
Size: Small
Speed: 30 ft
Proficiency Bonus: +2
Passive Perception: 11
Darkvision: 30 ft
Languages: Common, Feline
Initiative: +2
AC: 12

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	9 (-1)	13 (+1)	16 (+3)

Features:

Go Limp	Flexible Casting
I'm Sure I Live Here	Metamagic
Wild Magic Surge	Distant Spell
Tides Of Chaos	Extend Spell
Font Of Magic	



Spells

- 🐾 **Spell Attack Modifier:** +5
- 🐾 **Spell Save DC:** 13
- 🐾 **Cantrips Known:** Blade Ward, Command, Fire Bolt, Prestidigitation, True Strike
- 🐾 **Prepared Spells:**
 - **1st Level (4 slots):** Mage Armor, Burning Hands
 - **2nd Level (2 slots):** Invisibility, Crown of Madness

Actions

- 🐾 **Bite Attack.** +2 to hit. Range 5ft. *Damage:* 1d6+2.
- 🐾 **Dagger.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft 1d4+2 piercing damage.

Carried Gear

Belt pouch
 Rope (silk, 50 feet)
 2 rations
 Collection of small toys from childhood
 13 gp in various pockets

Saving Throws

+0 Strength Saves
 +2 Dexterity Saves
 +4 Constitution Saves*
 -1 Intelligence Saves
 +1 Wisdom Saves
 +5 Charisma Saves*

Skills

+2 Acrobatics (DEX)
 +1 Animal Handling (WIS)
 +1 Arcana (INT)*
 +0 Athletics (STR)
 +3 Deception (CHA)
 -1 History (INT)
 +1 Insight (WIS)
 +5 Intimidation (CHA)*

-1 Investigation (INT)
 +3 Medicine (WIS)*
 -1 Nature (INT)
 +1 Perception (WIS)
 +3 Performance (CHA)
 +3 Persuasion (CHA)
 +1 Religion (INT)*
 +2 Sleight of Hand (DEX)

+2 Stealth (DEX)
 +1 Survival (WIS)

* **Prof. bonus added**

Mutt & Bailey

Legendary adventurers. Heroes. Explorers. Mutt and Bailey are known as many things, and for their many expeditions. Not all of these expeditions ended well, of course. But that's the risk you take when you set out to forge a reputation by the blade, and by bravery. Reputations get tinged with scandal. And that's certainly the case with Mutt and Bailey. For every village that proclaims them heroes for chasing away the ghouls troubling the graveyard, there's another that calls them villains for burning down an inn. Of course it was an accident, but that's what happens when you're fighting a desperate battle against marauding goblins. That's their excuse anyway.

Mutt is a dedicated paladin, resilient, kindly, but unswerving in pursuit of justice for any who require it. Mutt is also an expert at pulling Bailey out of the enormous amounts of trouble the cat manages to get himself into. It's that kind of relationship. Bailey believes himself to be endlessly charming and funny. Mutt keeps that charm and wit from getting Bailey killed. Bailey is a rogue, naturally, and believes it's his duty to ensure that Mutt enjoys life a little more. This involves embroiling them both in quests, schemes, and all manner of adventures. Thus far, it's worked out. Just. Of course, the search for the treasure of the Golden Crab has been a little tougher than they expected. But it'll be worth it. Definitely.

Bailey CAT SMALL, TABBY

Class: Rogue
Alignment: Chaotic good
Background: Awakened cat
Hit Points: 25
Hit Dice: 3d8
Size: Small
Speed: 30 ft
Proficiency Bonus: +2
Passive Perception: 9
Darkvision: 30 ft
Languages: Common, Feline, Thieves' Cant
Initiative: 3
AC: 14

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

Features:

How Did He Get Up There?
Light on Your Paws
Expertise
Sneak Attack
Thieves' Cant
Cunning Action
Roguish Archetype: Thief
Fast Hands
Second-Story Work

Actions

Bite Attack. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit. Range 5ft.
Damage: 1d6
Darts. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit. Range 20/60.
Damage: 1d4

Carried Gear

Padded Clothing	Oil (flask)
Rakish Hat (+1 AC)	Caltrops
Potion of Healing	4 Rations
Tinderbox	Rope (silken)

Saving Throws

+0 Strength Saves
+5 Dexterity Saves*
+1 Constitution Saves
+1 Intelligence Saves*
-1 Wisdom Saves
+1 Charisma Saves

Skills

+7 Acrobatics (DEX)**
-1 Animal Handling (WIS)
-1 Arcana (INT)
+0 Athletics (STR)
+5 Deception (CHA)**
-1 History (INT)
-1 Insight (WIS)
+1 Intimidation (CHA)

-1 Investigation (INT)
-1 Medicine (WIS)
-1 Nature (INT)
-1 Perception (WIS)
+1 Performance (CHA)
+1 Persuasion (CHA)
-1 Religion (INT)
+5 Sleight of Hand (DEX)*
+5 Stealth (DEX)*
-1 Survival (WIS)

* **Prof. bonus added**
** **Expertise added**

Mutt

DOG

MEDIUM, BULLDOG

Class: Paladin
Alignment: Lawful good
Background: Awakened dog
Hit Points: 31
Hit Dice: 3d10
Size: Medium
Speed: 30 ft
Proficiency Bonus: +2
Passive Perception: 9
Languages: Common, Canine
Initiative: 0
AC: 18

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	11 (+0)	8 (-1)	15 (+3)

Features:

Guard Dog
Devoted to the Pack
Channel Divinity
Lay on Hands
Divine Smite
Divine Health

Sacred Oath - Oath of Devotion
Fighting Style – Defense

Spells

🐾 **Spell Attack Modifier:** +5

🐾 **Spell Save:** DC 13

🐾 **Cantrips Known:** No Paladin cantrips

🐾 Prepared Spells:

- **1st Level (3 slots):** Bless, Divine Favor, Purify Food & Drink
- Protection from Evil & Good (Oath Spell)
- Sanctuary (Oath Spell)

Actions

🐾 **Bite Attack.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit. Range 5ft.
Damage: 1d6+3

Carried Gear

Plate Armour
Holy Symbol
Holy Water
4 Rations
Oil (flask)
Saddle of Unity (Magic Item)

Saving Throws

+3 Strength Saves
+0 Dexterity Saves
+1 Constitution Saves
+0 Intelligence Saves
+1 Wisdom Saves*
+5 Charisma Saves*

Skills

+0 Acrobatics (DEX)
-1 Animal Handling (WIS)
+0 Arcana (INT)
+5 Athletics (STR) *
+3 Deception (CHA)
+0 History (INT)
+1 Insight (WIS) *
+5 Intimidation (CHA) *

+0 Investigation (INT)
-1 Medicine (WIS)
+0 Nature (INT)
+1 Perception (WIS) *
+3 Performance (CHA)
+3 Persuasion (CHA)
+0 Religion (INT)
-+0 Sleight of Hand (DEX)

+0 Stealth (DEX) (Disadv.)
-1 Survival (WIS)

* **Prof. bonus added**

Magic Items



Gullet Cove Magic Items

Gullet Cove is a port town; ships arrive there having visited every corner of the world. And they bring strange things with them. Interesting, shiny things. Dull, unnoticed things. But some of these things have power. Real power. Those who look for such things can find objects densely woven with magic, capable of remarkable feats and unleashing dangerous energy. Gullet Cove is a place of strange occurrences, of curious residents and peculiar places...some claim that the magical items found in the Cove are really the junk thrown out of the rooms of WISPER, the Wizards Guild. The wizards deny this, of course, but they would. Acknowledging that dangerous magical objects are regularly forgotten about and discarded, to end up on the shelves of some dodgy market vendor, is not in keeping with the image of wisdom and restraint WISPER likes to project. The following items might be found anywhere in the town — in Master Pettifer's Emporium, perhaps, or lying around waiting to be picked up in Old Timory's Ship Yard.

Satchel of Ownership

Wondrous Item, very rare

Sturdy and well-made, the satchel is largely unremarkable except for the fact that it is marked all over with a series of strange runes. These runes defy any attempt to decipher them, even with magic. If any items are placed in the bag, they cannot be stolen. Any thief attempting to take something from the bag believes they have retrieved the item they seek, only for it to vanish 60 seconds later. Rumours claim that the bag sings incessantly, but this isn't true. When a thief attempts to filch something from within, the satchel erupts into loud song, but, once its owner has comforted it, it stops.



Compass of Light

Wondrous Item, very rare

A half-finished compass, encrusted in copper, that hums and rumbles whenever it is touched. At certain times, it emits bright rays of light which scorch unusual patterns on the wall. Originally intended by Old Timory to be a compass, now, whenever it is immersed in darkness, the object emits a powerful glow as though someone had cast a Light spell. This occurs every time the compass enters dark conditions and lasts for two hours. The compass takes two hours to recharge, after which it can be used again as normal.

The Thirsty Blade

Weapon, legendary

There are many stories of magic rune blades. Most of them are lies. In this case, for once, the stories are true. Whenever this blade makes a successful attack causing damage, searing red runes flicker into life. On the next successful attack, the rune blade inflicts an extra 1d6 slashing damage. The runes then die away, sinking back into the blade. This process repeats itself every time the blade makes a successful attack.



The Abyssal Eye

Wondrous Item, very rare

Plucked from the socket of some vast creature, this eye is approximately the size of an orc's head and still horribly gelatinous. If held against the eye of a creature (as though looking through a telescope), it reveals all traps in a room to the viewer, and the true nature of any creatures in the room (for example, any mimics or doppelgangers are revealed). Using this item requires a DC 12 Constitution test. A failure results in the user suffering 1d4 poison damage, as they suffer from nausea...pressing an ever-living eyeball against your face can do that to you.



Dagger of Venom

Weapon, rare, requires attunement

With the serpent's eye glowing from the hilt, this dagger is a relic from the elven city which stood where Gullet Cove now stands. Clearly of elven design, it drips a thick viscous poison, though from what source is far from clear. The dagger inflicts an additional +1d4 poison damage whenever it makes a successful attack. In addition, any creature that carries the dagger, and is attuned to it, becomes resistant to all poison damage.



Perpetual Ember

Wondrous Item, very rare, requires attunement

An ember, forever glowing, seethes in the heart of this small boulder. The item is treasured by the Rat King, who believes it to be a source of unimaginable power. He might be right. No one is sure where it comes from or what created it, though the Rat King claims it was gifted to him by a god. While touching the Perpetual Ember, you are immune to all fire damage. You may also use the Firebolt cantrip, for free. This ability only lasts so long as you a part of your flesh or fur is in contact with the Perpetual Ember.



Gem of Clarity

Wondrous Item, very rare, requires attunement

Iridescent, beautiful, mesmerising. This gem sits on a shelf in Master Pettifer's, drawing every visitor to it and putting every prospective buyer off with its inordinate price. Master Pettifer knows exactly how much the gem is worth and won't accept anything less. Should someone one day purchase the gem (or, gods forefend, steal it), they'll find a powerful magical artefact in their hands. While holding the gem, as an action, you may use a charge to become immune to all mind control spells and effects. The gem has 6 charges.



Horn of the Command

Wand, very rare

Plucked from the skull of an ancient horror, this long and extremely sharp horn is made from a substance that resembles a mixture of ivory and obsidian. It is one of Morganna Veries' most treasured possessions, and one she uses only when she absolutely has to. Her secret weapon, to be used in the most desperate circumstances. The horn has been carefully and exquisitely carved with a series of eldritch symbols. In darkness, the horn gives off a faint purple corona. The horn has 7 charges, for the following properties: Calm Emotions, Charm Person, and Dominate Person. It regains 1d3+1 charges per day, at midnight. If you expend the horn's last charge, roll a D20. On a 1, it disintegrates utterly. Spending 1 charge enables the wielder to cast Dominate Beast, or spending 2 charges enables the wielder to cast Dominate Person.



Bow of the Lost City

Weapon, very rare

Beautifully crafted and incredibly ancient, this is another relic of the elven city that dominated this area of the coast before it was mysteriously destroyed. Found buried deep in the crumbling wall which surrounds Gullet Cove, the bow fits perfectly into the hand (or paw) of whoever uses it. It grants advantage on all ranged attacks and does +1 damage as part of all successful attacks.



Warhammer of the Dwarves

Weapon, very rare, requires attunement

Smuggled in by a group of dwarves for unknown reasons, this hammer lies mouldering in the vaults of the Watch. While Filamena, the Watch captain, has some inkling of its true power, she's far too busy to spend any time thinking about it. The dwarves who brought the hammer into Gullet Cove disappeared soon afterwards, and no one has touched the hammer since its mysterious arrival. Should you retrieve it from the Watch vault, you gain access to a warhammer which possesses a +2 bonus to all attack rolls and all damage rolls. You are also immune to the fear condition while holding the warhammer.



Timory's Wand of Water Weaving

Wand, very rare

A wand, fashioned from the figurehead of a long since scupperped vessel, Timory intended this to become part of a device for tracking the position of the stars. What it is now, he isn't sure, except that when waved near water, peculiar things seem to happen... The wand has 6 charges. Once all 6 charges have been used, the wand is useless. Spending 1 charge enables the wielder to cast Water Breathing or Water Walk.



Chest of the Pirate King

Wondrous Item, very rare

Precisely who the Pirate King was has never been entirely clear. There are various stories attached to a nebulous figure called 'the Pirate King' but nothing more solid about the person, or creature, behind the moniker. Whether the chest belonged to the Pirate King, no one truly knows. What they do know is that it possesses true magical properties. Opening the chest always requires a DC 14 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) test to unpick the lock, irrespective of how many times it has been opened before. Once opened, the chest contains 6 field rations, 6 flasks of cold potable water, 6 torches, 6 lengths of rope, and 6 changes of clothes. Upon opening the chest, a player character should roll a d8. On an 8, the chest also contains 6 pouches with 35gp inside. These resources refresh once per day.



The Helm of the Pirate Prince

Armour, legendary, requires attunement

This ornate helmet belonged to the self-styled Pirate Prince, Deagull Roger. Roger was a famed buccaneer, sailing the seas at the head of a fleet of loyal ships, pillaging the coast of a dozen different nations and striking terror into merchants everywhere. Particularly famed was Roger's helmet, which granted him great power. And excellent facial hair. Anyone who wears the Helm of the Pirate Prince, irrespective of gender, immediately sprouts a spectacularly thick black moustache. The helm also grants +2 AC and the wearer has resistance against all force damage.



Potion of the Sea Witch

Potion, rare

The Sea Witch once haunted Gullet Cove, slipping over the water from the Isle of Dogs, preying on the foolish and unwary and adding them to her collection of soul bottles. Eventually, the witch was driven out by the combined efforts of the Clerics of the Good Mother and the Temple of Urbaste. Most of the witch's belongings were destroyed and the unfortunate spirits she had imprisoned in glass bottles were released. But some of the witch's tinctures and potions were kept and then sold on. No one knows quite what they do, but the outcomes are always worth watching...

When drinking a Potion of the Sea Witch, a player character should roll on the following table. There is no way of determining what the potion is before drinking it, this can only be determined through consumption.



D6 Result	Potion Effect
1	It's poison! The potion scorches your throat. The unfortunate player character takes 2d6 poison damage and must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution save or be poisoned. A poisoned player character takes 1d6 additional damage every turn, until they make a successful Constitution save, or a Cure Disease spell is used on them.
2	Where did these grey hairs come from? The potion ages you. Roll d6+2. Your age advances by that many years, feeling every second of that time suddenly flood into your flesh and sinew.
3	Nothing! The potion is mainly water and a bit of sand. It doesn't do you any harm, but it doesn't exactly do any good, either.
4	I feel great...sort of? The potion is a strange brew, making you by turns an expert, before suddenly reducing you to incompetence. On alternating turns, you gain advantage on the first check you make, then disadvantage on the first check you make. This effect lasts for 1d6 rounds.
5	Where did he go? The potion functions as a potion of invisibility, but it lasts for only 20 minutes, rather than for a full hour.
6	Ahhhh that's better! The potion is a restorative, soothing tired limbs and healing injuries. You restore 1d8+4 hit points of damage.

Teeth of the Kraken

Wondrous Item, very rare

Gullet Cove was once, three centuries ago, a centre in the kraken hunting trade. Younger specimens of the vast beasts used to swim into the bay, making them prime targets for those willing to hunt a creature of such power. Even a juvenile kraken is capable of ripping apart a dozen ships with ease. Artefacts of this old and bloody trade are occasionally found on the market stalls of the Cove. This bag of Kraken teeth is proof of that. The bag contains 12 kraken teeth, usable as throwing darts.

Kraken Tooth. 1d8 piercing +1d4 lightning damage.
Finesse, thrown (range 20/60)

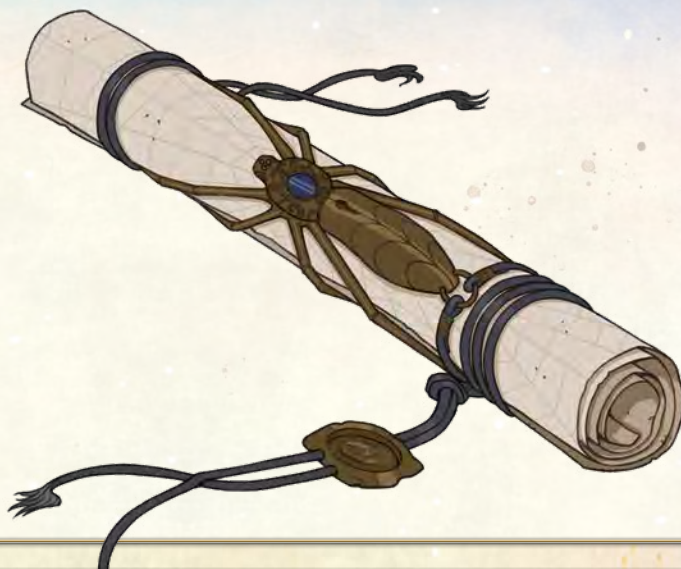
When a kraken tooth causes damage to a creature, it delivers a jolt of stored lightning energy, as 1d4 bonus damage.). Each tooth can be thrown once.



Scroll of Abeyance

Scroll, rare

The scroll of abeyance is a mysterious creation, a spell that surrounds the caster in a bubble, removing them from their own dimension for several minutes, preserving them in an outer world, where they can see everything but not interact. As an action, a creature can read the words on this scroll. The spell triggers instantly. For one hour, the player character is transported to an adjacent pocket dimension; they cannot attack or be attacked. They can communicate with another creature via magical means. After 15 minutes, they are returned to their previous location as though they had never been gone.



The Dark Iron Key

Wondrous Item, very rare

Created from a mysterious, and entirely alien, metal, the Dark Iron Key is one of the most prized possessions of the Thieves Guild. Indeed, it's so precious that it is only ever taken out on the most vital of missions, by the most senior members of the Guild. The Dark Iron Key can, once per day, open any lock, whether magical or mundane. After it has been used, the Dark Iron Key is dulled and much lighter than it had been previously. Its power is restored 24 hours after it's been used.

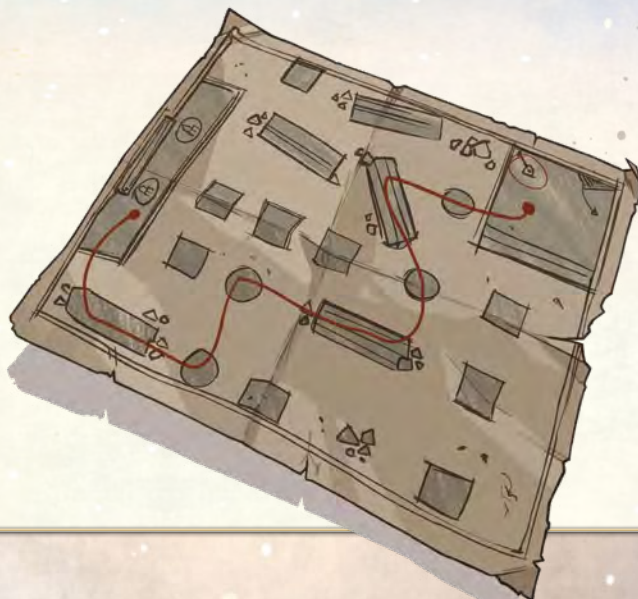


Map of Safe Passage

Wondrous Item, very rare

Another of the Thieves Guild's most carefully guarded, and treasured, items, the Map of Safe Passage is the work of an architect with magical ability and a paranoia about falling into the traps he built in his own creations. To this end, he created a map which, when left in a location absorbs the spirit of the place, allowing all of the traps to be revealed and avoided.

When the Map of Safe Passage is left in a room for 12 hours, it becomes a perfect map of that room, indicating all traps, secret doors or other concealed elements. Once the map has been used to map a location, it cannot be used to map a separate location for 24 hours, during which time the lines of the map gradually fade.

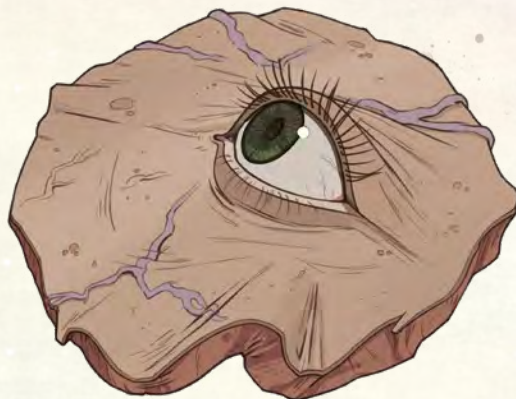


The New Flesh

Wondrous item, very rare, requires attunement

What strange shore this magical item hails from has long been forgotten. Quite possibly deliberately forgotten, given the sinister nature of the item. The New Flesh is a patch of skin, apparently human skin, in which an eyeball is embedded. The flesh bears prominent purple veins, erupting from the skin, that are as livid as the green of the eye's iris is gentle.

The flesh is faintly sticky and can be attached to a wall or another surface, where it clings until removed with an action. Anyone attuned the flesh can see anything the eye can see, as though they were looking at it themselves. The flesh cannot be destroyed but nor can it be enchanted or have spells cast on it.



Mutineer's Rope

Wondrous item, very rare

Those who betray the sacred hierarchy of the ship are condemned forever. So intense is this belief amongst sailors and pirates that those ropes used to bind those who seek to overthrow the captain are thought to be cursed. In this case, it is true. The Mutineer's Rope is a thick, hemp rope which can be used to bind a prisoner. Any prisoner bound in the rope can't utter a lie. Any attempt to dissemble while bound by the Mutineer's Rope results in 1d6 force damage. A prisoner can escape from the rope with a DC 15 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check.



The Saddle of Unity

Wondrous Item, legendary (requires attunement)

Made by a Dwarfish craftsman, to an exacting set of specifications provided by Mutt and Bailey themselves, the Saddle of Unity is a testament to magical ingenuity and friendship. It allows the animal friends to act in perfect tandem, each emphasising the other's strengths and enabling the pair to become even more dangerous (and cute) than they are alone!

While Mutt wears this item, and Bailey rides in the saddle, Mutt & Bailey may act as a single creature in combat. When rolling for Initiative, both Mutt and Bailey's players should roll, selecting the higher of the two as their combined initiative. On their turn, Mutt and Bailey may make their actions in any order they wish (e.g: Mutt may attack, then Bailey may move, then Mutt may cast a spell, then Bailey may attack). This includes Bonus Actions. Using this item takes up one of Mutt's spell slots for each day it is used.

If Bailey leaves the saddle, and moves more than 5ft from Mutt, these effects immediately cease.

This item can only be used by Awakened Animals.



Animal Magic Items

Just as awakened animals discovered the gods, so too they discovered magic and made it work for them. Some learned mighty spells and others used their skills to bind spells into objects, providing their fellows with toys and memories of their past lives, but with an extra little *kick*! Below are magical items that can be found and used by animal adventurers throughout the land.

Cat Magic Items

It is one of the great mysteries of this universe, indeed of every universe, why cats prefer the box that an item came in to the item itself. The greatest scholars from every plane have tried to unravel this mystery. None has ever arrived at a satisfying answer. For this reason, despite the number of magical items which awakened cats might use, relatively few of them are ever seen. For those cats capable of ignoring the attractions of the boxes containing them, however, the following might prove useful...

The Collar of Resilience

Necklace, uncommon

Created by an artificer, for a wizard who wanted to ensure that his pet cat could come on his adventures alongside him, this small red collar is adorned with a brass bell which rings whenever the wearer is performing a heroic deed - lending a strange, tinny peal. When worn, it grants the user +2 AC and advantage on all Strength and Constitution saves.

Post of Illimitable Scratchiness

Wondrous Item, uncommon

An extendable scratching post which can keep a cat's claws extra sharp and extra vicious, this peculiar magical device is extremely ancient, marked with pictograms of cats from some long-dead culture. Once per day, the owner of the Scratching Post may declare that they are 'sharpening their claws'. For the next hour, all attacks made by the owner of the Scratching Post do an extra +1d6 slashing damage.

Enchanted Yarn Ball

Wondrous Item, uncommon

What cat doesn't enjoy batting a ball of yarn around, allowing it to unravel before rolling it in the opposite direction and tangling themselves, joyously, in the mess of string? This ball of yarn, however, is somewhat different. It is an infinite ball of string, capable of being unfurled to any length. It can only be cut or severed by the owner.

Frying Pan of Chaos

Wondrous Item, very rare

This heavy, black iron frying pan is etched with strange images of mice, dancing just out of reach of a tall, sinuous cat wielding the pan as a weapon. The frying pan is a +2 Melee Weapon, dealing 1d10 bludgeoning damage. If it is ever used against a creature of Tiny size, however, all its attacks are made at disadvantage.

Box of Shelter

Wondrous Item, very rare

Cats love hiding in boxes. Fortunately, this box does more than offer a place to hide from the world (though it does also offer that). The box is usually only a few inches across and can be carried in a pocket or in a pouch on a belt with ease. When activated by the use of the correct purr, the box quickly swells in size, so that 10 medium sized creatures could fit inside the box. The box is warm and comfortable and there are a number of blankets and cushions within, left there by previous owners. Only creatures granted access by the owner of the box can enter it - all others are repulsed.

Hat of Effortless Style

Wondrous Item, legendary

This small, round, pork-pie hat is coloured a distinctive purple - it always makes the wearer look cool, irrespective of how dishevelled they might have seemed before they put it on! When worn by a cat, the wearer gains advantage on all Charisma tests and gains proficiency in Acrobatics. The Hat of Effortless Style can only ever be worn by a cat, however. Should any other species attempt to wear it, the hat no longer appears to be stylish but rather tattered and ugly. It also has no magical effects.

Eye Patch

Wondrous Item, legendary

This old, leathery eye patch is worn and beaten from years of use. There are numerous myths woven around it, including that it once belonged to the cat deity, Tom o'th'Alley himself, and still bears his touch. When worn, it grants advantage on all Perception checks and on all Intimidate checks.

Bells of Silence

Wondrous Item, very rare

This small series of golden bells attached to a length of green ribbon has the remarkable effect of improving the stealthiness and coordination of the cat who wears it. Any cat wearing the Bells of Silence gains +2 to their Dexterity modifier and gains advantage on all Dexterity (Stealth) tests.

Trickster's Yarn

Wondrous Item, uncommon

Crafted by a dwarven wizard with a sense of the mischievous, the Trickster's Yarn can be used to ensnare an unfortunate victim. The Trickster's Yarn can be thrown as a ranged attack, with a range of 20/40 ft and a single target. If it successfully strikes its target, the creature is immediately restrained for 1d4 turns. The yarn cannot be broken or ripped but, after the turns have passed, the yarn immediately rolls itself back into a ball - ready to be collected and used again.

Twin Fish of Perfect Harmony

Wondrous Item, very rare

This beautifully crafted piece of jewellery, made from a single piece of silver, is wreathed with deep and powerful magic. Any cat possessing it makes all saves against spells or magical items which affect the mind at advantage.

Wand of Fascination

Wand, very rare

A long, silver wand with a glass bauble mounted at its end, the wand emits a single, vermillion mote of light at a point anywhere within 30 ft of the caster. All creatures within 10ft of this vermillion mote must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom save or become confused until they succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom save.



Dog Magic Items

Those magic items made by dogs, for dogs, tend to be less tricky than those created by cats. This tells you a lot about the different species; dogs are less whimsical than cats but also more concerned about helping their fellows, however they can.

Barley's Ball of Fetching

Wondrous Item, uncommon

This seemingly normal rubber ball can throw itself up to 120 ft upon speaking the command bark from up to 15 ft away. The most basic of these balls has no other effect but to allow you to play fetch without needing someone to throw the ball. A successful Spell Attack allows the ball to be used as a ranged attack for 1d4 bludgeoning damage.

Snack Sack of Scoobus

Wondrous Item, rare

This bag starts each dawn with 6 small snack treats in it. Eating a treat is an action and confers the following benefit, chosen by the creature consuming the snack. Choose between granting advantage on the next action or restoring 1d4+2 hit points. Once these treats have been eaten, the bag is useless.

Bun-Bun of Soothing

Wondrous Item, uncommon

The Bun-Bun is a tattered looking stuffed rabbit toy which seems to be forever on the verge of falling to pieces. Chewing on or stroking the Bun-Bun as an Action casts the spell Calm Emotions with a DC of 12+ the bearer's Charisma modifier. The Bun-Bun has two charges and resets after a long rest.

Festooned Flea Collar

Necklace, rare

This tatty collar has 5 charges, which replenish weekly. Each charge allows the wearer to summon a Swarm of Insects under their direct bidding.

Tymon's Tugrope of Tenacity

Wondrous Item, uncommon

This 3 ft length of brightly coloured knotted rope exhibits the same qualities as an Immovable Rod, except that one end still moves freely and is therefore perfect for solo tug of war games. The rope is activated and deactivated by twisting the brightly coloured rubber bead set at its centre point.

Hegglewyddle's Handy Helper

Wondrous Item, uncommon

Hegglewyddle the Houndwitch, crafted this easily replicated magical item to aid herself in the daily tasks for which opposable thumbs and a free hand would be useful. This small, nondescript stone is roughly square and has a dog's paw engraved on one side. It is usually hung from a collar or cord as a pendant. The Helper exhibits the standard properties of Mage Hand with the following changes — it can remain active for as long as the user wishes, being activated and deactivated with a command as a Free Action, and its range is reduced to 5ft around the user.

Pavol's Bell of Conditioning

Wondrous Item, very rare

The brass bell of the ancient mage Pavol may be rung three times per long rest. Each time it is rung, it casts the Suggestion spell. The DC for the saving throw is 10+ the ringer's Charisma modifier. If the bell is used on the same target more than once between long rests, the DC increases by 5 each time.

Collar of Command

Wondrous Item, rare

The wearer of this brown leather collar may cast the Command spell once per long rest at 2nd level. The DC for resisting the Command is equal to 10+ the wearer's Charisma modifier.



Silken Mantle of Lustrous Pelt Cloak

Wondrous Item, uncommon

This finely made silken mantle hangs from a silver collar. If worn it grants the user the ability to be magically cleaned and groomed.

Groof's Gobblecharm Necklace

Necklace, very rare, requires attunement

Created by the insane canine wizard Groof Grimgullet, the Gobblecharm is worn at the neck and may be activated three times a day. Whilst activated, the attuned user has one minute during which anything that they consume is not ingested but instead moved into an extra-dimensional pocket in the same fashion as a Bag of Holding. At will, the wearer may regurgitate anything consumed in this manner. After regurgitating an item, the wearer must pass a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or suffer one level of Exhaustion for 5 minutes, and a distinctly queasy feeling.

Earthtouch Harness

Wondrous Item, rare, requires attunement

This magical harness allows an attuned user to call upon the earth itself for aid. The harness can be activated as a Bonus Action once per long rest. Whilst active, the wearer may not be involuntarily moved by any effects and has a +4AC bonus whilst stationary.

Food Bowl of Plenty

Wondrous item, very rare

Precisely what it sounds like, the food bowl of plenty is a normal, ceramic bowl, with the words 'For All Animals' baked into the rim of the dish. This bowl produces a meal's worth of edible, nourishing food whenever it is empty. If the bowl isn't emptied, the food remains fresh for as long as required. Mould and rot never touch it.

Hermal's Halitoid Hoop

Wondrous Item, uncommon

A braided woven leather throwing hoop that seems covered in semi-dried slobber, the hoop can be thrown up to 30ft as an action. Once it lands, all creatures in a 15ft square centred on the hoop are assailed by the odours of wet dog, poor dental care, and bad digestive processes. Affected creatures must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or suffer the Poisoned condition. The Hoop has 5 charges and recharges at a rate of one charge per day.

Silgoon's Sleepytime Blanket

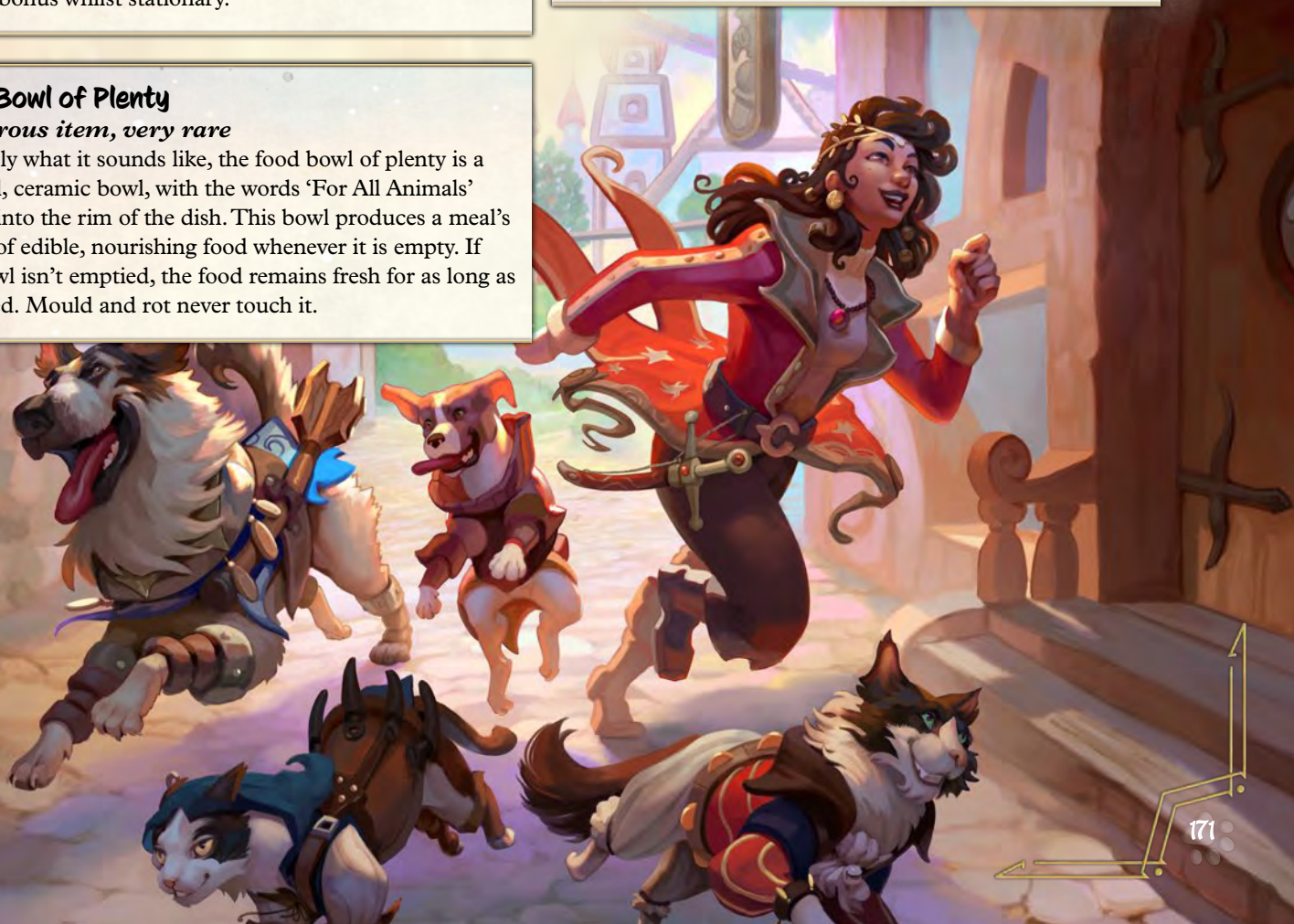
Wondrous Item, rare

This apparently well-loved yet still fluffy blanket, when laid out on the floor, grants the benefits of a long rest for up to five creatures after only one hour of gentle snoozing. Once used, the blanket is inactive for one week.

Everwater Drinking Bowl

Wondrous Item, rare

This blue ceramic drinking bowl, if placed on a flat surface and touched with the nose of a dog as an action, produces enough water to fill to the brim. If the water is drained from the bowl, it will refill again one hour later. The water is always refreshingly cool and clean.





Campaign Guide

The adventures in this book are written to be run together, telling an episodic story in which the player characters are drawn ever deeper into the sinister secrets of Gullet Cove. Unsurprisingly, when the player characters start probing the hidden dark side of the coastal town, some people (and animals) are less than happy about it!

So, what makes running a campaign in Gullet Cove so different? And how can you, as a GM, make such a campaign as much fun as possible? Good questions! Fortunately, you came to the right chapter for the answers. What follows are guidelines, aiming to give you an insight in to how you might go about approaching building your own campaign in Gullet Cove, or using the pre-written scenarios in the book. There are tips, tricks, some ideas you might use, some advice you might ignore, and some guidance we hope is helpful. Let's get started!

Getting the Tone Right

Chances are, if you've bought this book, and want to use it in your games at home or at conventions, you're looking for a particular feel to your roleplaying. *Animal Adventures* isn't grim and filled with relentless misery. Yes, there's peril. Yes, there're scares. But they are leavened by humour, by hope, and by extremely cute animals. When running an *Animal Adventures* game, when setting a scenario in Gullet Cove, keeping this tone in mind definitely helps. The best way to describe it is this: think like the writer of a Pixar film. Your heroes are going to experience a lot — fear, action, sudden reversals of fortune. But they come out the other side stronger for it. Basically, the heroes win. It might be a close run thing, but the heroes are ultimately triumphant.

Securing the right tone doesn't solely fall on you, as the GM. The players need to join in as well. They need to remember that they're playing inside a world of heroic animals. They are there to help people, to rescue those in distress, to assist when it's needed, and protect those in danger. Some roleplaying games allow you to play villains, but *Animal Adventures* isn't one of them. Keeping this in your mind, and your players' minds, ensures that everyone knows what to expect.

A Living Town

Adventures in Gullet Cove take place in a living, breathing town. It's a town where something is always happening, where someone is always in the middle of doing something — and these things can form part of your adventure. The adventures in this book give you the plot, the action scenes, and the events your players and their characters are going to experience. But they don't give you everything. They also don't account for what the player characters are going to do! So, remember that this book is your friend. Did your players just decide to investigate somewhere not mentioned in an adventure, or explore somewhere you'd not planned on them exploring? Just open the gazetteer and choose a place, or pick out an NPC you think might be interesting and drop them into the story, just as you fancy! These are your stories and this book is a resource allowing you to create your perfect adventure. And on that subject...

Mix It Up

Is there something in the gazetteer that you don't like? Or someone you think should behave differently? Or would it make your life as a GM easier if Filamena Gruth was a corrupt Watch captain, rather than thoroughly decent? Well then in your Gullet Cove she is. Or they do. Change whatever you like, however you like, in order to make it exactly what you want and need it to be. This is your Gullet Cove, not ours. You change it to suit you, in whatever way you need to. Same with the adventures; want to move one encounter forward? Go for it. Do whatever you need to, in order to achieve the effect you want.

Keeping It Fun

Animal Adventures is about having fun. Don't worry about rules, don't worry about strict adherence to the information in this book. As long as you and your players are sat round the table, happy and laughing, you're doing it right! The thing to bear in mind is keep things moving. If your players find themselves trapped, don't let them be trapped for too long. If they are struggling to work out what to do next, feel free to give them a bit of advice. This can be frowned upon in some roleplaying games but, as we've said elsewhere, Animal Adventures is a bit different. It's not about trying to trick your players and make them struggle. Yes, threat and difficulty is vital — you want the game to be exciting — but you don't want the game to grind to a halt because your player characters are trapped in a dungeon with no idea of how to get out! If you need to make a choice between making something easy or difficult, always go with the side you know is going to ensure your player characters have more fun, even if it might mean letting them off easy once in a while.



Building Adventures

What makes a good adventure? There are lots of different ideas about this. Theories galore, in fact! What kind of baddie to have, what they should be doing, and what the player characters should feel towards them. Then there are articles about what should go in each room, and how monsters should behave. It can be difficult to try and keep all of this information lined up in your head. So, we're going to make it very simple. When creating your own adventures and your own campaigns in Gullet Cove, try and bear the following in mind:

How do the players get involved?

- 🐾 This is a key factor to consider. If your game relies on the players spotting a series of elaborate clues before the true meat of the adventure begins, consider compressing it. Get the players to the meat of the adventure as quickly as possible. Take a look at the adventures in this book for inspiration. They have simple, direct openings; the player characters are thrust into a situation instantly.

How does the bad guy act towards the players?

- 🐾 There are several great bad guys in this book already and loads of inspiration outside of the book to use when building your own compelling villain. Instead of taking up your time trying to explain how to make a villain, we want you to think about how your villain reacts to your player characters. Are they vengeful? Are they confused, or curious? Do they want to know more about the player characters or are they going to do everything they can to get rid of them? Thinking like this lets you build in reactions to your player characters' actions. It makes the adventure feel dynamic, exciting, and ensures your players don't get too complacent or comfortable! It also keeps the players involved; it's hard to get distracted when you're constantly facing new threats.

How does the ending lead into a new adventure?

- 🐾 Some scenarios might end with a simple resolution. The player characters solved a problem and that's all there is to it. Order is restored. But think about your favourite television programs...they leave aspects of the plot unresolved, leading into the next episode. It maintains your interest. Think about how you can leave certain elements of your plot open. These can be very obvious links to the next episode in your campaign (the plot threads in the adventures in this book all lead very clearly from one to the next), or they can be more subtle. Mysteries the players don't fully understand. Or won't even realise apply to them until later. How you do it is up to you.



So what next?

The real next step is to get playing. Get your friends together and kick off your campaign! If you're a less experienced GM, we suggest using the adventures in this book. They provide some great adventure moments while being clear and easy to follow. Use them to show you how to put together a fun adventure in the midst of running one. Then, once you're feeling confident, you can begin to build your own adventures for the animals of Gullet Cove to get themselves involved in. There are more than enough mysteries in this little patch of coastline to keep you, and your players, busy for years! Enjoy!

And then what?

The adventures in this book form a kind of campaign, each one connecting into the next to tell a story. But these aren't the only stories to be found in Gullet Cove. On the next page are two tables to help you come up with your own ideas for adventures. Use these with the tips in this chapter and you'll soon be weaving your own thrilling tales of desperate escapades, and mischievous occurrences.

D6 Result	Adventure Name	Plot Threads
1	<i>A Night in the Silver Sovereign</i>	You've been invited to a very fancy evening in the Silver Sovereign, the classiest joint in town. But why? You don't know anyone at the Silver Sovereign. And why are all these people from out of town here? And what's this talk of a special menu? Do they...do they want to eat you?
2	<i>Grim Tides</i>	There are strange things being washed ashore. Creatures from the deepest parts of the ocean, human-fish-toad hybrids, clambering out of the depths. They want to make Gullet Cove their new home. They claim they only want to talk, to trade. But why have they brought quite so many weapons with them?
3	<i>The Lost Treasure of the Pirate Prince</i>	There have been many famed pirates raiding the seas, but few as famous as the Pirate Prince: Deagull Roger. After years of pillaging every craft and port, Roger was finally captured. But not before he concealed his legendary hoard...somewhere in Gullet Cove. For the last fifty years, every jack tar has been searching for it and no one has come close. But now, fragments of a map have been found in the Seafarer's library...and suddenly, the hunt is back on! There's a lot of competition, but surely that's not going to stop you from getting your share?
4	<i>The Rat King Returns!</i>	You didn't think he was gone for good, did you? Surely you weren't that naïve.... No, the Rat King escapes prison and begins plotting revenge. This time, however, he hides himself away somewhere less obvious than the sewers. In Grimmsmouth Hall. Have he and the Necromastiff made a hideous pact? How long can you survive the Rat King's machinations? And this time, will you let him escape justice?
5	<i>Elvish Visitors</i>	Gullet Cove is built on the site of an incredibly ancient elvish city, long since lost. But, suddenly, a delegation from some far off land has arrived, claiming to be descendants of those ancients who once ruled here. And, whether deliberately or accidentally, they've awakened something. Something ancient and terrible and hungry. Someone needs to stop it, or the doom that befell the ancient elvish city might soon be getting a modern update...
6	<i>Upheaval and Strife</i>	The town is in the midst of chaos! The Council is on the verge of splitting down the middle, Morganna de Vries is threatening to have half the town arrested, and the other half exiled. And the Guilds are already mobilising for something approaching war. Can you bring the different parties to the table, to try and settle their differences? What caused this sudden ruckus? Is there a plot afoot, to bring Gullet Cove crashing down?

The above are a list of story ideas you can build into your own fully fledged adventures. Below you can find a table that just has random story elements. To use this second table, take your d8 and roll it three times. This'll give you a location, something your characters are hunting for, and an enemy for them to confront. Use these elements to build your next adventure!

D8 Result	Gullet Cove Location	What are your characters after?	Who are they fighting?
1	<i>Grimmsmouth Hall</i>	A lost treasure map	Morganna de Vries, herself
2	<i>The Master's Retreat</i>	An ingot of solid silver, stamped with a mysterious rune	A newcomer to Gullet Cove, who longs to be the new Mayor.
3	<i>The WISPER Guild House</i>	A portrait of Septimus Mugluk, said to contain a hidden secret	The ghost of Septimus Mugluk
4	<i>The Sisters</i>	A mysterious golden chalice	Gaius Vandel
5	<i>Fang Point</i>	Twelve letters written by Morganna de Vries to an assassin from out of town	An enigmatic visitor to the town, who wears a mask covering his face
6	<i>The Temple of Urbaste</i>	The wreckage of a ship called <i>The Porpoise</i>	Filamena Gruth, and the Watch
7	<i>The Market</i>	One of Master Pettifer's favourite pair of slippers	Mervynner the Frozen
8	<i>Imelda Forlyth's Smithy</i>	A sketch by Old Timory of, what he calls, the most deadly weapon ever dreamed up!	The Guild of Adventurers and Associated Heroes



Adventure 1: A Gullet Cove Hello

Your animal adventurers arrive in Gullet Cove and are immediately confronted by a mystery. Because of course they are. They didn't come to this town for a quiet time, did they? There's no chance of that. No sooner do they step off the boat, or walk through the gate, than they are dragged into a Thieves' Guild turf-war! And things are only going to get more frantic from here on out!

This adventure is designed for characters of level 1. At least one of the party should be an awakened animal adventurer, though the more the merrier!

This adventure requires the use of the Alleyway map and the Garden map.

Adventure Overview

New arrivals in Gullet Cove are always watched carefully, and that's definitely the case with the player characters. New adventurers and heroes are a valuable resource, and the Thieves' Guild make a quick move, asking the player characters to help them trace some burglars carrying out unsanctioned larceny!

Offering a Thieves Guild Mark and a fistful of gold to any player character prepared to help them, this represents a pretty lucrative hello to Gullet Cove. And all they have to do to earn it is investigate the scene of the latest burglary, locate the culprits, and bring them to justice. Or to the Thieves Guild, which is close enough.

The problem is that the burglars are unlikely to come quietly. They are in fact three very bored heroes from the Guild of Adventurers... tired of having nothing to occupy them, a spot of robbery seemed an ideal way to keep themselves entertained. This won't sit well with the Thieves Guild, who are notoriously protective of their profession...and are not the type to look generously on amateurs treading on their toes. But the Guild of Adventurers isn't exactly going to let three of its members be pushed around by a bunch of scoundrels...yes, their members might be scoundrels but that's not the point. It's the principle!

The player characters can try and defuse the possibility of a good old dust-up between two of the most powerful Guilds in the town. Or, alternatively, let them fight it out. Whatever they choose!

Arriving in Gullet Cove

Begin by reading or paraphrasing the following text:

The wind is strong and the scent of the sea which has filled your nostrils for weeks is slowly replaced by a much less pleasant odour. The town of Gullet Cove stands before you, and before you even set foot on the shore you can hear the shouts of street-traders, the roar of drunken sailors celebrating arriving home, and the haggling of merchants already negotiating the price of newly arrived produce. You're finally here. Time to start exploring!

The player characters begin the adventure onboard the ship, staring out over the side into the ocean. They can leave the ship, and explore the dock. Docks are exciting places, and Gullet Cove's is no exception; there is always something going on and something to experience. To determine precisely what they see, roll 1d6 on the following table:

D6 Result	Dock Events
1	Want to buy something, my fine friends? A street-hawker approaches, offering decidedly dodgy looking merchandise. He sells rope, holy amulets, and a variety of ink, paper, chalk, and other similar implements. Everything costs 2cp but breaks as soon as it's used. This includes the rope!
2	Street Fight! A gang of toughs are fighting each other. Fists fly and curses are hurled. You might try and stop it or simply stand and watch! Getting involved in the street fight requires a DC 14 Strength save. If you succeed, gain 50XP. If you fail, suffer 1d3 damage.
3	Try this! A dog passes you with a tray of delicacies on his back. He stops and offers you one, as a sample, and tells you that he works for the Gullet Coved Smoked Kraken Company. Trying a bit of Kraken restores 1d3 hit points.
4	What is THAT?! Something enormous and extremely strange is being lifted from a ship nearby. It could be a huge, terrifying monster trapped in ice, a vast statue of a multi-headed god, or the biggest vat of liquid chocolate you can imagine.
5	Isn't that...? A legendary pirate swaggers by, swinging their cutlass around lazily and hailing friends with cheerful bellows. Everyone acts as though this was the most normal thing in the world...even the officers of the Watch!
6	Someone is watching you! A slight, feline figure is observing you from above the streets. Watching. Waiting. But for what?

Let the player characters mingle amongst the busy, day-to-day life of the Cove. Perhaps they get into a heated negotiation with a trader, or perhaps they are accosted by one of the Watch who warn them to 'not make trouble'. Gullet Cove is constantly busy, constantly alive and letting the player characters spend a few minutes being immersed in all this vibrant oddness is a good move. And should help make what happens next even more surprising!

Stop! Thief!

One of the player characters is suddenly robbed! Have each player character make an initiative test. The player character with the highest total suddenly notices a small, indisputably feline paw at their collar or belt. They're being robbed! The player character being deprived of their treasured items can stop the thief with a successful DC 16 Dexterity save. If they fail to apprehend the thief, then they can give chase—he isn't trying to get far, really. This is all a plan to draw the player characters to a nearby back alley, where the thief's masters can relay their message.

🐾 If the player characters do catch the burglar before he can get away, he immediately gives up and returns the purloined item. The thief is a cat called Young Josef, a small unusual looking feline with milky white fur and red-tinged eyes. He's an albino cat and quite proud of the fact. He's also extremely friendly and more than willing to talk; he quickly relays the message that the player characters are expected around the corner, in the alleyway behind two warehouses, and he'll happily lead them there. He does everything he can to allay any fears they might have about being ambushed. 'They're excited to meet you!' he says. A DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check allows a player character to realise that Young Josef is being totally honest. He may be a thief but he's a good natured one. If the player characters use any spells to try and determine Young Josef's true motives, or his alignment, all indicate the same thing...he's a good little cat.

🐾 If the player characters let Young Josef scamper away into the crowds, they'll have to give chase. Fortunately, Young Josef isn't trying to get away. He just wants to be followed. If the player characters don't immediately chase him, he'll drop the stolen object he's carrying in his mouth, stick his tongue out and dare them to follow. If the player characters attempt to persuade passers-by to apprehend Young Josef, they receive a derisory laugh... chasing Young Josef is, however, easy. He keeps just ahead of the player characters, waits for them, watches to see they don't fall too far behind. Young Josef gradually leads them towards a deserted alleyway, tucked behind two large warehouses.





What if the players don't want to investigate?

Well, then they are likely to make themselves a powerful enemy. The Claw won't attack or do anything so uncouth. But they'll make life difficult. All prices the player characters pay for goods and services goes up by 50%, money and items mysteriously vanish just when they are needed most...basically, the Cradle goes out of its way to make life that little bit more awkward for the player characters. This can carry on indefinitely or, if the player characters change their mind, it ceases immediately. Guilds are extremely powerful in Gullet Cove and irritating one of them in their first moments in the town isn't a good idea.

The Alleyway

Once off the main street — whether directed by Young Josef or lured there — the sounds of Gullet Cove ebb away. The alleyway is narrow, hemmed in on both sides by the backs of large warehouse buildings. There is a staircase attached to the warehouse back wall, and, perched on each step is a masked and hooded cat. They watch the player characters intently. If Young Josef was caught by the player characters, they immediately request that he be let go. If, however, the party has been lured here by Young Josef, then the little cat runs to the masked cats on the stairs and looks extremely pleased with himself.

The cats on the steps greet the player characters warmly:

🐾 'Welcome! We had heard you were to visit our little town and sent Young Josef here to bring you to us. We hope he wasn't too much of a nuisance.'

Whatever the player characters respond to this, Young Josef looks slightly guilty but entirely unrepentant. One of the masked cats shakes their head at him, wryly. The largest of the masked cats leaps into the midst of the player characters, preens itself, and then announces:

🐾 'We brought you here to ask your assistance in a small task! You're new in town and so you'll be able to investigate without anyone tying you to us. Yes, of course we could investigate without being discovered...but we have more profitable things to be doing, I'm afraid. You, however, could earn yourself a valuable ally...and some gold too, I suppose. Which wouldn't be a bad start in Gullet Cove, would it?'

The masked cat saunters between the player characters, inspecting them with the air of a sergeant-major surveying new recruits. He makes a few comments about the relative smartness (or lack of it) that the player characters display, criticising slovenly costumes and anything which 'couldn't be used to confuse a witness after stealing something'. If any of the player characters point out that Young Josef isn't in disguise, the masked cat simply laughs and says: 'What? You think that's what he *really* looks like, do you? Don't be so silly. We teach even our initiates in the Cradle to keep their identities hidden; especially those who work for the Paw.' It's possible that one or more of the player characters are members of the Cradle, in which case, he nods appreciatively and singles them out for words of praise, saying that he hopes 'they'll prove worthy of their pledge'.

Upon hearing of 'the Cradle' and 'the Paw', a player character can make a DC 12 Intelligence (History) check. A success tells them that the Cradle is the infamous feline Thieves Guild, deeply entrenched in Gullet Cove, so much so that it functions as a part of the true Thieves Guild, whose head sits on the town council. The Paw is the shadowy cabal running the Cradle, made up of five Claws. No one knows the identity of the Claws, or of those who work for them. They are selected from the membership of the Cradle at a young age and taught the shadowy ways of deception and disguise. The player characters are in extremely powerful company...and the Claw want something from them!

The masked cat in the player character's midst announces the following:

- 🐾 'We require your assistance with a very minor matter. A trifling thing. Barely worth worrying about, really. Some thefts have been perpetrated. Some rather...embarrassing thefts for us. Thefts that have left us looking bad in our esteemed comrades' eyes. So, we need some clever newcomers to look into it for us.'
- 🐾 'Master Pettifer's Emporium was robbed two nights ago. Several items of considerable value were taken and some ostentatious cat's paws were found amidst the wreckage. Along with the Cradle's mark, etched into the wall. Fortunately, Master Pettifer is a good sort and knows this isn't our kind of caper — if we were going to rob him, we'd have done it a good deal more carefully — but we need to find out who is attempting to muddy our spotless name. And why.'
- 🐾 There's 200gp each in it for you, and a Guild Mark. That's a pretty good deal for people just off the boat. And Young Josef here will stay and show you around. You might want to start at Pettifer's. It's not far from here. Young Josef'll show you.

With a flourish, the masked cat leaps to the stairs and he, and the rest of the watching felines, scamper up the wall and are gone. Only Young Josef remains and he gives a cheery smile and says: 'Shall we go then?'

Master Pettifer's Emporium

A strange and crowded shop, Master Pettifer's place is always something of a mess, but right now it's a disaster. Stock is scattered across the floor and several windows are broken. An Intelligence (Investigation) check of DC 14 reveals:

- 🐾 Two sets of heavy bootprints outside the shop. These seem to hang around the shop though they don't go inside.
- 🐾 Frayed threads of string hanging from some of the jagged glass.

Inside the shop, a dog is dutifully sweeping up, while a slightly dishevelled, though still elegant cat, is sat on the counter turning over the pages of a vast book with his paws, occasionally shaking his head and tutting.

This is Master Pettifer and the dog, obligingly cleaning up, is Rufus. They are both a little shocked by the burglary and neither is immediately trusting, especially of strangers asking questions. A successful DC 14 Charisma check wins over Rufus (by far the most obliging of the two) and, once he's onside, Master Pettifer gradually begins to talk. Any character offering to help clean up or console Rufus or Master Pettifer over their situation gains advantage on any Charisma checks, when talking to them.

Master Pettifer is happy enough to point out the broken window (which is obvious even upon entry), muddy cat pawprints, and then, carved into the wall, the geometric symbol of the Cradle, seven lines forming a series of diamonds. Neither Pettifer nor Rufus examined these clues closely. If any of the player characters ask questions about them — whether the footprints appear distinctive, for example — Pettifer is extremely sharp: 'Gods above no. Why would I? Do you think I have time for detective work when I'm trying to work out which of my wonderful things have been taken from me?'

GM Tip!



Playing Young Josef

Having a cheeky little cat accompany your player characters is a great opportunity to bring some extra humour into the games! Young Josef should be naughty, prone to playing tricks on the player characters, but also brave and resourceful. He helps the player characters whenever he can, keen to prove his worth. Basically, the GM should feel free to use Young Josef to assist the player characters when they need it!

Rufus is apologetic for his employer's tone but gives essentially the same answer. The player characters can ask the pair anything they like. Some potential answers to their questions are given below:

🐾 What was taken? Well, that's just it. It makes very little sense. Lots of the most valuable things were completely ignored. The things which were stolen seem utterly random. I can't see any reason or logic or pattern to it whatsoever! It's like the theft was what mattered, not the items being taken. Very strange. They've taken a few magical bits and bobs, a pouch of money...but there's considerably more in the till and they've not touched that! Thoroughly amateurish.

🐾 Were there any suspicious characters in the shop recently? Hmmm...define suspicious? My emporium is a veritable haven for the unusual, the unscrupulous, and the improper. They bring in the best stuff to sell, typically. So yes, there were a large number of disreputable sorts in. And out. The only people I recall in particular were Swindell and Buller, who own that inn down the way, the Master's Retreat. Both fairly unpleasant sorts as a rule and they don't tend to come up this way very often.

🐾 Have the Watch investigated? Oh, yes. Of course. Or done the thing that passes for investigation at least. They poked at stuff, apologised, and left. They claimed they had several suspects in mind but that's what they always say. Poor fools. Who knows? They might have found something. Even a drunk sailor makes sense twice a day, as the saying goes around here.

🐾 Why are you so sure that the Cradle didn't commit the crime? Oh, come now. Does this look like the work of master thieves? The Cradle and I have had our disagreements, yes. They've stolen from me, and I've had reason to use my influence amongst the Guilds to reprimand them, but we also help one another at certain times. And allow me to assure you, when the Cradle have purloined items from my stock — little rascals — they did not leave broken glass and muddy pawprints everywhere. Let alone a big carved symbol!

The player characters can explore Master Pettifer's shop as much as they like. It is a virtually infinite mass of shelving stretching back into the musty darkness. Pettifer is more than happy to show you around, lugging his heavy ledger with him and stopping at certain points to identify something of particular worth. He won't, however, sell anything at the moment. 'Oh no', he says when asked, 'I must first carry out a full inventory before I can sell anything else! Find out who stole from me and I'll give you a discount, though. Few get discounts from Master Pettifer, that I can promise!'

Rufus nods his head vigorously in agreement at this. This is all the player characters find out at Pettifer's but it's more than enough to go on and leaves them with two potential routes. Visit the Watch or try and find out more about Swindell & Buller — involving a wander around town and a visit to the market, perhaps?



The Watch

The Watch House is somewhat run-down, but still a large solid building. The player characters are able to wander in without being stopped and are confronted by a large, open room with a number of desks arrayed before them. The desks are all exquisitely untidy, with mugs of tea and coffee in various stages of evaporation and mould piled up on every surface in precarious towers. Mounds of unsorted paper collect on chairs and on the tops of cabinets. It's a mess.

A small terrier immediately comes to greet the player characters, wearing the green uniform of the Watch. He bristles with self-importance, watching them closely and growling a little under his breath. He speaks quickly and aggressively and demands to know what they want.

'We're very busy! The captain is very busy! Investigating crimes!'

This officious little dog is McKenzie, the captain's companion and self-appointed bodyguard and he's fiercely protective of her. He also speaks entirely in short, clipped sentences, yapping them with considerable force, despite his small stature. Persuading him to talk about 'Watch matters' isn't easy. McKenzie takes his job *exceedingly* seriously, even if no one around him does and is not going to just hand over information about arrests or lines of investigation. A successful DC 12 Charisma check results in him getting his boss, however.

The Captain of the Watch stumps down the stairs grumpily, sipping from a huge mug of black coffee. Filamena Gruth is a dwarf losing her enthusiasm for the job. The Guilds keep everyone in line in Gullet Cove, leaving her with precious little to do. She's bored, weary, and increasingly indifferent to the various investigations she's meant to be running. Upon reaching the player characters, she gestures for them to find a place to sit comfortably — pretty difficult amidst the mounds of rubbish. During the conversation with Filamena, a number of other Watch officers enter and leave the room. They all glance at the player characters and then hurry off to perform other duties — mainly preparing themselves another mug of tea or coffee and then leaving again.

Filamena is more forthcoming than McKenzie and the player characters can ask whatever they need to, without much in the way of resistance. McKenzie isn't happy with her openness, sitting at her side throughout the interview looking askance each time she answers a question. Examples of the kind of answers Filamena gives can be found below:

🐾 **Who do you think robbed Pettifer's?** I'm not sure. Whoever it was went out of their way to make it look like a Guild job. Wanted us to arrest a few Cradle members, I think. As if anyone in their right mind could believe a job that badly done could have been sanctioned by a Guild!

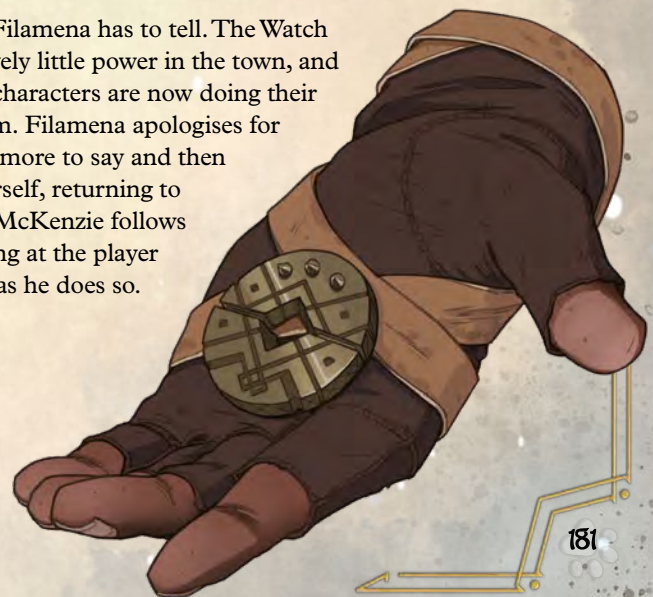
🐾 **What clues did she find?** What we were expected to find, more or less. Large quantities of broken glass, a crudely etched Cradle symbol...there were some bootprints outside. All in all, it was pretty amateurish really.

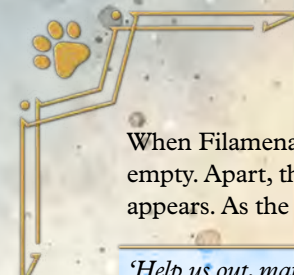
🐾 **What does she think really happened?** Seems to me someone wants to frame the Cradle for something. Yes, some think it might be to do with winding up the other Guilds. Me...I think it's to do with animals.

🐾 **Animals?** Yeah. Awakened animals. Gullet Cove is a haven for awakened animals, clever and kind souls like McKenzie here. But some people don't like it. Don't think they should be here. Not many, but a few. I think this was them. Make the Cradle look bad. Make the Thieves Guild disassociate themselves.

🐾 **Where do these animal haters hang out?** There's a tavern...Master's Retreat, it's called. We'd investigate but we've been told this is Guild business now. So we're out. That's Gullet Cove for you. The Guilds are the power. We're just watch dogs...no offence, McKenzie.

This is all Filamena has to tell. The Watch have relatively little power in the town, and the player characters are now doing their job for them. Filamena apologises for not having more to say and then excuses herself, returning to her office. McKenzie follows her, scowling at the player characters as he does so.





When Filamena has gone, the Watch House is apparently empty. Apart, that is, from the player characters. Or so it appears. As the place falls silent, a voice whispers:

'Help us out, maties, and I'll show you where you can find the rascals what broke into that there Master Pettifer's place!'

The voice is coming from one of the jail cells, just off the main room. It's quite difficult to see, being concealed by vast mounds of coffee cups and forgotten paperwork. Peering out from between the bars of the jail cell is a small doggie face. It's a corgi with an appealing, if somewhat goofy, smile on its face. This is Queenie, one of the most widely known and widely liked merchants in Gullet Cove. The problem with Queenie is that she often forgets to pay her Guild taxes. Or, more accurately, refuses to. Queenie isn't big on taxes. So, the Watch has to lock her up every now and then, but she's more of a frequent visitor than a prisoner. Young Josef can tell the player characters all of this. He has met Queenie several times, and, while the Cradle can never openly admit it, they quite respect her stance on not paying Guild tithes — it's a type of thieving, in a way, even if it's one they can't endorse.

If the player characters converse with Queenie, she lets them know the following:

- 🐾 I knows the Master's Retreat pretty well, and I knows they be up to something rotten. You let me out, and I'll take you right to 'em!
- 🐾 Filamena be right! They used to hate animals likes us, but suddenly they's all sweetness and light! Something's going on, something strange and Queenie can help you get there...
- 🐾 Oh no! You got to let me out first. Queenie wasn't born yesterday, I'll tell you that for free and for nothing. And believe me, that's all you get that's free from Queenie!

There's a choice to make! The player characters can attempt to pick the lock on the door — requiring a DC 12 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) test. Once opened, Queenie grins at the player characters and then whispers: 'Come on then! Follow me!' and leads them out. Each player character must make a DC 12 Dexterity (Stealth) test to sneak out of the watch house silently. If more than half of the player characters fail the check, then McKenzie appears at the top of the stairs and begins barking excitedly.

The only choice now is to run for it! Filamena and McKenzie give chase, with 1d3 other Watch officers joining them. Each player character must make a DC 10 Dexterity save to evade capture. Should any of the player characters fail, they are apprehended by the Watch. A Watch officer can be distracted with a quick display of magic or something equally unusual — allowing the captured player character a chance to escape on a DC 10 Strength (Athletics) test. If a player character can't escape the clutches of a guard, or of Filamena and McKenzie then, well...they can always be broken out like Queenie.

Once properly escaped, the player characters can regroup. Queenie is happy to keep her word and take them to the Master's Retreat. 'Be wary,' she says, 'They is most certainly up to nothing good in that pub.'



The Market

The Gullet Cove market is held four times a week in the central peninsula. It draws people from all over, with several nearby villages and communities flocking in to sell their goods, especially to the traders arrived from overseas. It's a vibrant, busy place with colourful stalls set up, most of the merchants and traders clad in equally multi-hued clothing...a celebration of the variety and strangeness of Gullet Cove.

The player characters can browse the market, buying the various goods, haggling with the traders, immersing themselves in the bartering and bantering which Gullet Cove market inevitably produces. The following information can be obtained from various stall owners in different locations in the market:

Market Stall & Owner	Information
A large and extremely opulent fish stall, with magical cooling units keeping the fish fresh. Owned by Brume Copperwelt, a halfling with a huge belly and a pipe never out of his lips.	<i>"Oh, as if the Cradle would be that sloppy! No, no. That was never any Guild robbery. Someone's trying to be too clever. And I'm not sure they're doing a good job."</i>
A small, mobile cart selling jewellery, particularly pearls pressed into seashells. Owned by Felicity Flop, a tiny cat who tinkles when she moves, her ginger fur braided with dozens of gems.	<i>"Who do I think might have done it? Well, someone who doesn't like awakened animals, I'd reckon. Trying to pin something on the cats of the Cradle, make them look bad in front of the thieves."</i>
A small flower stand, with artfully arranged bouquets of roses, delicately laced with dried seaweed. Owned by McIvor Glistenhame, a half-elf with a constant frown of concentration, whether arranging his stand or collecting money from a customer.	<i>"Two most vocal animal haters... they'd probably be the two reprobates who own the Master's Retreat pub."</i>
Stand composed of shelves, each containing jars of unusual ingredients utilised in magic spells, incantations, and rituals. Owned by Gladysia the Wise; a gnome with enormous spectacles who speaks extremely...slowly	<i>"The owners of the Master's Retreat are Buller & Swindell. Nasty blighters and they've been up to something lately. Not sure what though..."</i>
A bric-a-brac stand, with dozens of different items all in differing states of disrepair. Owned by Oakie Thompson and Mokie Thompson; a pair of twin spaniels who finish each other's sentences.	<i>"The Master's Retreat... not much of a pub. Big place. Funny clientele. Beer's cheap. And bad. But people still go there. Odd people, too."</i>
A stall selling artfully crafted hats and cloaks for dogs and cats, each woven or knitted from the finest of fabrics. Owned by Oshe, a large brown labrador with only one ear.	<i>"I've heard they've changed their minds about awakened animals these days. All for them, apparently. Keep inviting them along. Suppose it's nice, but I wouldn't trust those two as far as I could chuck 'em."</i>



The Master's Retreat

If the player characters follow the clues, they should realise that all signs point to the involvement of Swindell and Buller — the patrons of the insalubrious Master's Retreat. Swindell and Buller are indeed behind the crime as part of their not-terribly-smart plan to drive out all of the awakened animals in the city. This was their first step and, given that it seems not to have worked, they are already planning a new step. Indeed, they are hosting a meeting to discuss this plan with a new ally when the player characters show up.

The Master's Retreat is a large, square building with a large walled garden out the back. When the players arrive, the inn is quiet. A few patrons are sipping beer and cast dark glances at any player character who enters the inn — the place is almost utterly silent, save for the drip of beer from keg taps, the buzzing of several inebriated flies and the sibilant creak of wooden chairs and tables. There is no sign of either Swindell or Buller in the place. The bar is being tended by a regular, a hard-faced man called Stoop Jenkins and he refuses to answer any questions levelled at him. The player characters can attempt to ask questions but Stoop pretends to be deaf, insists he doesn't know the answer, or simply asks the player characters what they want to drink.

The player characters can, however, investigate the pub cautiously. All of the regulars are sat in the main tap room, but there is a second, deserted room at the back of the inn. A successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check enables the player characters to identify a carefully concealed trap door. A table is stationed over it, along with four chairs. Clearly, these have been situated with meticulous care...this wasn't something Swindell & Buller wanted found. A DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check enables the player characters to detect faint voices coming from somewhere beneath the trap door.

If the player characters start to move the furniture carefully, have them make a DC 14 Dexterity (Stealth) check, as a group. A success means that they are able to move the items quietly enough that the drinkers in the tap room ignore them. A failure brings half a dozen half-drunk, belligerent animal haters into the room. And they aren't in any mood for negotiation! They quickly call out to Swindell and Buller, who hurry into the tap room, along with their goblin companions! The GM should run the Garden encounter now, having it happen indoors instead.

The Cellar

There is a short stone staircase leading into the inn's cellar. The player characters are immediately greeted by a strange odour. A DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check, enables the player characters to identify it as peppermint. An exceedingly strong blast of peppermint.

The voices, barely perceptible with the door closed, are now clearly audible. A deep, resonant voice is talking to a faint, rasping human voice, discussing 'how many we can hope to acquire for sale' and the price of 'different specimens'. Above and alongside these two voices, there are several other nasal, grating voices gibbering and laughing insistently.

A successful DC 14 Dexterity (Stealth) check enables the player characters to insinuate themselves into the main cellar room. Amidst a pile of beer barrels, a meeting is being conducted. Two humans, one very large and the other scrawny, are conversing with a dwarf, clad in a thick brown coat with a chirruping bird sat on his shoulder. Behind the dwarf, three goblins armed with strange sticks jabber to one another, laughing cruelly.

The two humans are Swindell and Buller, the animal-hating proprietors of the Master's Retreat. The mysterious dwarf is the Cunning Man, a crime-lord recently arrived in Gullet Cove. The three are talking business. Any character with a passive Perception of 14 or higher can listen in to the conversation, while a player character can make a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check to listen in:

"We're turning people against the animals!" says the small, weedy figure you're sure is Swindell. "Soon, we'll be able to round them all up and sell them to you!"

The dwarf shrugs, reaches into his pocket and hands a seed to the small bird on his shoulder.

"That's all very well. But I need animals now. My clients need entertainment. They need new pets. Your plans to frame the Cradle are all very well, but they need to move much faster."

Swindell cracks his knuckles nervously and looks at the goblins behind the dwarf. Buller, huge and lumbering, suddenly points at you.

"Hey!" he shouts, "What are you doing here?!"

"Run!" yells the dwarf!

Swindell, Buller, the dwarf, and the goblins bundle themselves up a small ladder, pouring into the beer garden.

The player characters can follow. In fact, they have no choice. Above, the trapdoor has been shut and tables and chairs piled back on top. There's only one route out...into the garden!





The Garden

Swindell and Buller are waiting when the player characters emerge into the open air. They have armed themselves with bits of junk from the garden, wielding crude wooden clubs with menace. The goblins are still here too, snapping their strange sticks in the air and cackling. The dwarf stands behind the small group, shrugs apologetically at the player characters and says:


“Try not to hurt them too badly. The animals would be perfect for my clients!”

As the dwarf vanishes into an alleyway, Swindell and Buller, along with their goblin allies, close with the player characters. It's time to fight!

The battle is extremely tense, with Swindell and Buller fighting together as a cautious and highly practiced team. Buller takes most of the hits, soaking them up with his vast bulk while Swindell appears from behind him to stab and gouge at anyone within range. The goblins attempt to split individual party members off, grasping and grabbing at them, attempting to disrupt the player characters' battle plans.

Whenever the goblins are badly injured — reaching 1/8th of their starting hit points, or lower — they flee, following their leader into the shadowy alleyway. Swindell and Buller surrender when their hit points drop below 1/8th of their starting total, throwing their weapons to the ground and asking for clemency.

As soon as the battle is over, and Swindell and Buller captured, little Young Josef gives a high-pitched whine. The masked cats, met by the player characters earlier, appear on top of a nearby wall and the feline in the centre gives the player characters a flourishing salute, before all five disappear again. Later that night, with no explanation or sign of disturbance, the player characters find a Guild Mark tucked inside their coin pouches, along with 100gp each. The Cradle are extremely generous to those who help them out!



Wrapping Things Up

What the player characters choose to do with Swindell and Buller is up to them. They can deliver them to the Watch and hope that having apprehended two thieves, and prevented a spate of kidnappings, is enough to convince Filamena not to toss them in prison for breaking Queenie out. Or they can take them to the Thieves Guild and leave them to the tender ministrations of that organisation. It's up to them!

Things aren't over, however. There's the question of the mysterious Cunning Man, the goblins, and the mention of selling awakened animals for profit. Fortunately, the player characters are here and they might be getting some extra help in the next adventure!

EXPERIENCE

The player characters should earn enough experience from this adventure to allow them to reach the next level.



The second adventure in Gullet Cove is even more action-packed than the first! Fresh from uncovering the sinister plots of Swindell and Buller, the player characters are enjoying themselves in the town, exploring its various sights and perhaps getting acquainted with many of the local characters. But there are always surprises waiting in Gullet Cove so, just as the player characters think they're getting a feel for the town and how things work, spring this new adventure on them! The following adventure is designed for 4-6 player characters of level 2-3. At least one should be an awakened animal.

Adventure Overview

The Cradle reach out to the player characters again, asking for help. The precocious Young Josef has been taken, and no one can find him, not even the Cradle. They need you to knock on doors, crack some heads together, and find out what has happened to the little rascal!

The truth is that the Cunning Man kidnapped Josef, or rather, his goblin 'nappers have. The Cunning Man intends to carry away as many awakened animals as he can, selling them to the wealthy and indolent as entertainment. He's made good money at it so far and hopes to keep doing so. He also hopes to use the money he's making to insinuate himself into the town's criminal underworld. The Cunning Man has recently been joined by his right-hand man — Dinsdale Requin. Requin is a ferocious and intimidating foe at the best of times. At the worst of times, he's an enormous shark-man hybrid with the capacity to bite a victim in half without blinking. And anyone who pries too deeply into the Cunning Man's business often finds themselves explaining their curiosity to a mouthful of jagged shark teeth.

Fortunately, the player characters aren't alone. Galert of Hexea, one of the famed Watchers, tracks the Cunning Man and offers his assistance. Galert is taciturn and difficult, but he's also a formidable fighter, more than capable of hacking his way through a dozen opponents by himself. He's followed the Cunning Man's trail of stolen awakened animals through the land, and now he's cornered him. Except even the Watcher didn't bank on an 8-foot-tall wereshark suddenly being a problem. He needs help, as do the player characters.

Hunting the Cunning Man isn't easy, and the player characters are going to need to fight their way through a number of goblins to get to him. But at least they aren't alone!



A Plea for Help

The adventure can begin wherever the GM feels most appropriate. It can be in the middle of a crowded inn, or in the player characters' room at night; whatever the situation, the player characters are suddenly approached. A grizzled cat sits on their table in the tavern, or is perched on a chair in the shadowy corner of their chambers, or steps out of an alleyway. Scars crisscross the cat's face, and he wears a tattered cloak which covers his mouth but reveals glittering green eyes. He pulls the cloak away from his face and nods his head in greeting:

'The Cradle asks for your help. One of our initiates, a young cat known to you, has gone missing. Young Josef. We believe the foe you thwarted in your previous adventure with Young Josef has taken his revenge. We, the Cradle, are seeking everywhere we can. But we need your help too. Please help us.'

Hopefully, the player characters agree immediately. Young Josef was there to aid them in their previous adventures, after all! If the player characters require some persuading, however, the weathered old feline offers money, up the value of 250gp each.

'The last anyone saw of him', the cat says, 'he was doing some scouting work for us near to the cemetery.'

He won't provide any more detail on precisely what Young Josef was reconnoitring out near to the cemetery, but he offers the following details:

- 🐾 It's believed, judging from the footprints, that the Cunning Man's goblins seized Young Josef near the cemetery.
- 🐾 Their tracks disappear mid-way through the cemetery and the Cradle haven't been able to trace them any further.
- 🐾 The Cunning Man has been sighted several times over the days (or weeks) since the player characters encountered him. He has a new bodyguard.
- 🐾 The bodyguard is called Dinsdale Requin, a long-term associate of the Cunning Man, just arrived in town.
- 🐾 There are a number of dark rumours surrounding Requin, though he is entirely loyal to the Cunning Man.

The cat imparts this information and, once an agreement from the player characters to search for Young Josef is secured, slips away silently, quickly welcomed back into the shadows.

First Things First



What the player characters decide to do is up to them. Visiting the cemetery is a natural first step, but so too would be to trace the Cunning Man, starting from the Master's Retreat where they last encountered him. Whatever the player characters opt to pursue as a first option, the GM should allow them to conduct a brief investigation of the area.

On a successful DC 14 Intelligence (Investigate) check, the player characters can find a few dropped bird seeds — clearly the Cunning Man was here recently. He does always take his collection of small birds with him everywhere. If a player character succeeds on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check, it's even possible to hear the faint chirrup of small birds in very close vicinity. The player characters can follow the noise with a successful DC 10 Wisdom (Insight or Survival) check; the noise leads them through a series of back alleyways, narrow gaps between broken down fences and through a series of deserted buildings until the player characters are thoroughly disoriented. And then... the jaws of the trap snap shut.

The player characters are at a junction between two back-streets, when goblin 'nappers step out into the path, blocking any exit. Before the player characters can react, three hooded figures emerge behind them. All six foes draw weapons and close with the player characters — ready for battle. A deep, harsh voice (definitely not that of the Cunning Man) utters the words: 'Get 'em boys!' and the melee begins!

The player characters are facing three goblin 'nappers and three wererats. The Cunning Man sought allies after his last encounter with the player characters and the Cradle, and he found them. The goblin 'nappers aim to keep the player characters at bay, giving the wererats a chance to get amongst them and start doing real damage. Throughout the fight, the player characters are treated to a series of deep chuckles whenever one of them is wounded — and their player characters are belittled with a series of cruel quips, such as:

- 🐾 Call that a sword? I've seen better toothpicks!
- 🐾 You're the lot who chased the boss away, are ye?
Not exactly fearsome!
- 🐾 If this mob can't handle ye, I'll deal with ye personally, ye ugly curs!
- 🐾 I thought this was meant to be a fight!
Not some kind of tickling contest!

There is equally coarse encouragement for the goblins and wererats, along with a good deal more raucous laughter.

If the player characters are able to take out all of their enemies, the voice above tuts loudly and then says: 'Not to worry. I'll be seeing ye all soon. I'm ever so hungry for fresh meat!'

Should the fight be proving difficult, however, then help arrives in the form of Galert of Hexea — the white wolfhound and the dog with his nose firmly pressed to the Cunning Man's trail. He bounds into the alleyway, silver sword in his mouth, and quickly hurls himself into battle. The goblins and wererats are dismayed at their ambush being broken in this fashion and are quickly scattered. If the player characters aren't overly challenged by the combat, however, then Galert emerges a few moments after, nodding his head in approval and ready to talk.





What if my players don't say yes?

They *don't* want to fight evil, protect their fellow creatures, and work alongside the legendary Watcher, Galert of Hexea? You might want to think about getting some new players! More seriously, Galert initially attempts to win the player characters over, encouraging them to think of their fellow animals, of what they'd want if they'd been kidnapped. He also offers a certain amount of gold as inducement, or even membership of the Watchers. If, even after all these perquisites are offered, the player characters refuse to help, then the GM, out of character probably needs to sit down with their players and ask what they want from their adventure. Refusing the premise of an adventure is a sign that the player characters are bored. It's usually worth asking why!

The Watcher

Galert of Hexea is a seasoned warrior. Any player character can tell that just by looking at him; his armour is worn, repaired in several places. His swords are meticulously maintained but nicked. His white fur is ragged in a number of places, clearly marked by the teeth of past foes. A player character can make a DC 10 Intelligence (History) check to see if they have heard of the Watchers; a success allows them to know most of the information contained in the Gazetteer about this mysterious organisation (see page 90 of this book).

If the Watcher assisted the player characters during the battle, then, once the goblins and wererats flee or are killed, he turns to them, cocks his head, and starts to speak. Otherwise, he appraises them for a few moments and then says:

"So, what did you do to get on the wrong side of the Cunning Man and his pet wereshark, then?"

The player characters can recount their past experiences with the Cunning Man, as much or as little as they choose (and be suitably horrified at the notion a wereshark is after them). Of course, the player characters might be suspicious of this stranger, appearing out of nowhere and seeming a little too good to be true. Should a player character attempt to determine Galert's motives or use magic to discern whether the Watcher is good or evil, or his alignment, they can do so. Galert is decidedly good aligned, though his methods can sometimes be *unorthodox*. Once he's heard their stories, the Watcher grunts and says:

"Hmmm...I haven't seen your Young Josef but I'll help you look for him. That dwarf and I have a score to settle. And no animal is safe while that wereshark is abroad. They both need to be stopped. Especially now they have rat allies. You aid me, and I'll aid you."

The Watcher is a formidable ally, skilled in combat and with a range of connections he can utilise to aid the search for Young Josef. Now that the Cunning Man has new friends to aid him, along with a host of allies, it might be an idea for the player characters to find one of their own! Galert also knows the Cunning Man's history:

"Thrown out of a dwarf hold for cheating and stealing, he's made quite the career for himself in various towns throughout the land; usually cheating people, swindling them out of their money with implausible schemes. A magical bridge stretching across the sea. A machine that transports people around the city on a single rail, gliding high above the ground. But then he met Dinsdale Requin. A wereshark with a taste for blood. Since then, the Cunning Man's plans have become bigger and more dangerous. He's the brains, Requin is the muscle. And they've been taking awakened animals and selling them to the rich. As...pets!"

Galert spits this final phrase with utter contempt. There is nothing worse, in his mind, than an awakened animal forced to be a pet. Any creature attempting to subjugate an awakened animal is begging for a Watcher's vengeance...and Galert of Hexea brings the most sudden and dreadful of vengeance!

"I need your help", Galert says. "I need your help to bring down these monsters. Are you with me?"

Hopefully, the answer is yes!

Working with the Watcher

Galert isn't one for messing around. As soon as the player characters agree to accompany him, he's leading them away, off and into the tangle of streets. If the player characters ask where they're going, he barks over his shoulder, "Following Requin's scent! He's a shark, he's not hard to follow!" This is most certainly true. If the player characters attempt to detect the scent Galert is following, their DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check is made at advantage. The thick, fishy scent of Dinsdale Requin hangs in the air like chum in the ocean.

The trail wends through Gullet Cove, until it terminates at a sinister old warehouse. Large but clearly disused, the warehouse's broken upper-floor windows stare out at the players like unseeing eyes. The door to the warehouse is, however, conspicuously new and well-made and has been barred from without.

A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check allows the player characters to hear a low, threatening voice on the other side of the door, issuing rapid orders — instructing unseen individuals into guard positions.




Inside the Warehouse

Still, silent, the warehouse waits for the player characters to explore it. The building is divided into a series of rooms, each connected by long, narrow corridors. The place is filled with traps...this isn't the hub of the Cunning Man's operations. It is the guard house *on top* of them. Hidden inside the smallest room within the warehouse, in a room filled with carefully gathered and positioned rubbish, is a tunnel leading to the Cunning Man's place of business. But finding the tunnel requires the player characters to make their way through a building that the Cunning Man's goons have rigged with dozens of traps... extremely deadly traps. And then there are the goons themselves. It's not going to be easy.

Entering the warehouse can be done in two main ways:

- ✿ Forcing the heavy door open by breaching the wooden bar slotted in place. This requires a successful DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check to achieve. It's a new door and the Cunning Man paid well for it!
- ✿ Clambering up the wall of the warehouse to one of the smashed, open windows. Scaling the wall requires a successful DC 12 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check; the smashed and splintered wood of the façade provides numerous well-placed handholds, so the climb is relatively simple. A failed roll results in the unfortunate player character taking 1d6 bludgeoning damage from their tumble!

The means by which the player characters access the warehouse is entirely up to them, and they are, of course, free to devise their own method. If they want to smash through the wall...well, let them! Gaining entry is the main thing and however the player characters choose to do it is up to them. They may even choose to split up, some crashing through the door, others sneaking in via the windows. Whatever method or methods the player characters choose, they find themselves confronted by an apparently empty warehouse. Nothing stirs and a thin layer of dust covers most surfaces, though it has been stirred up by the passage of several recent feet. Danger lurks around every corner... what are the player characters going to do?



Entrance Hall

The room beyond the barred door is a rudimentary entrance hall. There are two large broken tables in here, along with a series of chairs — possibly once set up to allow visitors to sit and rest, while waiting for an appointment, or for their order to be prepared. The floor is scattered with a combination of dirt, dust, and trampled paper. Large boot prints are visible in the grime of the floor. Inspecting the papers reveals them to be old manifests and bills to be delivered to clients — the usual ephemera of business.

The room is trapped. Two peculiar looking crossbows are carefully positioned in the upper corners of the room, with fishing line wrapped around their triggers. These lines are stretched to the ground and then carefully strung across the obvious paths across the room. Spotting the crossbows requires a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check. If the player characters don't manage to spot the crossbows, spotting the fishing line is a lot harder — requiring a successful DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check. Cutting the wires, to render the trap inert, takes a steady hand and, most essentially, a DC 12 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check. Missing the crossbows or the fishing line, or cutting the wire incorrectly, results in arrows firing at every creature in the room. The crossbows are enchanted, and their bolts extremely deadly. If the trap is triggered, each player character must make a DC 14 Dexterity save, or else be pinioned by an arrow doing 1d6+1 piercing damage. Once the trap has fired, however, the crossbows crumble away.

If the player characters disarm the traps and attempt to retrieve the crossbow, prior to touching one a player character should make a DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check. The crossbows are etched with a series of obscure magical sigils — in fact, they are themselves booby-trapped. Should anyone but their owner lay hands on them, they each explode in a hail of splinters. Any player character handling the crossbow must succeed on a DC 16 Dexterity save or suffer 1d4+2 piercing damage as the weapon shatters.

The room itself has little else in it; the player characters can still smell Dinsdale Requin, but there is no direct sign of him. The papers on the floor are useless. They must go deeper in! There are two potential routes the player characters can follow — they can take the stairs, leading to the upper landing, or go through the door at the far end of the room, leading to the main office.

Main Office

A large, square room, this was the main office when the warehouse was functional. The walls are now covered with maps and drawings of animals. The centre of the room is occupied by a huge table with more maps on it along with a teetering stack of letters. These are the weird catalogues the Cunning Man puts together for his wealthy clients, complete with drawings of the animals he has kidnapped and profiles of their likes and interests...it's all very sinister. The maps, nailed into the walls, have pins stuck into it at various locations, with names and pictures of animals attached to each location with lengths of red string. It's basically a scene of crime board, but for animal 'napping! The player characters can examine these boards, perhaps finding the names of some animals they've interacted with, along with the Cunning Man's notes and intended purchaser attached: "Make excellent pet for the Van Joneses — charge top price," and other business considerations.

Beyond the Cunning Man's various business arrangements, there are also collections of plates and glasses, mainly coated with grime...cleaning isn't high on the priorities of the Cunning Man and his associates.

This room isn't booby-trapped. Well, not exactly. But it is guarded. A number of goblin 'nappers equal to the number of player characters are hanging from the ceiling, using their grabbing poles to secure themselves a firm grip and waiting for the opportune moment to strike! Detecting these lurking dangers requires a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check. Alternatively, a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigation) check enables a player character to notice a peculiar arrangement of plaster on the floor, where the goblins have disturbed it. If the player characters notice the goblins, they immediately drop down and attack!

If the player characters don't become aware of the dangling goblins, they goblins wait until the player characters are entirely distracted with the papers and wall-hung maps and then strike! The goblins make a free surprise attack on all player characters. Once this attack has been resolved, combat continues as normal.

The goblins fight until they are all killed. They certainly aren't risking invoking Requin's wrath! A corridor extends from the main office, as well as a dusty and unstable flight of the stairs, leading to the upper corridor. The corridor has three doors heading off it. The first door on the right leads to the small Storage Room. The door opposite it, on the left, leads to the Room of Cages. The final door, at the far end of the corridor, leads to the Bubbling Pond.

Upper Landing

If any, or all, of the player characters clambered up the outside of the building, then the broken window they clamber through opens onto this upper landing. The landing is plain and entirely unadorned, bar some ragged carpet that is now more akin to a threadbare fishing net than any useful floor covering. Dust and grime is smeared over every surface and some crude graffiti is scrawled on the walls: *Goblinz Rule!* The rest of the landing is empty, beyond exposed floorboards and eerie silence.

Upstairs Office

The only upstairs room is this large office. The room is filled with wooden packing boxes, each marked with a different address and swarmed with dust motes. The boxes are fairly old and in poor repair. Some are marked with patches of mildew and damp; others possess broken slats with old matted straw protruding from the gaps. There is nothing else, though a DC 14 Intelligence (Investigate) check reveals a small folder of mouldy shipping manifests, left by a merchant captain many years ago. In the bottom of this are a series of small diamonds, worth a total of 150gp.

If the player characters examine the boxes closely, then a DC 10 Wisdom (Perception) check enables them to discern that three goblins are hiding inside them, waiting to spring a trap! The goblins aren't especially well-hidden. If they don't...well, then the goblins leap from the boxes as soon as they are certain the player characters are otherwise engaged. They make a surprise attack on all player characters, before combat proceeds as normal. The goblins dodge in and around the boxes, leaping out to try and get the drop on the player characters. This fight continues until all the goblins are dead — surrender isn't an option!

Storage Room

An extremely untidy room set just back from the main ground floor corridor, the storage room is also stiflingly malodorous. The walls are lined with shelves on which is an array of spoiling food. The stench being given off by this rotting food fills the storage room entirely. Any player character entering the storage room must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution save or be racked with nausea, taking 1d4 poison damage from the noxious scent.

Room of Cages

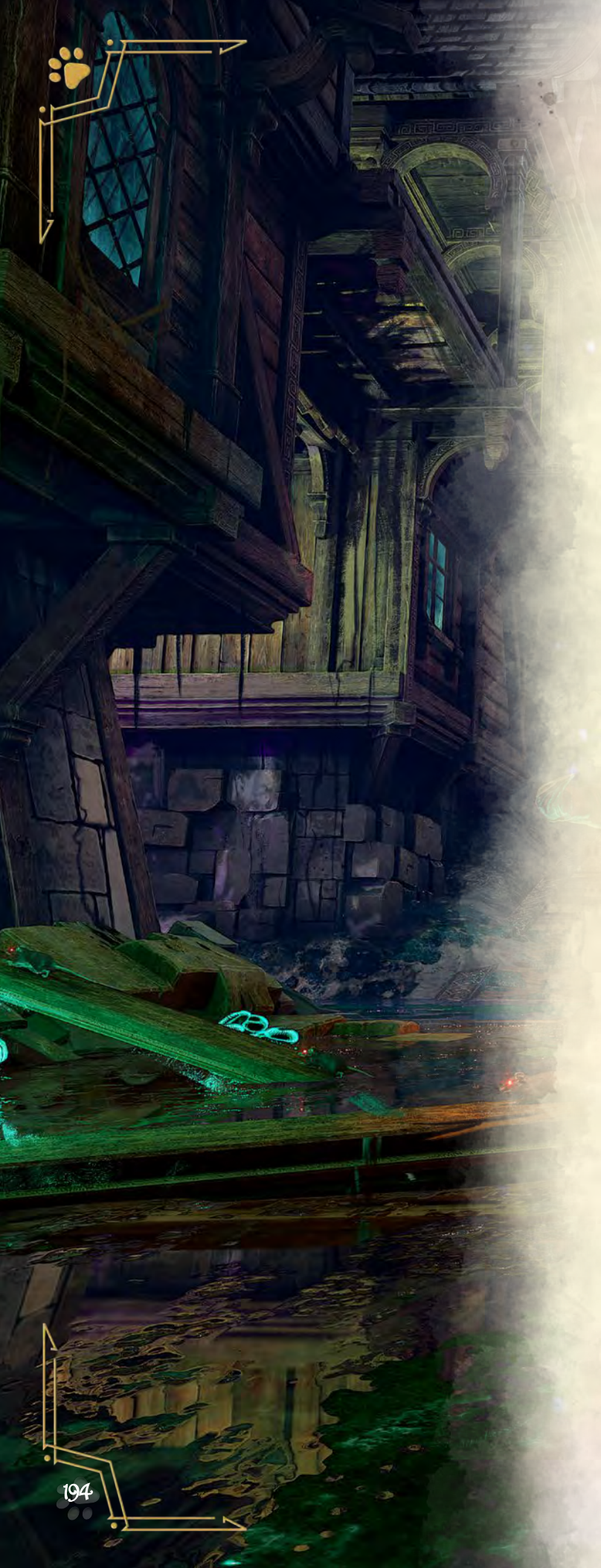
This room is a sad and particularly ugly one, and it certainly is for the player characters. The room is filled with empty cages, many of which show signs of being recently inhabited. Bowls of stagnant water are apparent in the corners, visible between the thick iron bars. Despite the obvious purpose of the cages, there are no animals in here, awakened or not. Just piles of deserted cages and the lingering scent of fear.

Galert immediately begins to inspect the cages, assessing how many animals have been kept in here and whether he can scent where they were taken. The player characters can identify whether the cages contained Young Josef at any point via a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigation) check. A success reveals that their young companion was indeed kept in here. They can also find his small blue cap, trodden into the floor and torn by unkind treatment.

The room is cunningly booby-trapped, designed to ensnare unwary visitors and to prevent any escapees making a break for it. The centre of the room, unobscured by cages, is a giant pit trap. There is a lever behind a hidden panel by the door which keeps the pit from opening — the goblins use this to allow them to enter the room safely. The first player character to head towards the centre of the room may make a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check to see if they can spot the slightly sunken edges of the trap. It is quite well obscured, and the mess of cages around the trap's perimeter, along with the accumulated grime, makes it even harder to spot. If the trap isn't spotted, it opens once three player characters are stood on it. Any player character on the trap when it opens makes a DC 14 Dexterity save, or else plummets down into darkness. And, more importantly, onto a very hard stone floor. Any player character hitting the floor suffers 1d8+2 bludgeoning damage.

The bottom of the pit is smeared with filth and garbage. The goblins decided to combine a rubbish tip with their lethal trap — thoughtful of them, right? Clambering out of the pit requires either a DC 16 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check, or a DC 16 Strength (Athletics) check. Assistance lent by a fellow player character, or the use of a rope, decreases the DC of this check to 10. Once out of the pit, the player characters can detect the presence of the lever with a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) check.





Bubbling Pond

A grotesque bubbling sound greets the player characters' ears as soon as they enter this room as the floor has been entirely removed and a mass of seething green liquid fills it instead. Huge pustules form on the surface of this liquid, scabbing over and then exploding again into liquid. This is where the goblins who serve the Cunning Man are created; a combination of the Cunning Man's strange alchemical experiments and some good old-fashioned magic. Goblins are created in this strange, magical brew whenever needed...and they are born ready to serve the Cunning Man's plans. Just one more reason he needs to be stopped! The room is magically protected with sigils surrounding the door. A player character can detect this magical resonance before entering with a DC 14 Intelligence (Arcana) check or via an appropriate spell — Detect Magic, for example.

As soon as the player characters enter, these runes begin to glow, and the viscous liquid in the pit shimmers with a sickly light. Goblins begin to emerge from the pit, immediately flinging themselves at the player characters, teeth bared and shrieking! The pit creates two goblins initially, followed by a new one every time a goblin is killed. These goblins immediately form in the vile ooze, then emerge and attack in the following turn. The ooze continues to produce and disgorge goblins until the player characters eliminate the magical runes inscribed around the door, or until all of the liquid is removed from the pit. The pit is 5 feet deep and 15 feet across and filled with the strange, suppurating liquid!

How the player characters go about achieving this is entirely up to them. They might enchant the liquid, using the Shape Water cantrip, or just fill their helmets up and chuck it away! Alternatively, just hacking at the door frame with an axe should be sufficient to deface the runes to stop them working their sinister magic! Otherwise, the goblins keep coming! Beyond the legions of goblins, the room is mainly crammed with equipment for the goblins once they emerge from the ooze. There are grabbing sticks plus heavy-duty boots and clothing to allow them to cover their features when they go hunting for the Cunning Man's targets.

Utility Room

The scent of the stolen animals leads the player characters to this utility room. At first, it seems to be simply filled with more garbage, crammed in fact. The small 10 foot by 10 foot closet is piled with detritus — broken napping sticks, smashed cages, smashed crockery. Anything that can conceivably be ruined by careless goblin hands is stuffed in here. Underneath it all, however, is the trap door leading to the Pet Shop. Or at least that's what the Cunning Man calls it. Finding the trap door requires a DC 12 Intelligence (Investigate) check, or a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check. The trapdoor is concealed behind a mound of rubbish. Once this is cleared, a DC 12 Strength (Athletics) check is enough to force it open, revealing a tunnel leading into the earth...

The Pet Shop

GM Tip!



What Requin Might Say...

A great way of making this combat feel as dangerous as it is, is to have Dinsdale Requin make savage little comments whenever he attacks, or whenever a player character misses with their attack. Dinsdale likes talking about fighting. It's his only really interest. He kept up a commentary on the player characters fight against the goblins before, he'll definitely do it now he's involved. Some examples of what passes for wit in Dinsdale's mind are provided below...

I'm going to enjoy flossing my teeth with your gizzards!

How did you manage to miss me, you poltroon? I'm huge!

I'm going to snack on your tasty, tasty flesh when this is done.

You look delicious. A bit of salt and you'll be just right to eat!

The tunnel is dark, reducing visibility to 5 feet. A DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check enables the player characters to hear a heated conversation ahead of them, where the darkness of the tunnel is replaced by a glint of light. One of the voices is raging, demanding immediate violence. The other is placatory, inveigling the first voice to be calm and to trust him. Whether the player characters realise it or not, this is Dinsdale Requin and the Cunning Man trying to decide how to deal with them.

The tunnel is 45 feet long, terminating in a large cave approximately 60 feet by 50 feet. The cave itself, however, can only be described as...luxurious. Large glass cabinets are dotted throughout the room, each containing a wild-eyed awakened animal, brushed and dressed in a collar or hat. Several large leather sofas are dotted around, with ornately tapestried cushions placed carefully on them. A series of small, exquisitely carved wooden tables are positioned at three points around the room. Towards the back of the room, there's what appears to be some form of summoning circle, used in ritual magic. A DC 16 Intelligence (Arcana) check more properly identifies this as a teleportation circle — enabling the rich customers the Cunning Man sells the unfortunate animals to, to drop in at their convenience. Four goblin guards are stationed at various points around the cave, and, at the centre, between the cabinets, a dwarf and a large, stocky man are arguing. The player characters instantly recognise the Cunning Man, having seen him in their last adventure. The other man is Dinsdale Requin, but he is in his human state currently. His gigantic anchor is propped up at the side of the cavern. As unobtrusively as its possible for an enormous, blood-stained anchor to be.

What the player characters do once they arrive in the pet shop is up to them. They can see Young Josef trapped in one of the glass cabinets on the other side of the room. It would be feasible to sneak across the room, free him, and leave. Galert, the Watcher, intends to free all of the imprisoned animals and ensure that the Cunning Man's ugly business is finished for good.

Moving around the pet shop requires a DC 14 Dexterity (Stealth) check, given the number of guards around the place. Any failures result in pandemonium! The goblins immediately gather into a single group, and Dinsdale undergoes the hideous transformation into a wereshark — his flesh distending and too many teeth sprouting from livid pink gums. They attack, attempting to kill the player characters, while the Cunning Man supports them with a few spells. The Cunning Man doesn't stay too long, though. After three rounds, he runs towards the teleport circle and flees!

Requin won't flee, no matter the circumstances. He fights with reckless abandon, enjoying himself intensely. The goblins provide support to the wereshark, but he leads the combat, snapping at the player characters with his vast jaws or bludgeoning them with the anchor he carries everywhere. All the while he keeps up a sardonic commentary.

What Young Josef Knows...

Eager to repay the debt he feels he owes the player characters, Young Josef tells them everything he's seen and heard while a prisoner:

- 🐾 The Cunning Man struck a sinister deal with a character called 'The Rat King'.
- 🐾 It was the King who showed the Cunning Man this hidden space. He rules the Gullet Cove underworld; all sewers belong to him.
- 🐾 The Rat King was given a generous cut of the proceeds by the Cunning Man; he won't be happy at his income being terminated.
- 🐾 He doesn't know where the Cunning Man has gone, but he knows that the teleport circle leads to a safe house somewhere in the town.
- 🐾 The Rat King never appeared in person, he sent messengers and emissaries with scrawled notes.

Young Josef also talks in a voice thick with fear of the huge lumbering creature he glimpsed accompanying the Rat King's ambassadors. Larger and more terrifying even than Dinsdale Requin, he is keen to never see it again!

The fight continues until either Dinsdale Requin is defeated or the player characters are. The wereshark is uninterested in retreat and keeps battling until he is finished off for good. Once he has been dealt with, any surviving goblins throw down their weapons and surrender. The Watcher immediately begins smashing the cabinets and letting the scared, but otherwise unharmed 'napped awakened animals free. They are all intensely grateful to be rescued, especially Young Josef. He's even a little sheepish at being caught in the first place, but thanks the player characters profusely for being released. Young Josef also has a great deal of interesting information, information leading into a further potential adventure for the player characters!

The player characters can alert the Watch to the illegal pet shop the Cunning Man has been running. Should they do so, Filamena Gruth is both delighted the player characters stopped the illegal trade and embarrassed that she didn't know about it and halt it herself.

Young Josef's return to the Cradle results in the player characters being considered friends of the organisation; they each find a purse containing 200gp mysteriously smuggled in amongst their things over the next few days. They also find a second Guild Mark in amongst the coins.

Galert takes his leave of the player characters, thanking them for their assistance and praising their efforts, letting them know that he'll be watching out for them should they ever be in need.

As to what happens to the Cunning Man? Well, that's a different adventure...

EXPERIENCE

The player characters should earn enough experience from this adventure to allow them to reach the next level.



Adventure 3: The Enemy of My Enemy

His plans in tatters, his loyal enforcer dead, and his face now depicted in wanted posters, the Cunning Man goes to ground. But he's not done with the player characters just yet. This time, though, the Cunning Man isn't trying to ensure that the player characters don't interfere with his plans. This time he's coming to the player characters for help. He's a survivor, after all. And survivors don't care how they stay alive, just so long as they do. The following adventure is designed for 4-6 player characters of level 3-4. At least one should be an awakened animal.

Adventure Overview

Suddenly confronted by a dwarf being chased by three hooded rats, the player characters intervene. They soon wish they hadn't bothered when they discover the person they've just aided is none other than the Cunning Man! He pleads for the player characters help, explaining that the Rat King is after him and intends to feed him to a slaving beast. If the player characters offer him sanctuary, he promises to willingly hand himself over to the Watch. In fact, he'll happily walk with the player characters to the Watch station now — as long as they promise to accompany him the whole way. The Cunning Man is as good as his word. The problem is, the Rat King isn't taking any chances with the Cunning Man and soon dispatches his vile Rataclysm to chew the dwarf confidence trickster up and swallow him. The player characters must escort the terrified dwarf through the Gullet Cove streets, getting him to the Watch House, while the Rat King's followers attack them and harry them at every turn. It's going to be a very long night...



Opening Scene

The player characters can be doing anything — perhaps walking home from a night in the tavern or having spent a morning perusing the markets — when they are accosted by a frantic man. And not just any man. The Cunning Man grabs at them, gabbling for help and imploring them to shelter him! He's clearly deeply afraid, though any sceptical player characters can make a DC 14 Wisdom (Insight) roll to determine that this fear is genuine and not some form of ruse. It definitely isn't. The Cunning Man's clothes are tattered, and there's a suggestion of swelling around his eyes and lip. He babbles for assistance:

*Help me! Help me! They're coming, they're coming...
from every sewer!*

It's certainly something of a shock...and the Cunning Man doesn't let up. He reaches into his pockets and pulls out a handful of gold, thrusting it at the player characters with both hands and imploring them to take it, 'just so long as you protect me!'

What the player characters opt to do, after being so suddenly accosted, is pretty much up to them. They can arrest the Cunning Man, marching him directly to the Watch House, something the Cunning Man is quite happy to cooperate with. They can ignore him, leaving him to his fate...except the Cunning Man won't be so easily put off. If left behind, he follows, demanding and pleading for help.

If the player characters are sufficiently altruistic, or just frustrated enough to ask, the Cunning Man quickly tells them why he's so desperate for help...

🐾 *The Rat King is hunting me.*

🐾 *We made a deal...a deal that he'd let me use his underground passageways for a substantial percentage of my earnings. But, of course, you put me out of business.*

🐾 *Oh, no hard feelings. But, really, it's only fair that you help me out, right? That's reasonable, I think. Don't you?*

🐾 *I can give you the money I have left over. It's not a lot. But it's yours. And I'll go to prison, happily. Just...keep me safe!*

🐾 *He's sending rats after me! Big ones. And even worse, the wererats. They're combing the streets for me now. They nearly caught me, just before I found you.*

The Cunning Man is certainly right on the last point. If the player characters are in a large crowd, say at the market, then a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check enables them to spot three suspicious figures at the fringes. They are wearing hoods, but fur, sharp needle teeth, and other ratlike features are just about visible for those looking closely. These wererats follow the player characters, waiting for an opportunity to seize the Cunning Man and attack the player characters.

If, alternatively, the Cunning Man approaches the player characters at night in an empty (or virtually empty) street, the wererats are not so cautious. They immediately attack, surrounding the player characters and attempting to separate the Cunning Man from them. The four rats attack quickly and savagely, relying on speed to try and disorient the player characters. Once the player characters are forced into a defensive position, the wererats concentrate on assassinating the Cunning Man. If possible, two of the wererats focus their attacks on the player characters while two attempt to slay the Cunning Man. The wererats are determined foes; they don't flee, even if the battle turns against them. If only one of them is left alive, however, it flees.

If the player characters decide to pursue it, then move ahead to the Sewer Explosion encounter immediately, as the wererat deliberately leads them into a trap. If all the wererats are killed, or if the player characters decide not to immediately chase after the wererat, then the Cunning Man offers something like thanks to the player characters — though it's somewhat hard to tell what he's saying immediately, as he's breathing so hard. The player characters are confronted by a complex little dilemma at this point — what do they do with the Cunning Man?



Sewer Explosion

Whatever the player characters decide to do with their more-than-willing captive, they should begin to do it now. Whether they're marching him to the Watch House or leading him to the docks, or forcing him to show them his hideouts, they set off. If a player character has a passive Perception of 14 or more, they get the uneasy sense they're being watched. If no player character's passive perception is sufficiently high, then one player character may make a DC 14 Wisdom (Perception) check to see if they register the sensation. Working out where they're being watched from, however, is a very different matter. On a DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check, the player character determines that the watching eyes are not on the rooftops or on the street...but below it! In the small gaps in the street, provided for drainage, beady eyes are watching. Watching and waiting.

The player characters are being stalked. Very carefully stalked. The Rat King has decided he wants the Cunning Man dead, and he isn't going to give up. The town is suddenly alive with threats, every corner potentially obscuring the knife of the assassin, each rooftop bristling with the poison-tipped arrows of hypothetical killers. Except that the attack, when it comes, is from beneath the player characters' feet!

As they approach a crossroads, the Cunning Man urges the player characters to stop. "Something isn't right!" he hisses. He isn't wrong. The ground ahead suddenly erupts, chunks of stone and other debris flying everywhere. The player characters must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity save or suffer 1d8+1 bludgeoning damage. There's worse to come. As the haze of powdered stone begins to subside, the player characters become aware of a vast shape, clambering up through the hole in the street. It utters a hideous shriek, three huge heads straining upwards, teeth glinting. Then it charges. The Cunning Man yells 'The Rataclysm! Protect me!' and dives for shelter behind the biggest of the player characters. He whimpers as the Rataclysm gives another bellow of fury.

GM Tip!



Well...what do we do?

This is an opportunity for the player characters to do some real roleplaying, discussing what the right thing to do is with regard to their recently acquired fugitive friend. The bloodthirstier groups might want to kill the Cunning Man — he's done some extremely unsavoury things. We'd suggest you, the GM, steps in if this idea is mooted. That kind of ruthlessness might suit other games but not Animal Adventures. Taking the Cunning Man to prison is the most sensible option. The Cunning Man goes along with whatever, so long as he is protected. If the players are struggling to decide on the best option, emphasise that they are good animals and adventurers. That while the Cunning Man should definitely be punished, there are proper ways of going about it!





Rampaging Rataclysm!

The Rataclysm is a terrifying creature, created as a result of the Rat King's magical experiments. It's entirely obedient to the Rat King, small brain easily overwhelmed by the royal rat's mind control. It is also extremely strong and extremely dangerous. The creature charges towards the player characters as soon as it encounters them, laying about them with its vast fists and aiming to do some real damage. Its main target is the Cunning Man, of course, but it's more than happy to hurt a few player characters on the way. This is the Rat King's first real sight of the player characters — he's heard about them by this point (from the Cunning Man) and he's unsure what to make of them. So, he's testing them, seeing how they react and how they work together. While the Rat King isn't the genius he believes himself to be, he's also far from stupid. He's appraising the player characters closely, but he's not willing to lose any resources at this point. The Rataclysm fights until it has lost a quarter of its hit points, at which stage it suddenly pauses and flees back into the hole it made in the street.

The wreckage left by the Rataclysm's assault isn't the only thing left behind. A few moments after the Rataclysm vanishes, a message wrapped around a rock is hurled up towards the player characters. The message is written in a flowing, elaborate script, albeit one with a number of awkward smudges and inky ratty claw-prints forming a part of it. The text reads:

Dearest Friends,

I greet you as one greets all those with a mighty destiny. I am, humbly born though I was, now recognised as the Monarch and Lord Protector of all rats, both within the limits of Gullet Cove and beyond. The insalubrious creature you have with you, going by the ludicrous pseudonym the Cunning Man, is an enemy of all right-thinking rat folks everywhere. I request that you hand him over to the ministrations of my most capable and trusted servants, I'd esteem it a great favour. Indeed, I would go so far as to offer you your lives in exchange.

Of course, should you persist in thwarting my entirely deserved vengeance, I will thenceforth consider you impediments to the well-being of my good people. Such a situation, while regrettable, will end more painfully for yourselves than for myself and my kingdom. You have twelve hours to comply with my exceptionally reasonable terms, then I will be forced to take steps. Heavy hangs the head that wears the crown...I'm sure you understand. Please bring the aforementioned reprobate to the cemetery, before the allowed time has elapsed.

His Regal Majesty,

The Rat King, first of his name

(This message composed on behalf of his august personage by his lackey, Gripe)

Mob Rule

Once the player characters have read this, a crowd begins to gather around the hole, staring into the darkness of the exposed sewers. There are several angry demands made of the player characters for information. People are, understandably, scared and want to know precisely what's been going on...and why a giant rat monster just forced its way up from below.

A few of them try and snatch the letter from the hands of the player character holding it. To keep hold of the letter, the player character must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity save. Should one of the growing mob grab it, they read it aloud, before handing it on to those nearby. This is when the mood starts to turn ugly. They immediately demand that the player characters hand over the Cunning Man to the Rat King, to prevent any more incidents of the kind they've just witnessed — or been awoken from their night's sleep by, as the case may be. It doesn't take the mob long to work out which of the player characters' group is the Cunning Man. Some of them seize him and attempt to force him into the open sewer.

Diplomacy is likely the most sensible, and effective, option. The player characters can try and persuade the angry mob to release the hapless Cunning Man. This requires either a DC 14 Charisma (Persuasion) check, or, alternatively, you can let one or more of the player characters improvise a speech. The people of Gullet Cove are, on the whole, reasonable and peaceable people. They're just afraid and seeking for an easy solution — the easiest of which is flinging a defenceless dwarf into the waiting jaws of death. An address from a well-armed, and well-intentioned, adventurer turns them around, gradually. There is a great degree of hostility towards the Cunning Man, unsurprisingly, irrespective of how inspired the player characters' placatory words might be. But, if the player characters pass their check, or deliver a sufficiently convincing argument, the mob releases the Cunning Man. A failure sees him precipitated into the sewer.

Fortunately for the Cunning Man, the sewer is empty. The Rat King and his forces abandoned it soon after lobbing up their lengthy letter...they weren't hanging around. There are a number of very large rats there, though. And they are more than happy to nibble on anyone who comes too close. Any townsfolk flee, yelling, from the sewer entrance. The player characters, if they ventured into the sewer entrance, are confronted by eight giant rats, who attack immediately. They are very hungry and have deliberately been left behind by the Rat King to dissuade any potential followers.

So...What's Next?

The player characters have two potential options at this point — they can either press forward into the sewer, chasing the Rat King into his lair and corner him, with the Cunning Man in tow. They can try holing up somewhere, keeping the Cunning Man safe for as long as possible, or they can approach things more proactively; preparing themselves for combat and trying to spring a surprise on the Rat King when he least expects it, at the cemetery.

Should the party opt to pursue the Rat King into the sewers, you can skip straight to the fourth adventure in this book, Kill Ten Rats, making a few changes to reflect the fact that the player characters are a little ahead of schedule. For starters, let them level up. You might also need to change around some of the encounters slightly to make them work as needed.

The next approach is to find a defensible position and get ready to hold it against whatever the Rat King sends. And you better believe he's sending something. The player characters can choose anywhere to make their stand — a random building they come across, the Watch House, the Master's Retreat Inn...anywhere they can think of. They just better be prepared for what's coming!

The final option is the decision to try and spring a surprise on the Rat King at the agreed meeting point — the cemetery. The Rat King comes expecting the handover of his intended victim, and this offers a chance to the player characters, letting them catch him at his most complacent!

GM Tip!



It's entirely possible, of course, that the player characters opt to take a fourth path which no one could possibly have accounted for. That's the nature of players and roleplaying games... we suggest you pick out the encounters and events from the following sections you find most appealing or exciting, and place it in the party's path, changing the context but keeping the encounter roughly the same. This allows you to make use of the resources provided here, while also ensuring that your player characters get to choose their own destiny!



Assault on Pawcinct 13

Choosing to set up a defensive perimeter to defend the Cunning Man against the Rat King's hordes is a risky but understandable choice. For one thing, as the Rataclysm demonstrates, nowhere is safe. Finding somewhere that can be fortified isn't a bad move. Finding help, from the Watch for example, is similarly sensible.

Should the player characters decide to bring the Watch in on their side, Filamena is, by this point, entirely convinced of the player characters' good intentions. The problem is that there aren't many constables in the Watch House... there never are these days. Filamena is there, of course, and McKenzie. There are also 1d4+1 other officers doing some paperwork or making extremely strong cups of tea. Filamena orders her officers to obey the player characters and works with them to shore up windows and doors, readying the Watch House for attack. There's not much else that can be done then, save wait until the Rat King attacks. Wherever the player characters choose to make their stand, if there are people or awakened animals resident there, they operate much as Filamena and the Watch do — albeit with greater trepidation. They might not be happy about the Cunning Man being the cause of imminent attack, but they are prepared to trust the player characters — the Cradle's respect for them gets around pretty quickly.

The player characters can spend time constructing a series of barricades and obstacles to defend themselves, and the building, from the horde without. The player characters can create fortifications to prevent entry for the ravaging rat hordes at their door.


As the appointed time for the player characters to deliver the Cunning Man to the Rat King comes and goes, sinister snuffling sounds begin to emanate from everywhere; the pipes, the floorboards, even the roof. Rats can get everywhere...and these rats are proving this theory very correct. A high pitched, querulous voice from without shrieks:

"I gave you twelve hours to obey my very reasonable request, and you have failed to do so! Fetch the wretch for me, my darling ratlings! And now, Gripe, carry me back to my throne room!"

The siege begins!

Rather than prescribe a building the player characters need to reach and hide in, the following is a list of events they might experience in any location under siege from the Rat King. Mix and match these as you need to keep the player characters on their toes. This should be a tense battle, against an unseen number of foes who just keep coming. This isn't an easy battle, and nor should it be!

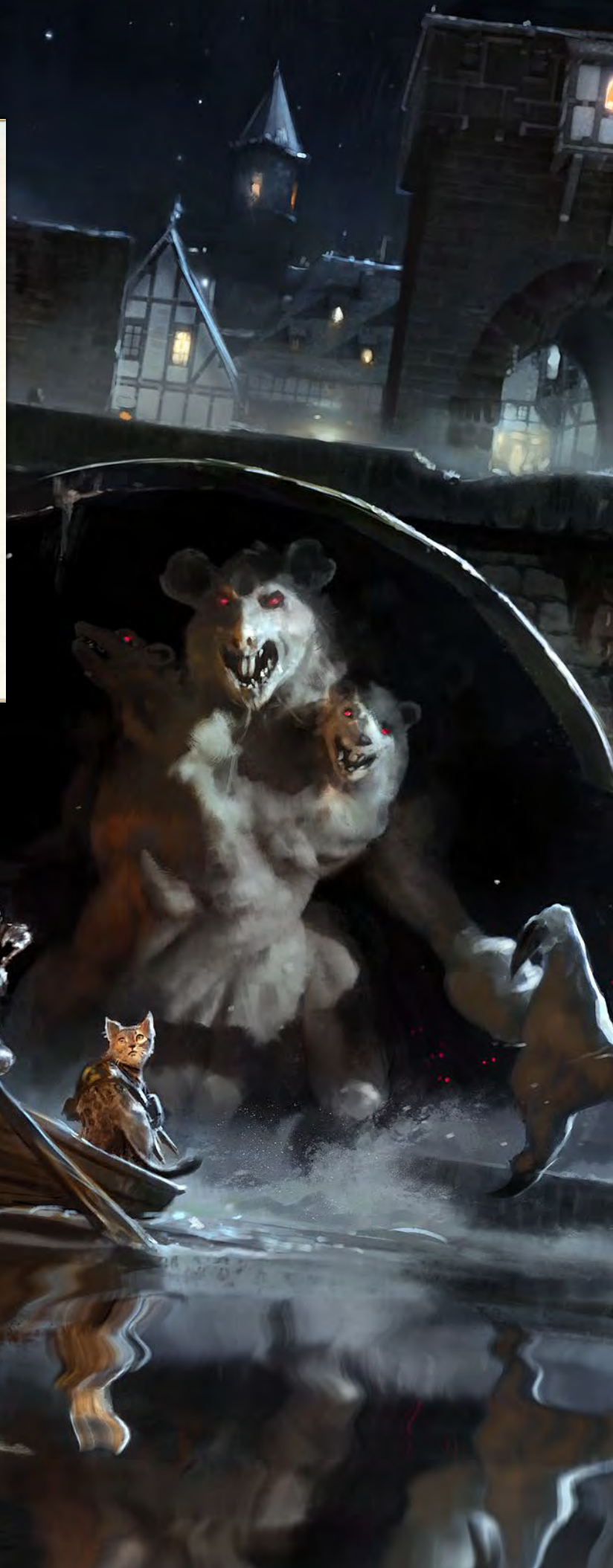
Event	Location	Effect
Through the Wall!	<i>The wall with the most player characters adjacent to it</i>	Whether through the use of magic, gunpowder, or sheer brute strength, the Rat King's forces smash through the wall. 1d3+1 wererats and 1d6+2 giant rats pile through the fissure in the wall. Each turn after this, another 1d4 giant rats follow, until the player characters manage to seal the rift!
I'm Off!	<i>A back exit</i>	The Cunning Man panics, convinced he's about to be captured at any minute, and tries to run. Unfortunately, just as he does so, two wererats burst through the back door and seize him. The Cunning Man begs for help as they attempt to drag him away!
Rat Smash!	<i>Through the centre of the floor</i>	The Rataclysm does what it does best. Smash it way through and into places. The floor of the building suddenly bulges outwards, then bursts like a vast blister. Two wererats and 1d6+2 giant rats clamber out of the hole. The player characters are in serious, serious trouble...what are they going to do?
Swarm!	<i>Pouring down the stairs, or through a window, or through a gap in a door</i>	A swarm of rats (normal sized, fortunately) flood in from outside. A tidal wave of fur and fury courses across the floor and attempts to overwhelm one or more of the player characters. This is a perfect way to distract the player characters before introducing something much, much worse!
What is that?!	<i>Clambering through the largest window</i>	The window is torn bodily out of the wall, frame and all. A deluge of glass and mortar can be heard outside. The screeching face of the Rataclysm peers in, something like a grin splayed across its ravening features. Two wererats clamber up and through, swords between their teeth, ready for combat!
BOOM!	<i>The main door</i>	A shuddering blow, then another, and another, and another. The Rataclysm hurls itself at the barricaded door, trying to force its way through the wood. The player characters can run forward and try and reinforce the door. Should they do so, have each player character against the door make a DC 10 Strength check. If half of the total number of player characters succeed, the door holds. Otherwise, it crashes open and the Rataclysm, plus 1d4+1 wererats and 1d6+2 giant rats enter.
All Out Assault!	<i>Everywhere, simultaneously</i>	A wererat and a giant rat fling themselves into the room from any possible point of ingress — each window, each gap in the door, anywhere they might conceivably gain entry, they do so. They immediately try and open the main door to let the Rataclysm in. If they succeed, things are going to get very ugly, very quickly!
That's Inside the Room!	<i>Dropping down from above</i>	Things seem quiet; relatively, anyway. There's still noise outside, but it's subdued. Each player character gets the opportunity to make a DC 16 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice the wererats sneaking along the ceiling, their preternatural stealthiness making them barely detectable. There is one for each player character and as soon as they are noticed, they drop and attack. If they aren't noticed, each makes a surprise attack as they fall upon their guileless prey.



The battle is intense and frenetic, with the rats constantly launching their assaults on different parts of the building, wearing the player characters down. You can keep these attacks up for as long as you, the GM wants, for as long as it is tense. Throughout the fight, the Cunning Man is utterly useless; entirely consumed by fear. He doesn't even cast any spells to protect himself — unless reminded by one of the player characters. He backs away from any confrontation, trying to keep himself safe from any potential attack.

The Rataclysm is the most dangerous weapon in the Rat King's armoury and, once his favoured beast is reduced to 1/3 of its starting hit points, he immediately resummons it, sends one final wave of three wererats and three giant rats to delay any pursuit and absconds. He's not wasting any more of his precious subjects on such a fruitless endeavour. Not now, anyway.

As the Rat King's forces scurry back to the sewers, their extra-long tails between their legs, reinforcements begin to arrive to assist the player characters, tend their wounds, and debate in hushed tones what needs to be done about this fresh menace to the town...



Graveyard

Doing exactly what the Rat King demands isn't exactly the heroic thing to do...but following his instructions to some extent is a good idea. After all, the player characters know exactly where he and his minions are going to be in twelve hours. This gives them time to prepare a trap, plus an opportunity to spring it. Of course, the Rat King is going to be expecting some form of treachery — you don't become king of the rats without some degree of verminous cunning — but a chance is a chance.

The cemetery is a large open expanse of grassland with a large mausoleum at its centre. The mausoleum is one of the Rat King's secret entrances to the underworld he rules over, and it's here he and his personal throne carrier — Gripe — are waiting for the Cunning Man. They are accompanied by the Rataclysm (the Rat King's paranoia won't allow for anything less than the most belligerent and capable of bodyguards). The rest of the cemetery is populated with three hidden wererats and eight giant rats. The Rat King's plan is to draw the player characters towards the mausoleum, hopefully with the Cunning Man alongside them. Then, the Rat King intends to keep the player characters engaged and distracted while his various minions close in around them, catching them in a gradually tightening noose. It's a cunning plan...if it works.

Of course, the player characters can devise their own approach. You, as the GM, should be as encouraging of these strategies as possible. Let the player characters be creative; burning down the whole cemetery might be too far, but even the craziest plans are worth considering, just remember to apply appropriate tests. For example, if the player characters decide to carefully patrol the cemetery, they can spot the secreted wererats on a DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check and with a DC 14 Dexterity (Stealth) check, turn the tables by sneaking up behind them and taking them out before the Rat King even realises what's happening!

The moment it becomes clear that the player characters are attempting to infiltrate the cemetery, all the rats and wererats immediately converge on them. It's a coordinated attack, with the aim of surrounding them and bringing them down through weight of numbers. The player characters can use whatever tactics necessary to win the fight, but it'll be difficult. The presence of the Rat King means that the wererats and giant rats won't run away; they'll fight until they're all killed or otherwise incapacitated.

The Rat King doesn't emerge from the mausoleum until he receives a signal from one of his underlings that any unpleasantness is concluded. Especially cunning player characters might be able to lure him out of the mausoleum in this way, springing a trap on an unexpected Rat King, and getting a chance to severely damage the Rataclysm before it can bring its vast strength to bear...but they'll have to be very smart to do so.

The player characters can attempt to stop it doing so, but they'll have to kill it. Its sole purpose is to obey the Rat King...no matter what the cost. If it's impeded in escaping, it attacks, immediately intervening if any player character tries to get down the tunnel after its master. If the player characters choose to let it escape, it drags the vast stone pedestal back into place as it disappears beneath.

The Mausoleum

The inside of the mausoleum is occupied by a large stone sarcophagus, covering a descent into the Rat King's underground kingdom. The Rat King and the Rataclysm are poised by it, ready to scarp at the first sign of his plans being comprehensively foiled.

Getting into the mausoleum isn't the easiest. The door is old, made of stone, and pretty resistant to movement. When the rats use this entrance, the Rataclysm is dispatched with them to prise open the heavy door. For the player characters, they'll need to succeed on a DC 18 Strength (Athletics) check. As the door opens, the Rat King gives a screech of fear and the Rataclysm begins to throw hunks of heavy stone at the player characters. Each of these does 1d6 damage unless the player character succeeds on a DC 14 Dexterity save. The Rat King uses this opportunity to flee, before calling the Rataclysm after him. The Rataclysm retreats into the hole, dragging the displaced sarcophagus back into position as it does so.





Wrapping Things Up

The Rat King's plan is thwarted, and, while the vermin lord is still below Gullet Cove, plotting his next move, he's definitely more concerned with the player characters than the Cunning Man now. Giving away his existence to so many residents of the town was not his plan, and he's regretting his rashness already. But the folk of Gullet Cove know that the Rat King needs to be taken care of...and they know some heroes who might just fit the brief. The next adventure deals with those exact circumstances!

The Cunning Man is as good as his word. Or at least he seems to be. He lets the player characters deal with him as they see fit, whether imprisoning him or banishing him... but the Watch House is going to struggle to keep such a slippery customer trapped for long. Who knows what he's going to be up to next, and in what disguise?

This adventure is at an end. But the campaign most certainly continues!

EXPERIENCE

The player characters should earn enough experience from this adventure to allow them to reach the next level.



Adventure 4: Kill Ten Rats

Adventure Overview

The Rat King, criminal monarch of Gullet Cove's underworld of thugs, low-lives, gutter-born scum, and troublemakers, runs a particularly notorious side business in the form of a secret gladiatorial labyrinth called the Warrens of Woe, hidden beneath the Cove. Newcomers and strangers to Gullet Cove occasionally go missing, captured by the Rat King's agents. These unwitting human captives are then forced to run a gauntlet of death traps and challenges before meeting their ultimate end — pitted against one another in an area where only the strongest will survive. Jeering animals watch this, betting against one another and hoping to pick the winner. For years, this has happened, largely under the nose of the Watch, concealed by unscrupulous deputies paid, off or bullied into keeping it secret. But now the Rat King has gone too far, his agents growing ever reckless in their procurement of unwilling players in this fearsome game.

On the other side of town, the Lady Rhanda Yrestalle, Goldmaster of the Goldsmith's Guild, is on her deathbed, and there is concern that she will die leaving her estate and title without an heir. It is a closely guarded secret of the

Goldsmith's Guild that each successive leader has been related; a ceremonial title but not at all a symbolic one. Generations ago, the Guild's founder was blessed for his service to the goddess of fortune, Ernutet (see note below), and was marked with a magical birthmark in the palm of his hand, to be passed down to his descendants. Only those of the blood could see it. So long as the Guild's leader bore the mark, the Guild would know fortune. But Yrestalle's immediate heir long since disappeared from Gullet Cove.

The Guild has sent agents across all the lands, seeking any news of the heir. One of them met with success, finding a grandchild of the Goldmaster, bearing the sacred mark of Ernutet. The agent spoke to the heir but did not explain the true nature of their identity, as per Yrestalle's instructions. The agent merely bade the heir to travel to Gullet Cove and to show a particular ring to the Port Warden, who would direct them to the correct place and ultimately welcome them to a life of comfort and luxury beyond any they could have desired.

It is here, unfortunately, that these stories converge.

Kill Ten Rats

The title of this adventure is a tribute to a common introductory quest in many fantasy roleplaying games (particularly computer games), often thought of as a menial task, sometimes serving as a low-risk fight to introduce combat mechanics to newcomers.

Unlike those adventures, the “rats” in this adventure are no mere rodents to be done away with little effort, but a motley array of giant rats, rat swarms, and a quartet of wererat siblings, all in service to the diabolical Rat King, pulling strings from his vantage point off-stage.

The title also refers to the captive Rat Queen, a hybrid creature made up of ten conjoined awakened rats, captured and forced to dwell at the end of the Rat King’s Warrens of Woe.

As noted above, the Rat King’s agents, the Mauger gang — a pack of sibling were-rats, were on the very river boat and picked the heir as one of their intended prey, along with a handful of others traveling alone. On the night before the Copper Tub, the riverboat that plied the route back and forth between Windlass and Gullet Cove, put into the docks, the Maugers acted, drugging and overpowering the heir and the others, then using an army of rats hidden aboard the ship to secretly ferry them off the ship in the dead of night, bypassing the Port Warden and customs inspectors—and the authorities—altogether. Once in town, the captives were smuggled to the secret tunnels beneath the Poisoned Chop. There, they are to be forced into the Rat King’s deadly games.

One of the heir’s personal effects — the Goldsmith Guild agent’s ring — was taken from their confiscated possessions and was sold to a local fence. Recognizing it for what it was, the fence contacted the Guild. Thus, they hired some competent talent to see that Goldmaster Yrestalle’s grandchild is returned, as quickly and quietly as possible.

And it is here that the player characters come into the picture.



Note: The minor goddess Ermutet is suggested here as a goddess of wealth, goldcrafting, and general prosperity. Her holy symbol is a knotted golden serpent with its tail in its mouth. It is recommended that her worship be extremely obscure, even to religious scholars. Perhaps she has fallen out of favour; worshipped by very few, if any, and largely ceremonially. She has no clerics nor paladins and is mostly a tradesperson’s deity.

The gamemaster is encouraged to substitute another appropriate god from their own campaign world, if Ermutet is not suitable.

Scene One: Going Gold!

To skip the boring preamble that often accompanies adventures, the gamemaster is encouraged to begin the adventure with the assumption that the player characters have already been contacted by the Goldsmith Guild and are at least ready to hear an offer. They are now at the door of the home of Lady Rhanda Yrestalle, the Goldmaster of the Goldsmith's Guild, which also doubles as the headquarters of the Guild. Built close to Grimsmouth Hall, its proximity signifies the former close association with the city's leadership. An opulent, yet fortified building, it sends a message that those inside have money, and are well able to withstand theft. The symbol of the guild — a knotted golden ring — is emblazoned above the main doors. After a short wait in a gilded hall with painted ceilings and a shocking amount of gold on display, the adventurers are escorted by an awakened golden retriever into Yrestalle's presence, taken up to her opulent bedchamber, as she is confined there due to age.

She is an extremely old woman, her many decades show on her face, though she still has a formidable presence and her voice does not waver as she speaks. The décor in the room is ornate and speaks of incredible wealth, though the old woman is clad in a simple robe and cap for warmth. Chairs have been arranged around the bed, so the adventurers can seat themselves. The attendant retriever stands by, patiently, at the door, looking serious.

Lady Yrestalle tells the player characters that she would like them to find a missing person, and she would appreciate discretion. She does not trust the authorities, as even though the Captain of the Watch is honorable enough, she is concerned that word will get out of her request, and enemies will use the information against her. She explains that long, long ago, her daughter left Gullet Cove seeking adventure, never to return. Word reached Yrestalle that her daughter Anya had had a child but died shortly after — and the identity of that child was not revealed. So Yrestalle spent a fortune sending agents out to find this grandchild and return them to Gullet Cove to claim their inheritance. Many came forward, but all these claimants were false, lacking a certain identifying birthmark. She does not elaborate on what it is.

Finally, one of Yrestalle's best agents, a particularly enterprising awakened spaniel named **Gryre**, sent a cryptic message saying that he met with success and that the likely candidate had been given a ring and instructions to take a boat downriver and to report to the Port Warden's office, to receive further instructions. Gryre then went silent and sent no further message. Yrestalle was uncertain what happened to him but understood his (frustrating) desire for secrecy. The heir never arrived, and the ring given to them turned up amidst the wares of a local fence, who has now disappeared.

Now Yrestalle needs someone to find their heir, by whatever means necessary. She offers 400 gold pieces per player character for their efforts, and a bonus of an additional 100 apiece should the matter be resolved without any significant attention from the authorities. She will know if the one they bring to her is not the true heir, as their birthmark is unique, and she will identify it easily.

The player characters may not take this deal at face value, and may want to pursue the matter:

- 🐾 A successful DC 10 Wisdom (Insight) check reveals that she is hiding something. A DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check gets her to admit that the true heir has a magical birthmark identifying them as an heir to her legacy, a gift to her line from a god, many generations ago.
- 🐾 A successful DC 18 Charisma (Persuasion) check increases the amount she is willing to pay by an additional 50 gold pieces. As the Goldmaster, she is a shrewd negotiator.
- 🐾 A successful DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check shows that she clutches her right hand whenever the identifying birthmark is mentioned. Her gestures later reveal no unusual marking.

Once everything has been settled, if it is not obvious to the player characters, she tells them that they should start at the Port Warden's Office (see below). Failing that, the ring showed up in the possession of a thief of the Thieves' Guild, so that avenue might be worth pursuing. She would dearly like Gryre's ring back, and with it news about how the thief came into possession of it.

With that, they are shown out of her chambers and the Goldsmith's Guild Hall.



A Visit to the Port Warden's Office

The Port Warden's office is described on page 74 of the gazetteer, located between two warehouses at the docks. It is a dilapidated, dirty building filled with clutter and trash; dim windows, peeling paint, and rust stains the walls. The building creaks with the wind and seems almost too rickety to stand upright. Amazingly, the door is unlocked, and many of the rooms inside are abandoned, filled only with broken furniture and rat droppings. Upon the ground are many buckets to catch leaks from the roof and floors above, and the place somehow feels worse than abandoned. A short hallway leads to an open door marked "Office", crudely painted on the wall with an arrow indicating that indeed, that must be the place.

As the player characters approach, they hear some rustling and a crash, along with a muffled curse in a male human voice. As they grow near, the sounds of scraping and more rustling become louder, and it seems as if someone inside is in the process of trashing the room. Entering the office, they can see that in a sort of jail cell in the back of the office, a tall, stooped man is shrieking, perched atop a precarious pile of registers and ledgers. The ground is teeming with a veritable carpet of black bodies — several rat swarms, trying to get to the man on the stack of books! The rusted, barred door to the cell is closed, apparently locked.

As the player characters approach, one rat swarm engages them and the other continues to try to get to their target. To get the cell door open, the player characters must succeed in a DC 12 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check. The man is so paralyzed with fright at the rats below that he does not notice the player characters unless they've launched into combat outside. Once the cell door is open, the rest of the rats swarm towards them. The rats have been ordered by the Mangers to eliminate the Port Warden before he speaks to the player characters, but if they're sufficiently injured, they flee, disappearing into the many holes and gaps in the walls and floor of the office building.

Rat Swarms

Once the rats are dealt with, the man waves to them, losing his balance and crashing to the ground, along with the pile of books he was atop. This is the Port Warden, Gaius Vandel. He spends most of his time patrolling the docks and only an hour in the office, but today, that hour happens to be happy hour, and Gaius is quite drunk and was in the cell for an old register from several years ago for some particular reason that made sense when he started. Then...rats!

Once his initial shock has subsided, he settles into his chair and seems lucid, but is also still quite drunk and his recollection of facts may be somewhat unreliable. He has no idea why the rats attacked him, and what they were after. "What a question! Have I done something to offend these rats...is that what you are implying?"

If asked about his role in the return of the heir, he explains that "I do a lot of business with the little fellow, Gryre, thank you. I cannot talk about some of it, so you must respect my oath of con-fi-den-tee-al-it-y." (And yes, he sounds it out like that, as if he can't remember the word syllable to syllable.) But then he goes on as if he hadn't said that. "The little guy, he asked me to wait on the dock and welcome some newcomer to town, arriving on the Copper Tub, and to send them along to the Goldsmith Guild hall if they had Gryre's ring with them. They never showed, though...I checked all the names...and I even stayed late!"

A successful DC 12 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals a passenger and goods manifest tacked to the wall near Gaius' chair, clearly labelled "Copper Tub" and dated with the apparent arrival of the vessel into Gullet Cove. Most of the items and passenger names are checked off, and appropriate customs fees noted as paid, but six of the passengers' names are unchecked, no entry fees paid.

Gaius does not know anything more about the identity of this person and explains that Gryre was going to go find them, so he didn't know anything about them either, other than they were relatively young and most likely human. Other than that, Gaius doesn't know much. It is more than possible that he missed their arrival — there are an awful lot of ships and they do have a lot of people on them, after all — but if the player characters don't believe him, they're welcome to look around on the docks.

Asking for someone "young" and "probably human" should be pretty easy, if someone isn't too discriminating.

Asking Around at the Docks

As can be imagined, wandering around the docks asking if anyone has seen a “young” person, “most likely human”, perhaps even with a concealed birthmark is a wonderful way to be laughed at, or at the very least get polite bafflement.

A successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals that some of the dock workers remember when the captain of the Copper Tub put in, she and Gaius got into a bit of an argument about some missing passengers. The captain said she and her crew searched the ship top to bottom, and she suspects that they jumped ship the early in the morning before putting into port, under cover of darkness.

One thing the dock workers did notice was that the dock cats got agitated when the Tub pulled in to port, hissing and growling extensively at a couple of passengers who departed, a brother and sister pair of dandies named the Mangers, who do business on the ports from time to time. They Mangers are usually up to no good and live somewhere near the edge of town. If anyone is looking for them, maybe they’ll be at the Poisoned Chop, which they favour.

So Many Eyes

As the player characters are wandering around through town, they are discretely being followed by the Rat King’s wererat henchmen, the Manger Gang (see page 113 for more on the wererats). These wererats spend most of their time in human form, hiding their true natures. They are skilled, if overconfident bravos and thieves, and use the Rat King’s vast network of unawakened rats as their informants and spies, a living surveillance system, so even if there is no visible human observer, the player characters are being watched from the moment they leave the Goldsmith Guild House.

The rats are small, their kind are commonplace throughout Gullet Cove, and the player characters are not expecting to be shadowed. One of the player characters may make a DC 18 Wisdom (Perception) check, at disadvantage, to see if they notice they are being tracked. If the roll is a success, the player characters notice any of the following:

- 🐾 A particularly large looking rat seems to be staring at them from the edge of a building rooftop, tracking them as they move past. If they notice it, it scurries away.
- 🐾 Two rats peer at the player characters from the shadow beneath a wagon. If they are approached, they split and race off in opposite directions, quickly disappearing into cracks or crevasses.
- 🐾 A rat seems to be keeping pace with the player characters as they move through the town, running along the street in the corners. When it hits an area it cannot pass, it squeaks a message to another nearby rat, who races off.

The player characters can chase these rats down if desired but will learn nothing from them unless they have some means of speaking with animals, such as a druidic spell. If so, the rat tells anyone who asks that they were promised cheese by one of the “rat mans” if they would follow the player characters and say where they went. If asked about the “rat mans” the rat explains that some “mans” can turn into big rats and could they please have some cheese now. The spy rats are not particularly loyal to the Mangers and happily lead the player characters to the Manger hideout (see page 211).

Alternately, the rats might help lead the player characters into an ambush, appearing to spy on them but in fact posing as bait to lure them into an ambush by the Mangers. See Dry Gulched, on the next page.

Ultimately, the rat spy angle is a way the gamemaster can shortcut the player characters through the investigation if it becomes stalled.





Dry Gulched!

If the investigation is stalled or the player characters are getting bored (so much talking!), the gamemaster should have the Mangers intervene directly, trying to either take the player characters out with an ill-advised but cathartic ambush. This may happen after dark or when the player characters enter a particularly shady part of town, for example, almost anywhere near the Thieves' Guild Headquarters, the Poisoned Chop, the Docks, or, well...many many places in Gullet Cove.

Depending on how things are going, the Mangers want to either scare the player characters or put an end to their investigation, permanent-like. They find an alley or conveniently quiet street and send one or two rat swarms (see page 120) to block one entrance, herding the player characters towards a pack of giant rats (see below) which they've convinced to attack the player characters. There should be at least two giant rats per player character, with one extra.

The player characters see two humans — a young man and a young woman — in fancy clothes and dandy-like hats, standing behind the rats. These are **Brannock and Dierna Manger** (both these Mangers use the wererat stats found on page 113). They tell the player characters to drop their investigation, which goes about as well as one might imagine. At the first sign of refusal, the Mangers simply order the rats "Kill them and pick their bones clean" and get away as quickly as possible, transforming into rats to escape notice...in a town full of awakened animals, a couple of rats in suits and elaborate hats doesn't seem particularly odd.

The giant rats aren't suicidal and don't really have much of a stake, so they'll flee if injured sufficiently or intimidated or frightened off.

Meeting with the Thieves' Guild

As one can imagine, one does not simply walk up the front door of the Thieves' Guild headquarters and ask to speak with the manager. There is no single Thieves' Guild headquarters and if there was one, it wouldn't very well be where one could just walk up and bang on the door, now could it? So the player characters will have to ask around, using their contacts (easy if any of the player characters are thieves), or check against Intelligence (Investigation) or some other means (Deception, Intimidation, Insight, Stealth, etc.)

They eventually learn that a safehouse is not too far from them and that one of the Guild's capos will meet with them at the Poisoned Chop (see page 85). This sounds awfully convenient, so when they arrive, they find that the capo, an awakened cat, is waiting for them already, with an excellent table in the back. The place is hopping, with many of the usual clientele on hand.

The capo is a black-haired, mangy yet majestic, one-eyed, oversized tomcat with a small silver patch covering his missing eye. He dispenses with introductions, offers his name only as "Blackmane" and asks them to get to the point.

When the player characters explain themselves, his answers depend on what they tell him.

🐾 The thief found the ring near an entrance to the dredges, the sewer tunnels that run under most of Gullet Cove. He gives the directions and careful information about how to find the entry if they are eager to know. The thief's name is not important. He sold it to a fence, who then tried to sell it back to the Goldsmiths, who recognized it for what it was.

🐾 If asked about missing people, he emphasizes that kidnapping is not any part of their repertoire of activities. People stealing is more the province of the Rat King, who has been known to have some sort of secret lair beneath the city.

🐾 If the whole story comes out, Blackmane tells them that the Thieves Guild wants no trouble with the Goldsmiths, who they enjoy robbing but would not challenge directly.

🐾 He does say, though, that he's heard that the Rat King's henchmen, a family of thugs named the Mangers, also started asking questions about the ring. He doesn't know much about the Mangers, but the bartender here does.

Ultimately, Blackmane is friendly to the player characters and almost suspiciously helpful. He doesn't want a group of unsanctioned mercenary adventurers charging around messing with Guild activities, and he knows very well that he's pointing them right at the Rat King, who he and the Thieves' Guild despise.

Whenever the interview is done, Blackmane heads out the front door, accompanied by almost everyone else in the Poisoned Cup who are not player characters.

Asking the bartender gets the word that the Mangers come here from time to time and get cheap beer that's gone sour on credit, and a lot of cheese. They're usually good for this, but lately they've been scarce. He knows that there are three or four of them — they all look and dress alike, so it's hard to tell — and live somewhere near the edge of town, where the dredges open up to the air.

The Maugers' Hideout

The wererat gang spends most of their time hanging out in their home, an abandoned building on the edge of town near a reeking entrance to the dredges. All the time, night or day, a steady stream of rats make their way singly or in small groups, darting in and out of the barred over, rotten front door, which a DC 10 Intelligence (Perception) check reveals to be a cleverly disguised door, hinged where the frame meets the wall, swinging inward without a lock. Inside is a mess, and the only indication of habitation is from upstairs, where the Maugers all live together, sleeping in a heap of straw and old clothes piled in one corner.

Most of the time they spend their days and nights throwing darts at their hideout in an abandoned building near the docks, playing terrible music on poor quality instruments, sometimes venturing forth to procure cheap beer at the Poisoned Chop, running up an outrageous bar tab, and giving cheese to a seemingly endless stream of their rat informants.

The house is basic and somewhat ramshackle, a single large room in the ground floor full of junk, broken furniture, old broken barrels, crates, and a seemingly deliberate maze of scrap wood. Making one's way through the ground floor and up the stairs requires a successful DC 10 Dexterity (Stealth) check. It leads up to one large room with three small rooms down a small hallway.

Everywhere, the upstairs is decorated with an abundance of ridiculous finery: too many chandeliers, gauche paintings, gaudy statues, candelabras, velvet curtains, gilt furniture, all arranged with no sense of décor or aesthetic other than "shiny!" In the middle of the room are several low couches, and on them are strewn the Maugers, unless they were alerted, in which case they'll be ready for a fight, armed with crossbows and throwing daggers.

If confronted peaceably, they deny everything, of course, and threaten to call the Watch (not likely!). They claim that they work for the Rat King (which is really dumb of them), and that they're untouchable. If the inevitable fight turns against them, they'll surrender or attempt to flee in wererat form.

If defeated, any surviving Mauger will admit that Ansonia and Glevan took the people off the boat. They drugged them at dinner, then had an army of rats swim them to shore in the dead of night. They brought them here through the dredges, then sent them down into the Warrens for the Rat King's spectacle. What happened to them down there, they don't know. The Rat King keeps something down there at the end of the Warrens...something he captured and chained up there years and years ago.

As for the ring, they say they took it from one of the passengers — they forget which — and sold it. Then when the Goldsmiths started asking questions, they got spooked and tried to cover their tracks. Which was why they sent rats to the Port Warden's office and tried to take out the player characters.

If asked where the Warrens are, the Maugers gesture down the hall...a darkened corridor at the back of the room. This hallway has three doors on one side, and each opens into a small side room filled with as much of a shocking amount of tawdry junk as is the main room. At the end of the hall is a door leading to a narrow, extremely steep stair that takes the player characters down into...the Warrens of Woe!

The Maugers, Wererat Gang

Brothers and sisters from the same pack, the Maugers were part of a much larger family but now only two brothers and two sisters remain, all in service to the Rat King. They are relatively young, barely out of their teens, but have risen to the top of the Rat King's criminal hierarchy with their unbridled viciousness and lack of any scruples. There is nothing they will not do to save themselves or to serve the Rat King, in that order.

Humanoid when not in their rat forms, they are nonetheless quite distinctive, with vaguely rodentlike features and beady eyes. The Maugers dress like dandies, favouring silk and velvet finery, bowler hats, and scented handkerchiefs, appearing like nothing more than a group of effete young nobles, clearly related. This is belied by their speech, revealing them to be unsophisticated hicks, crude and cruel in equal measure. Ansonia, the pack's default leader, is the firstborn and distinct in that she is an albino, with red eyes and white hair. Her brother Glevan is her most trusted, and favours a flaring mustachio, while the others, Brannock and Dierna, the other brother and sister, are followers, lacking much will of their own but serving their older sister cheerfully. All members of the Maugers use the wererat stats provided on page 113.



The Warrens of Woe

The stair from the Mauger's hideout leads into the audience chamber for the Warrens of Woe—the Rat King's hideous maze of death! Wooden benches ring the edge where the viewers can watch the spectacle below, but otherwise it's dark and deserted. The traps aren't set and hang loosely, apparently between uses.

The player characters can follow the course of the maze, but at the end of the viewing area, they need to either get down into the tunnel or go home. If they are carrying any light sources they hear the shouts of human men and women coming from the walls, echoing in the large chamber...begging them for help. The ground is covered with bones, broken and cleaned, animal and human.

As they get their bearings, a curious face with oddly dull eyes peers over the edge of the walls, a belled jester-style cap work askew atop it. Above a slender human shoulder, a curious construction juts up from its back, a howdah, inside which is a grotesquely bloated rat of considerable size. It's the Rat King. Beside him, looms the Rataclysm, snarling and raging, its heads frothing at the mouth.

Back atop the curious walls, the jester produces a small horn-like device of brass from somewhere behind the wall, and hands it up to the rat rider. The rat shouts down at the player characters, its voice shrill and tinny despite being magnified by the horn.

"Welcome, my dear visitors, to the Warrens of Woe! I hope you will put on a good show for my guests. If you manage to survive the labyrinth, you may yet see the light of day again!" With that he laughs, raises a tiny rat paw, signalling to the two humans flanking him. They tug on some chains dangling from the roof and a doorway opens in the wall of the round room, revealing a darkened passage beyond. The humans and awakened animals cheer, and begin to hoot and holler, waiting for the action to start.

If the player characters try to leap or climb up the walls, they find that the walls are smooth and greased. It requires a DC 25 Dexterity (Acrobatics) check to climb them, and due to the slipperiness and slight incline inward, all Climb rolls are at a disadvantage. Trying to use Intimidation or Persuasion to talk their way out of the situation is similarly fruitless. If by some miracle they manage to reach the top, they are pushed back into the pit by the two humans from the riverboat, using long poles.

There is little the player characters can do but go forward...into the Warrens of Woe.

The Obstacles

Once they pass into the Warrens, the door rattles shut, slamming down the ground behind them. Above, they see the onlookers hustling to follow them, eager to see what happens next and impervious to any pleas for mercy. The player characters must move forward as the obstacles are deployed against them, helpless in the Rat King's maze. Once inside, they find that the Warrens are a bewildering maze of sharp turns, switchbacks, and dead ends.

Navigating to the end of the Warrens requires three successful DC 15 Wisdom (Survival) checks. Failing any of these means the player characters stumble onto one of the obstacles listed below.

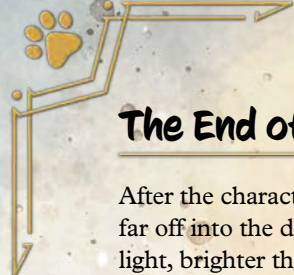
🐾 **The Barrels:** Ten meters from the first entry, the first of the Warrens' many traps is sprung! The GM should ask the player characters for a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) checks. If successful, the player character notices a metallic rattling sound as a series of swinging deadweights — tall wooden barrels bound with iron, swung like pendulums from long chains — are released from the darkness above their heads, swooping back and forth along a section of the hallway. Avoiding them requires a successful DC 10 Dexterity save. Heavy and greased, these barrels move quickly and cause 1d4 points of damage if they strike a player character, knocking them to the ground or even down the hallway. Once they have gone back and forth twice, they are quickly retracted. Any attempts to try to grab them are at DC 20 due to the size and lack of purchase, and any attempts to climb onto one are met with pole-armed attendants and a fall back into the Warren's maze.

🐾 **The Pit:** As the player characters venture further down into the tunnels, the gamemaster should ask for a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. Beneath their feet, a section of the floor drops away on a hinge from behind them, sliding them to the ground just over two meters below. A successful Dexterity save or Acrobatics check (DC 15) lets them leap to safety on the other side, while a failure means they fall into the pit for 1d4 points of damage. It is easy enough to help someone out of the pit once they fall, and the pit is shallow enough for a full-grown human to easily clamber out of, with a DC 5 Strength (Athletics) check.

🐾 **The Darts:** As the player characters continue, a series of carefully concealed, spring-launched darts hurtle at them from hidden recesses in the wall. Detecting these recesses requires a DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check. These are angled so they're not visible as one approaches. Activated by a pressure plate in the floor, it is only after one passes do they have a clear line of fire. Each character has 1d4 darts fired at them, but these are fired blindly without a guiding eye, so a successful DC 10 Dexterity save allows a player character to throw themselves to the ground, avoiding them entirely. The darts are drugged, but with a poison that causes unconsciousness, not death. Any darts that strike do 1 point of damage and force a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. Failure means the character falls unconscious for 1d4 hours.

The GM can add to these obstacles, as desired, or hasten the player characters through them to the end, following. Anyone who falls or is "killed" can be carried along by the others or left behind. If the characters dawdle, the gamemaster can introduce some rat swarms (see page 120), advancing slowly behind them, not as a combat threat, but instead to induce dread.





The End of the Tunnel

After the characters have made it this far, the tunnel extends far off into the darkness, at the end of which is a glimmering light, brighter than anything they've seen thus far. The chanting from above them has broken into support for the characters and dismay that they've made it all the way through the Warrens. The voice of the Rat King echoes from the tinny horn above, clearly exasperated, calling down to them.

"Very well then! You've made it. Go and leave this place. That way, then, and tell no one of what you've seen here!"

The tunnel narrows and closes shortly after, offering no vantage from above. The voices of the audience fade to a hush, and before too long it is almost impossible to walk side-by-side through the tunnel, and the only light is the stream of sunlight clearly visible at the end. The characters emerge into a large chamber, almost an oubliette, and above them an iron grate admits sunlight, streaming down into the room. An iron gate clangs shut behind them.

They're trapped again! But this time they're not alone, and from the darkness comes a curious sound that combines shuffling with scurrying, as if something with many small legs were dragging something ponderous across the stone floor. The near-vertical rays of sunlight are reflected by eyes within that darkness...many, many eyes. Then, they hear the mocking laughter of the Rat King, echoing down the darkened tunnel behind them.

The thing in the shadows moves toward them, slowly but then swiftly...

The monstrosity that lurches towards the character is a strange creature seemingly made up of the bodies of living rats, their tails tangled together and laced as if holding themselves together. The chain extends and encircles the creature's waist. This is the Rat Queen, the original ruler of the rats of Gullet Cove. She reaches out her hands and says in the common tongue "No kill!"

The Rat Queen

This curious creature was the former ruler of the vermin of Gullet Cove until being deposed by the nefarious Rat King. Long ago, a number of awakened female rats decided that their unawakened brethren needed to be protected. Binding their tails together, they became something more than the sum of their parts. Unfortunately, her calm temperament and determination to care for her rats left her open to a coup by the rapacious Rat King.

The Rat Queen isn't evil and doesn't even want to kill anyone. She's fed a marginal amount and is always hungry. What she wants is revenge upon the Rat King, who overthrew her, trapped her, and has kept her chained up here for so long most of her "people" have forgotten her. The Rat King sends humans down here, intending for her to kill them, but she never does so, attempting to help them and care for them as best she is able. The little food she has means she can do little for them, but she still tries her best. As a result, there are four wretched looking humans down here. They are all clad in rags, encrusted with grime, and look thoroughly miserable.

If the player characters slay the Rat Queen, they have put her out of her life of misery. She didn't really deserve it, but there's little way the player characters had to know that. The four prisoners tell them that she didn't in fact harm them, and it was the Rat King's human henchmen who locked them up.

If the player characters try to free the Rat Queen, they must either pull apart the links on the chain, requiring a DC 20 Strength (Athletics) check, or someone doing enough damage to the chain to sever it (20 hit points). She thanks them profusely in her limited speech. The four prisoners are also chained up... their ultimate destiny was to be starved out and then fed to the Rat Queen. Picking the locks on the cells requires a DC 14 Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check.

As the player characters attempt to free the Rat Queen and/or the prisoners, they hear a shrill little mocking voice laughing at them from the entry to the oubliette...it is the Rat King, along with several giant rats, and the hulking form of the Rataclism, finally unleashed!

You Thought it Would End Without a Fight, Did You?

At this point, the Rat King orders the Rataclysm to surge at the player characters and overcome them, killing anyone who has been freed from their cells. This should be a big, knock-down, drag out battle, with enough giant rats for two to three per player character, supplanted by as many rat swarms as make things interesting. Into the middle of the skirmish runs the Rat King's jester/mount Gripe, the Rat King still in the howdah atop his back, shouting orders into a tiny horn, clinging on for dear life.

If the battle goes poorly for the Rat King, he surrenders. Better to live than to die in a cage like... well... a rat. The Rat Queen may leap upon him, seeking her own vengeance, and the player characters are all too welcome to see her dispense her own rough justice or they can intervene if they feel charitable towards their intended murderer.

It may be too, that the Rat Queen identifies herself and some of the old rats remember her, and kneel before their former queen, thought lost all these years. Now freed, she chooses to remain in the Warrens for now, and will summon her people to her and rebuild her old court.





Wrapping Things Up

Once this has all been resolved, the player characters can properly talk to the four prisoners. After freeing them, one of them reveals a familiar looking birthmark on their hand! Heading out of the Warrens of Woe is relatively easy and they are unscathed or bothered, and if anyone living or dead was left in the Mauger house, they are gone.

From here, the other rescued prisoners thank the player characters for the rescue, and they head off to find their destinies, perhaps to become useful NPC characters in future adventures in Gullet Cove. The heir goes with the player characters to the Goldsmith's Guild hall, where the front door is opened by none other than an awakened animal, the dog called Gryre, arrived at least to see his charge to safety. He embraces the heir, so happy to see them alive, and explains that he was beset by many mishaps and unfortunate adventures after his meeting with the heir, and only recently escaped to find his way back home to Gullet Cove.

Family Ties

Gryre escorts the player characters and the heir to the Goldsmith Guild mansion when all has been settled. Brought face to face with Goldmaster Yrestalle in her bedchamber, the heir is asked to approach, and does so nervously. Gryre tells the player characters that what they will see cannot be spoken of to anyone, and it is only the gratitude of the Goldmaster that allows them to be witnesses.

Yrestalle asks the heir to show their hands, and as they do so, the image of a golden, shimmering and knotted serpent gleams from the palm of their hand. Yrestalle holds up her own hand, wrinkled and trembling slightly, and everyone in the room sees that it has a similar mark, which also glimmers into view. She extends her arms and pulls the heir into an embrace, crying slightly, beaming with joy.

"Thank you," she says, "for restoring my family and ensuring the future of the Guild."

Gryre asks the player characters to give them their time together, and escorts them from the room. Once outside, he removes his spectacles and wipes a tear from the corners of his large black eyes. He pulls a handkerchief from his waistcoat and blows his nose widely, blaming it on "All of this dust in here." The player characters may notice that the room is apparently spotless, but it is up to them whether to comment.

With that, he sees to the issue of their compensation for their part in the rescue.

Rewards


If the player characters rescued the heir (and any companions) from the Rat King and the Maugers, they should be rewarded in the form of wealth and experience points.

Goldmaster Yrestalle has each of the player characters given their gold pieces, as well as having earned her favor. If there is any activity she or the Goldsmith Guild could potentially aid the player characters with, dropping her name counts as rolling with advantage. This is only usable within Gullet Cove, with a suitable set of circumstances, and can be redeemed once. If it is abused or attempted to be re-used beyond that one time, it counts as rolling with disadvantage. Used egregiously beyond that, the Goldsmith Guild will send agents to quietly inform the player characters that they have earned the Guild's disfavor and should cease any mention of them again, else further consequences be suffered.

If the Maugers are defeated, the Warren of Woe is shut down, and the Rat King arrested. He faces a lengthy spell in the Watch cells. But he will be back again, working behind the scenes and embarking on another criminal enterprise. The shut-down of the Warren of Woe has cost him dearly, and he does not forgive lightly. The arranged number of player characters have earned a dangerous enemy. Though he is not willing to act openly against the player characters, they are nonetheless encouraged to keep an eye out for his inevitable vengeance.

EXPERIENCE

The player characters should earn enough experience from this adventure to allow them to reach the next level.





Adventure 5: Dark Doings at Grimmsmouth Hall

Adventure Overview

A new owner has recently purchased the haunted home of Grimmsmouth Hall, and already there are reports of strange happenings. It looks like the famously-haunted house is getting ready to chase off its newest occupant.

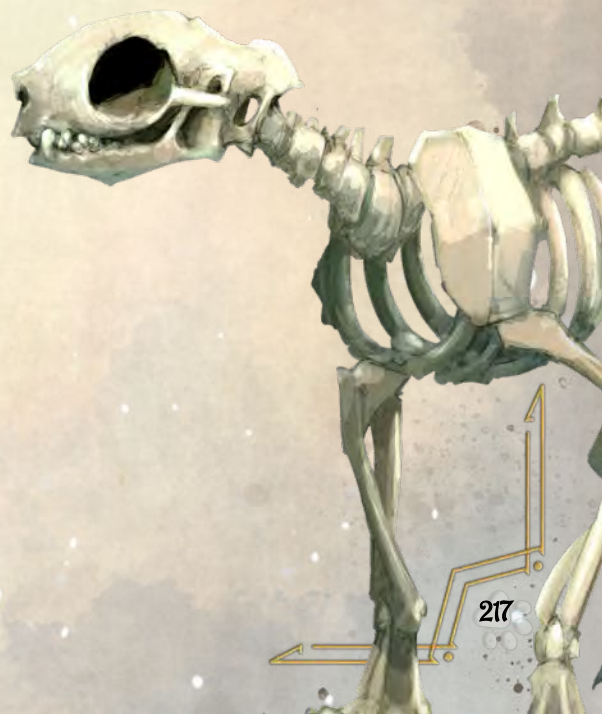
That's pretty normal for the Manor, but there's a twist: this new owner seems to welcome it. Unbeknownst to the heroes—and most of the town—the owner is none other than the Necromastiff, a dangerous practitioner of the Dark Arts.

The Necromastiff has locked himself away in the highest, most secure room of the manor, and from there gathers the ingredients for his powerful spells. He has already placed an enchantment on his chamber, so that only the non-living may enter while he performs his dark rituals.

Tricky, indeed.

While all may seem lost, there is still hope. Our heroes, while making their way through the labyrinthine twists and turns of the haunted house, will come upon two benign ghosts. Together, they hold the secrets to defeating the Necromastiff—as well as unearthing some darker truths about the manor itself—if only the heroes can put their spirits to rest.

Battling Skelly Cats, solving mysteries, and discovering long-buried secrets...what more could a hero ask for? The following adventure is designed for 4-6 player characters of level 5-6. At least one should be an awakened animal.





Fur-ther Breakdown and Secrets

Grimmsmouth Hall is an enormous estate looming over Gullet Cove. There are far too many rooms, secret passages, and dead ends for adventurers to explore in one sitting. While future releases may detail other wings of the manor or other secrets yet to be discovered, this adventure focuses solely on the Necromastiff and his tie to Grimmsmouth Hall.

That being said, Gamemasters should feel free to expand upon the house in any number of ways if it furthers the players' enjoyment or otherwise serves your campaign.

The focus of this adventure surrounds the two ghosts who need to be set to rest. The rooms in which they may be discovered are detailed in the order which they should be found.

So What's Really Happening? (Spoilers)

Players, beware: this section explains all the secrets of the adventure, and should be viewed by the Gamemaster only!

Grimmsmouth Hall and all its secrets has always been known to be haunted. The true revelation here is what – or who – is haunting it.

No, no, not haunting... *Possessing.*

Septimus Mugluk, Gullet Cove's first "true" mayor, built this hall and also died in it. Although his body died, the half-orc's spirit remained, growing angry and bitter over the next century. Little wonder none can live here for long before being run off by terrible events; the first owner never left.

What's more, his faithful, awakened mastiff, Lucas, died trying to save him. While Mugluk's body was never found, Lucas's was recovered and given a proper burial.

And now, over 100 years since his death, someone has cast a True Resurrection upon Lucas. A shadow of his former self, Lucas is a creature of impulse and need now. His only real drive is the instinctual need to return home and get his beloved master and friend back.

Since returning from the grave, the dark arts have come to him effortlessly. Using some of the long-fabled treasure he and Septimus hid away, the Necromastiff has purchased the Old Hall for himself. He now inhabits it, and as the spirit of his old friend draws ever closer to returning, things just keep getting more and more strange and frightening.

Unaware of the true identity of the new owner or his plans, the rest of the Cove only knows that the house is growing restless again, and it may start posing a threat to the community if it's not investigated and settled.

From the moment they meet the first ghost, suspicions may start to arise in the heroes that some dark events happened here, and maybe the beloved mayor, Septimus Mugluk, wasn't as kind-hearted as all suspected.

This is, sadly, correct. Mugluk didn't get where he was by being nothing but friendly. He was sharp, and he had a network of assistants and spies to help him keep on top of his game. There were several conspiracies going on that the ghosts were a part of:

- 🐾 Several prominent citizens wanted control of the town to move away from a single mayor. Brother Monty-Jonn was there to discuss the formation of a ruling council. Mugluk didn't like that.

- 🐾 A long-standing rivalry between Mugluk and the rogue Adora Torthe came to a head when Adora tried to blackmail the mayor.

Background Clues

As the heroes go to investigate each location, very sharp players (or those very familiar with game mechanics) might pick up what the Necromastiff's plans are. A number of clues can be found, just as background color:

- 🐾 More people than usual have been asking for blessings with holy water, even going so far as to pay for vials of it. Holy water is an ingredient for the True Resurrection spell that Lucas is preparing to cast.

- 🐾 Around the city, jewelers are complaining about thefts. Rumors at the Inn and complaints at the Guild especially point to a lot of diamonds going missing. Diamonds are another ingredient for the True Resurrection spell.

Enemies

Each location has suggested enemies. While on the manor grounds, the Necromastiff's preferred minions are his Skelly Cats; more often than not, those are a safe fallback if you need to throw some random enemies at your heroes. Other simple undead may be around – malicious ghosts, non-feline skeletons, and so forth. There have been many visitors within these walls, and not all of them have come out again.

Outside of his manor, the Necromastiff might have hired any number of random bandits, bruisers, or spies. This is especially true for people inside the Seafarer's Guild Hall or outside the Scratching Post Inn.

Grimmsmouth Hall

A new owner has recently purchased the haunted home of Grimmsmouth Hall, and already there are reports of strange happenings. It looks like the house is getting ready to frighten off its new occupant.

This new owner, though, won't be frightened away; in fact, it looks like he's welcoming the haunting. He has locked himself away in the most secure room in the manor, allowing nobody in, and from there is doing who-knows-what!

As things get stranger and stranger, the town council is getting nervous for the safety of the townsfolk. They are looking for brave heroes to investigate, and you, daring doggies and courageous kitties, have answered the call!

You have been given a key to the front gates and door, as well as an official permit to be there, and have been asked to investigate the spooky happenings within Grimmsmouth Hall. Your task is to find what the issue is; if it is a threat, eliminate it, if it is a criminal, bring them to justice.

The Outside

As they approach, the sheer size and magnitude of Grimmsmouth Hall starts to become apparent. The gate surrounding the expansive estate is both stunningly beautiful and intimidating. The black-stained metalwork is rusted now, to be sure, but despite that, it remains breathtaking in its intricacies. Unbendable bars with sharp-edged decoration are spaced perfectly between thicker pillars of a similar design.

It manages to create a sturdy, protective wall around the estate while leaving the grounds unhidden, meant to be admired. Once upon a time, one can imagine the grass as green, the bushes well-trimmed, and the storied manor in the distance shining protectively as it watched over the town.

Now, though, it is all dried. Are those some tombstones in the back, or are they just petrified tree stumps? And certainly, it's just a coincidence that the sturdiest, spaced pillars of the gate resembles a line of very pointy teeth.

The house at the center is intimidating. Three stories tall, and expansive. The Council chambers, from which the players have just come, is unimposing in comparison, so grandiose is the Old Hall.

As soon as the player characters pass through the gates of the Hall, there is a sudden chill in the air. The gates slam shut behind the party, and a ghostly voice utters the words: 'You should not have come here!'

Ahead, there is movement. Six horrifying skelly cats drag themselves into the light, and begin to drag themselves towards the player characters! The skelly cats attack until they are all destroyed, and the manor's doors won't open until all of the revenant felines are dealt with. The player characters are trapped now—the necromastiff has no intention of letting them go.





The Inside

With a jarring creak, the manor's grandiose double doors groan inward on their rusted hinges, revealing a grand foyer. It seems the manor's new owner has attempted to tidy, though it makes little difference. The decorative paint on the walls is faded, cracked, and flaking away, even though it has been recently dusted. The checkered tiles of the floor are old, many of them cracked, highlighting every failed attempt to sweep away the dust.

A wide staircase dominates the foyer, leading up to a landing bathed in the muted colors of a long-faded stained glass window as intricate as the fancy latticework outside. Much of the window remains intact, depicting a stately looking half-orc holding up a long scroll as onlookers cheer. Part of the window has broken away: clearly a dog sitting at the half-orc's feet, but the sections that were the animal's head and neck are missing, clearly broken. There is something unsettling about this lovely scene, marred by the obvious lack of the dog's head.

A History check will reveal some information about the window and its subject:

- 🐾 DC 8: This is a depiction of the mansion's original owner, the half-orc Septimus Mugluk. Considered Gullet Cove's first "true" mayor, his work helped turn the town into what it is today.
- 🐾 DC 10: He was the first to openly welcome awakened animals, and his policies turned the place into a haven for them.
- 🐾 DC 12: He was also the one who supported and instituted the lax attitude towards theft and piracy.
- 🐾 DC 14: He is always depicted with his beloved pet dog, and doubtless, that is who this is. While his name is lost, he is always remembered for his loyalty.

From the landing, the stairway splits into two, one leading to the east wing of the grand mansion, one leading to the west. This must have been awe-inspiring when it was first built, grand, glorious, and opulent.

Like many expansive houses, there is a logic to the center parts of Grimmsmouth Hall. Parlors, visiting rooms, dining rooms, and kitchens are all easily found on the first floor, while upper floors have sleeping quarters and restrooms easily located. The farther down the wings one wanders, though, the stranger and almost nonsensical the house's anatomy becomes. Hallways narrow and become single-file oddities. Stairs lead up...to nowhere. A trap door might be found that has solid concrete below it. Yet other hallways seem to wander aimlessly across the entire manor, with few doors to end the paths between.

The Private Chapel

As the players explore the twists and turns of the mansion, they may begin to hear a rhythmic, echoing chant. It carries from a far corner of the Hall, tugging ever so slightly at the players' ears. A successful DC15 Intelligence (Religion) check lets players recognize the song being sung as an old but familiar benediction to the Good Mother.

If the players follow the sound, it leads them through multiple twists and turns, up staircases and down others, becoming clearer and clearer, until they find themselves in front of an arched doorway.

The door is unlocked, and groans heavily as it is opened, revealing some sort of private chapel beyond. It is not unknown for such places to exist in rich, expansive homes: a place for the house's occupants and guests to participate in worship while still enjoying peace and privacy.

This room is small but lavishly adorned; through layers of dust and cracked paint, golden scrollwork still gleams at the corners of this once-holy place. A gently-arched ceiling hosts a single, dangling scone; once upon a time, soft torchlight must have shed its golden comfort over the two oversized, empty chairs. A large statue of the Good Mother commands the focus of the room, her arms outstretched, eyes averted.

The chanted benediction swirls around the adventurers, coming from everywhere and nowhere, yet unmistakably present. This is definitely the source of the echoing prayers, even though there is no immediately discernable source.

Brother Monty-Jonn

As the players approach, the pious chanting seems to swirl and gather before the statue of the Good Mother. The sound pulses once, and then the notes themselves seem to coalesce into a ghostly form. A stately, elderly Golden Retriever adorned in priestly garb stands before the statue, his eyes shining softly. His holy symbol dangles around his neck, shining a soft, muted white-gold. Through the scent of old air and dust now also mingles a subtle scent of frankincense.

The Awakened dog speaks in a soft voice and with a humble manner, introducing himself as Monty-Jonn, a cleric of the Good Mother.

He shares his story with the players: he had been visiting the mayor, Septimus Mugluk, on behalf of the allied powers of the town. Much as Mugluk had helped shape the town, other prominent citizens felt that a shift to a ruling council would be more beneficial to the community.

Monty-Jonn was there to discuss the potential of this new council with Septimus. The mayor did not seem pleased with the idea of the council's formation, but promised he would give it thought.

The last thing Monty-Jonn remembers was being asked to lead the mayor in a prayer for guidance in this very room. Since then, this existence, praying before the Good Mother and unable to leave this place, is all he has known. As soon as Monty-Jonn finishes his tale, however, the scone in the middle of the room sparks once, by itself.

A DC15 Wisdom (Perception) check reveals quick flashes of what looks like glass skeletons, framed by glowing, red eyes. More and more of them start to take shape, and the heroes realize that dozens of tiny, glasslike spiders were readying an ambush!

If the PCs do not succeed at the perception test, the glass spiders gain a surprise attack. The torch flares to life all by itself, just for dramatic effect, and the spider swarms will attack!

After the spiders are defeated, the dangling scone sparks again, this time a soft, warm light bathing the room. Brother Monty-Jonn appears one last time before the statue of the Good Mother. His wizened eyes hold both gratitude and pain, as he finally understands that he is dead.

He thanks the heroes for their time and perseverance, admitting that he now understands what has happened to him. He cannot linger long, now that he is set free, but he offers a final word of advice: there is something innately wrong here. It feels to him almost like this house is alive itself, and its malignant heartbeat lies at the very top of the manor. This is meant to make sure that if the adventurers have not yet visited the top floor that they do so next.

With a final prayer over the heroes and a last word of heartfelt gratitude, Brother Monty-Jonn leaps up into the arms of the Good Mother, dissipating as he finds his well-earned rest. As he dissolves into the air, there is a light-sounding clink as the priest's holy symbol becomes material and falls gently to the ground, a final gift to the heroes.





Top Dog, Top Floor, Cursed Door

With Brother Monty-Jonn set to rest, Grimmsmouth Hall seems...different. The foyer is a little darker, with shadows scurrying out of sight just at the corner of one's eyes. Shadows scurry out of sight one way or the other, with no hint as to what they are. The house has started noticing them.

As they proceed, hallways they have travelled before seem smaller, stuffier, and tighter than usual. A right turn no longer turns right. A stairway, once straight, now spirals upward and ends at the ceiling – no landing, nowhere to go.

Graffiti shows up on walls that were once clean. These are random and range from pictures of monstrous faces with eyes that seem to sink inwards forever to nonsensical glyphs and messages written in dried blood or smoky ash or any other number of materials.

Sample messages can include:

🐾 GO AWAY.

🐾 Cleanse yourself in flame.

🐾 He was the best of us.

🐾 They awaken.

🐾 FORGIVEN NOT FORGOTTEN

🐾 The Necromastiff will eat your heart!

🐾 I will not touch the outer walls, no matter what your plea, else all of Gullet Cove should fall into the hungry sea.

The spirit of Mugluk is starting to “play” with the adventurers, now that it has noticed them. As they venture higher into the manor, they find the walls starting to weep tears, warping the wood wherever they drip. The tears stink of sea water and rotten fish, and should anyone be foolish enough to taste them, they are overwhelmingly strong. The taster needs to make a DC15 Constitution save or else be poisoned for 1d6 minutes. A poisoned creature has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks for the duration of the poison.

The top floor of the manor is even more twisted than the floors below. The landing itself seems ravaged by time and shadow. A large swath of the ceiling has been broken in by the remnants of some great catastrophe. Nature has taken over and invaded the corner of the landing. A golden frame, once upon a time likely another family portrait of the mayor and his dog, now dangles, empty, from a noose-like root.

A thick layer of dust and dirt stirs underfoot with every step. The air tastes of mold and rat droppings, and does not smell much kinder. Time has eaten at the walls here, as well. Fancy-patterned wallpaper hangs in tatters to match the ravaged ceiling.

It seems obvious where the trouble stems: the nearby doorway with the purple, glowing symbols on the door and the two horrific Skelly Cats guarding it! As the heroes approach into the creatures' line of sight, the two guards hiss menacingly and start shambling right towards them! What's more, as the heroes move to fight the two guards, two more drop down from the hole in the roof to help their friends.

These are the reanimated corpses of unfortunate cats in various states of decay. Some still have hints of skin and muscle, while others are little more than skeletons themselves. Only one of the undead cats has any treasure: it appears to have a small diamond stuck between two of its bones.

Once the heroes have defeated the four Skelly Cats, they will be able to investigate the door and its strange, glowing markings.

An Arcana check reveals the following:

🐾 DC 10: These marks are definitely of a magical nature, if unfamiliar.

🐾 DC 12: They radiate negative energy -- likely Necromancy, but there is more here.

🐾 DC 15: The necromantic sigils are combined with some other sort of school of magic, and it is acting as a protective barrier.

🐾 DC 20: These sigils are part of a very powerful spell that is acting as a cursed enchantment -- and one that will not be easily broken! Necromantic energies...warding glyphs...curses and enchantments.... Whatever is beyond this room will not allow anything living past its walls!

There must be a way to break the enchantment on this door. The clever adventurer might try to hold up Brother Monty-Jonn's holy symbol; there is definitely a reaction to that. The purple glow of the cursed ward flickers and almost seems to want to pull away from where the holy symbol approaches it. This is definitely part of the key to opening this door -- but it is not enough. Not yet.



The Drawing Room

After visiting the top floor and its cursed door, as they descend the staircase or otherwise continue their exploration of the manor, the sounds of a celebration start to draw attention to themselves. Much like the echoing chant of the priest, the giggling, glass-clinking sounds of revelry stretch forth and tease the protagonists.

A successful Perception check (DC 10) lets the players begin to track this new sound. As before, the sound leads the party through multiple, twisting hallways and staircases. This time, though, there are one or more surprises waiting for them. These can include:

- 🐾 The lights in the hallway suddenly go out, plunging the adventurers into total darkness.
- 🐾 A mirror hanging in the hallway does not show any reflection, no matter who stands before it.
- 🐾 A sudden drop beneath their feet as a pit trap opens up! This could be a slide down to another part of the mansion, or it could be an actual trap meant to harm, such as a spike trap.
- 🐾 As they pass doors, some of them randomly creak open; equally, ones that are already open might slam shut as they walk by.
- 🐾 A creepy doll in the shape of a dog sits in front of one closed door. Every time the players look back, it has followed them and now sits in front of whatever door they just passed.
- 🐾 A staircase suddenly sprouting thorns! Damage will be minimal (maybe 1 HP of damage); it is meant more as a surprise for the players.

Finally, the sounds of revelry lead to an ornate, rectangular door, trimmed in sculpted, if rusted, roses. The ornate handle is sculpted in matching vine-work that angles its way gracefully to a knobbed end.

Above the knob, words are carved into the door:


ALL CATS ARE STUPID.

The door does not want to open easily; the handle catches once, but then, on second try, it functions properly and the door squeals sharply open. Beyond the threshold, a once-handsome drawing room awaits — empty of people, of course.

As the party enters, they notice how soft and lush the carpet is, only realizing after a moment that it is not a padded rug. Instead, layers and layers of mold and grass have grown over what was once a flat, decorative area rug. Several plush, oversized chairs must have been heavenly to relax in; now, though, they slump forward like bloated corpses too long drowned at sea. It's hard to tell where the frayed upholstery ends and the torn, moldy stuffing begins. A small, circular table sits nearby with some shattered pieces of glass resting atop it.

Decorative curtains lie half-mast and shredded, and the once-expensive windows to the room are little more than dusty pieces of glass half-hidden under the lifeless cloth. A tree branch, its old, gnarled fingers stabbing through the window, has grown large here, taking up most of the western side of the room.





Adora Torthie

The sounds of revelry start to fade, and the noise of many party-goers hushes down to a singular, feminine laugh. As the heroes watch, the glass on the circular table begins to glitter, seeming to reconstruct itself into a ghostly, crystal snifter, held in the delicate hand of a ghostly elfin woman. The musty smell of the room now carries an extra tint of lavender fragrance with the appearance of this ghost.

Dressed in flamboyant layers of colorful silks that shimmer as she lifts her snifter to the party, she introduces herself as Adora Torthie. The extra sharp of eye, after succeeding in a DC18 Wisdom (Perception) check notes the small hilt of a dagger hidden away beneath one of the folds of her skirt.

With a grin and a gleam in her eye that shines almost as brightly as the crystal snifter, she shares her story.

As a long time rival of “Darling Septimus,” Adora had worked with the mayor for many years, gathering information and helping to broker deals. Every so often, she would turn the tables on him, getting the better end of a bargain or keeping a grand treasure that he’d had his eyes on. Equally, he’d had his fair share of turnabouts and petty thefts.

With a simple DC10 Wisdom (Insight) check, the players realize that Adora admired the mayor’s ability to be as sneaky as she was; this strange back-and-forth was a foundation of their relationship.

This evening, she shares, she has come to finalize details of her latest victory over Septimus: the transfer of the deed to the Scratching Post Inn, from his ownership to hers. It had been a long process to get the better of him, and this time, she admits with a gleam in her eye, she had to play “just a little dirty.”

She is proud of her accomplishment and it takes no coercion for her to brag: she’d been working as a spy for the mayor for so long, she had gathered a lot of “dirt” on him. This was the first time she’d actually moved forward with a blackmail attempt; he buckled faster than she’d anticipated, and agreed to sign over the Scratching Post Inn.

They shared a drink, and he refilled her glass while he went to get the papers. Adora explains that she is just waiting for him to return with her signed deed, and then she’ll be on her merry way. She points at the empty snifter glass on the table, and says, pointedly: ‘I’ve finished this!’

Much like Brother Monty-Jonn, Adora doesn’t realize that she is dead, and likely by a poisoned drink. She’ll ask if the players could please check up on Darling Septimus and see what is taking so long for her to get her papers. If the player characters don’t respond to her, or ask her for a favour, she becomes increasingly angry and irate, demanding that they tell her where Septimus is. If the player characters attempt to leave the room, or otherwise don’t answer her questions, Adora gestures violently at the door they entered through, causing it to slam shut. Then she flies at the player characters in a mad rage!

The player characters have little choice but to either fight Adora’s spirit and destroy it, or find some other way of subduing her. The fight is potentially extremely difficult and draining, Adora is no slouch in combat, even as a spirit. There is another way to defeat her, however. If the player characters think to smash the snifter glass on the table, then the fight ends immediately. Adora gives a sudden start, as though she’d been awakened from a terrible dream. She ceases to attack the player characters and immediately tries to make peace.

Her eyes fix on the broken snifter glass and grim realization dawns on her. She gives a sad little smile, amused that Septimus apparently got the last laugh. She explains that the glass, the source of her murder, had kept her trapped, unable to accept her fate. She thanks the heroes for helping her find her freedom. As she does so, she suddenly seems more real, more sharply into the present. She warns the heroes: the house is becoming...alive. Darling Septimus always swore that this house would remain long after his body was gone. His beloved friend Lucas would speculate and daydream about living together, forever, and being able to always watch over the Cove.

And now, she says, there is a resurrection spell currently being cast all around them! As if to prove her correct, the purple-glowing veins start creeping into the Drawing Room. She looks, wide-eyed, at the party: resurrection spells only take an hour to cast if one has all the materials. Time is of the essence! Wide-eyed, she breathes that Lucas is here; she can feel him nearby -- at the top of the manor. Things are not as they should be, she realizes, and offers them one last piece of advice: stop Septimus from being reborn however they can!

With that, Adora thanks the heroes one last time. She blows them a kiss, and the party feels strangely reinvigorated. Her kiss has restored them back to full health -- and they will likely need it for the final battle with the Necromastiff! (Sorry, casters, no extra spells!)

The Big Bad Battle

At last, it is time to face down the Necromastiff!

As the heroes bound towards the top floor, the pulsing of necromantic energy in the walls grows brighter, more rhythmic with each passing minute. The ambient lighting darkens the closer they get to their destination, until only the flash of purple energy lights their way, creating a strobe effect. More messages show up as they run, taunting, threatening, and warning away the living.

As they arrive at the top floor, there is another heave as the ground quakes and groans. Part of the ceiling, already broken in, rains down more detritus into the purple-lit room. A Dexterity Save, DC 20, will help the heroes keep their footing during this round. Failure means that they fall prone. A prone creature's only movement option is to crawl, unless it stands up and thereby ends the condition. The creature has disadvantage on attack rolls while prone, and an attack roll against that creature has advantage if the attacker is within 5 feet of it. Otherwise, the attack roll has disadvantage.

The entirety of the Necromastiff's chamber door falls away, revealing a wall of solid purple energy. It seems the spell will hold, even if the actual door buckles! There is very little time to ponder this, though, as six Skelly Cats make their way through the necromantic haze to attack!





The Final Confrontation

Once the Skelly Cats are defeated, the next step is to break the enchantment on the door. With one player holding Monty-Jonn's holy symbol, the energy wall should be touched. At the touch, there is a monstrous scream. The floor bucks and shudders as the force field surrounding the door shatters!

With the spell broken, the heroes are free at last to enter the final chamber, where Lucas, the Necromastiff, continues his spell to bring Septimus Mugluk back to life! The chamber is a wide, open space; any furniture that might have decorated the room is pushed haphazardly to the sides to allow an enormous magical circle to be drawn on the floor. The circle glimmers with a mixture of diamond dust and holy water, and sitting in the center of it, the heavy-boned, brindle mastiff.

He looks more perturbed than anything as the heroes invade his chambers. "You are too late," he intones. "What I have started cannot be stopped." He barks out a gruff-sounding laugh.

Before the party can close on the circle, the Necromastiff gives an unconcerned order, "*Kill them.*"

In response, four more Skelly Cats slink their way out from the corners of the room and from the ceiling. They close on the heroes while the Necromastiff remains sitting firmly in the center of the magic circle, continuing to concentrate on his spell.

A clever player might think to cast spells using Brother Monty-Jonn's holy symbol as a focus. If so, the player should roll advantage on all attack rolls using the relic.

Similarly, the heroes do not have to fight through the Skelly Cats before closing with the Necromastiff. This will become apparent the moment the Necromastiff takes damage, be it from a spell or a physical attack. The wound jars him, commanding his attention, and he will command his Skelly Cats to dog-pile (pun intended) the attacker. He stays within the giant, magical circle he makes, maintaining his concentration.

To stop the spell from being completed, the heroes need to break the Necromastiff's concentration. Any time the Necromastiff takes damage, just like any other spellcaster, he must succeed on a Constitution Saving Throw or lose his spell. The DC of this check equals 10 or half the damage taken, whichever number is higher. If he takes damage from multiple sources, he must make a separate saving throw for each source.

The Necromastiff does not give up easily, of course. While he is maintaining the spell, he must spend his action each turn casting, although he is free to use his movement to keep himself as far away from harm as possible. He calls for Septimus to help him; the House, in return, will do one of two things. Every other turn, it will buck and quake, forcing a DC 15 Dexterity save for the heroes to avoid being knocked prone. When it is not quaking, the veins of purple light will disperse, pitching the entire room into darkness and making it harder for enemies to be targeted.

When the Necromastiff fails a Concentration save, the House itself howls in anguish, and with a horrible shudder, falls silent! With the resurrection spell broken, the Necromastiff swears vengeance, frothing spittle in his fury. Without the need to maintain the resurrection spell, the players now have a very angry Necromastiff able to cast spells at them!

Furious though he may be, the Necromastiff still has some sense about him. If it looks like he is losing, he may try to flee. The adventurers have options here: they can try to subdue the Necromastiff, kill him, or even let him flee, in the hopes of buying time to alert the city.

One way or the other, once the Necromastiff is defeated, the adventure is completed!

EXPERIENCE

By the time the heroes finish this adventure, they should have more than enough XP to level up! This has been a tough encounter, and they definitely deserve it!

Notes





What Happens Now?

Greetings, adventurer!

You have explored the alleyways, gutterings, and hidden corners of Gullet Cove, and it has led you here.

Now, you may be wondering what comes next. The good news is, this book is just the beginning!

Beyond its pages, an ever-expanding world of animal heroes awaits you. The characters you've encountered here are available as highly detailed miniatures that will bring unmistakable charm to any tabletop adventure. Indeed, our range is always growing, with a host of intelligent animals—plus monsters, allies, and villains—all waiting for you!

You can ask your local gaming store about Animal Adventures, and discover the full range at steamforged.com, where you may even find further material to fuel your adventuring!

There's a flourishing and friendly community of players out there, and we have many exciting plans for Animal Adventures yet to come. Get involved with the community, sign up for our newsletter to find out what's on the way, and add your tales to the growing story of Animal Adventures!





Afterword

This has been a journey...

What you hold in your hands is the culmination of an adventure that started over three years ago. It began with the crazy idea that ordinary dogs and cats deserved to be heroes in their own adventures, and arrived here in a little town called Gullet Cove.

Gullet Cove was our chance to crystallise the wonderful world we were creating. That sense of wonder has been our inspiration (and motivation!) throughout the growth of *Animal Adventures*, from a 30-page PDF to a 200-plus-page book that draws on a wealth of artistic and creative talent. It is truly humbling to see the work that has gone into creating this book from such an amazing team of folks, all to get it into your hands.

Along the way, many people have reached out to us with stories of how a character or model has reminded them of a loved pet, or how the tales they've spun have brought fun and laughter to their gaming tables. These are messages we will never tire of hearing.

We started with the belief that dogs and cats are a source of pure joy in the world and could only elevate the stories we tell at the table. This belief has been proven many times over, thanks to the wonderful community of players that have themselves become part of the *Animal Adventures* story.

And, with this book in hand, it's now your turn to add your tale to the ever-expanding saga.

We couldn't do this without every one of you—players, Game Masters, dogs, and cats alike. We thank you all and wish you well as you set sail for Gullet Cove!

Russ Charles

Acknowledgements

Any RPG sourcebook is the work of lots of different, highly talented people. This one is no exception. I'd like to thank Mat Hart, for his trust and patience; Sherwin, for read-throughs at the last minute; Benners and Elliott for steering the ship to its destination; Ben Clapperton for starting us off and for sterling editing work (as well as for the pre-lockdown Thursday game nights); Abby, and Cristina, for their amazing work on layout and design—as well as their infinite patience with all the changes. Thanks to Jason and Rachael for writing two amazing adventures, and to all the artists for bringing Gullet Cove so spectacularly to life. Finally, especial thanks to Russ for beginning this project, and letting me create so much stuff for it, and to my friends and family (especially those in the dev team) for keeping me sane while I was in the midst of writing it. Here's to the next one!

Richard August



Licensing Agreement

The terms of the Open Gaming License Version 1.0a are as follows:

OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

- Definitions: (a) "Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b) "Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d) "Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.
 - The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.
 - Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.
 - Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.
 - Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.
 - Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.
 - Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.
 - Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.
 - Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.
 - Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.
 - Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.
 - Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.
 - Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.
 - Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.
 - COPYRIGHT NOTICE Open Game License v 1.0a Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, LLC.
- System Reference Document 5.1 Copyright 2016, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Mike Mearls, Jeremy Crawford, Chris Perkins, Rodney Thompson, Peter Lee, James Wyatt, Robert J. Schwalb, Bruce R. Cordell, Chris Sims, and Steve Townshend, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.
- Animal Adventures Secrets of Gullet Cove: Copyright © 2020 Steamforged Games Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this book shall be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information retrieval system without our prior written permission.

PRODUCT IDENTITY

The following items are designated Product Identity, as defined in Section 1(e) of the Open Game License Version 1.0a (OGL), and are subject to the conditions set forth in Section 7 of the OGL, and are not Open Content: All registered and unregistered trademarks, service marks, business names and designs belonging to, referring to, or otherwise associated with Steamforged Games Ltd, together with all proper names (including all those set out in the "Animal Adventures Secrets of Gullet Cove Names" section below), dialogue, plots, storylines, locations, character, artworks and trade dress contained within or referred to in the Animal Adventures Secrets of Gullet Cove game and/or any documentation or other materials associated with it (including this Rulebook and Adventure Document) (Materials).

No portions of any Materials may be reproduced in any form without written permission, unless such reproduction is permitted in accordance with the OGL.

OPEN CONTENT

The following items are identified as Open Game Content: All Animals Racial Rules, Abilities, Feats and Magic Items description and mechanics. The Companion Domain description and mechanics.

ANIMAL ADVENTURES SECRETS OF GULLET COVE NAMES

Gullet Cove, Grimmsmouth Hall, The Rataclysm, The Necromastiff, Goblin 'Nappers, Bilge Grick, Effervescent Ooze, Malbatross, Soaker, Mutt & Bailey, The Cradle, Timory's Wand of Water Weaving, Twin Fish of Perfect Harmony, Tymon's Tugrope of Tenacity, Heggleyddle's Handy Helper, Groof's Gobblecharm Necklace, The Oath of Twilight, Cat's Paw Martial Archetype, Bard of Amity, Companion Domain, Way of the Striking Tail





Embark on a spellbinding adventure in a place where daring dogs and cunning cats are the heroes, right alongside their two-legged friends.

Greetings, adventurer! You hold in your hands a sourcebook for the world's favourite roleplaying game. Inside, you'll find a campaign and setting unlike any other—Gullet Cove!

It's a wondrous seaside town home to brave heroes and dastardly villains, where intriguing mysteries and incredible discoveries lurk on two legs or four.

It takes a special kind of hero to make the most of all Gullet Cove has to offer, and these heroes are very special indeed. They're awakened dogs and cats—cute, talkative, and longing to be unleashed on adventures!

Within this book is everything you need to begin exploring the *Animal Adventures* world:

- 🐾 Rules for creating your own awakened cat and dog characters
- 🐾 A gazetteer packed with information, plot hooks, and mysteries
- 🐾 A bestiary stuffed with villains, monsters, and potential friends
- 🐾 5 thrilling adventures to take you all over town
- 🐾 Magic items, Guild rules, and much, much more!

You can use this book to start a brand new campaign, or to add Gullet Cove to your existing campaign. What are you waiting for? Welcome to Gullet Cove!

