



THREE LINE NPCs

How to Create NPCs Packed With
Fun, Flavor & Story *Fast*

Johnn Four
roleplayingtips.com

3 Line NPCs

Fast, Fun and Packed With Story

By Johnn Four
Edited by Robert Ferency-Viars

Inspired by ideas from Daniel Brouwer,
based on NPCs submitted by the awesome readers of Roleplaying Tips

Cover Art by Robin Irwin, <http://www.robinirwinart.com>

Errors? Omissions? [Please let me know](#)

Get more game master tips at RoleplayingTips.com



Contributors (thanks for your entries, feedback and support!)

Aaron B, Aaron Berg, Aaron Brant, Aaron Dunbrack, Adam Bragg, Adam Crockett, Andrew Byro, Andrew Joines, Anthony Hart-Jones, Benjamin Naveaux, Bhunter117, Bislav, Brian Auxier, Brian Bayes, Brian Mursch, Cason Snow, Charles Ciaffone, Chasen Hutchison, Chris Woods, Christine Hunnicutt, Christophe Saura, Chuck Nusbaum, Cory McFey, CyberSavant, D. Hodgson, Dale Poole, Daniel Brouwer, Daniel Gent, Darren Blair, David Lundy, David Tregurtha, Derek Nejedlo, Dominick Riesland, Edd Berridge, Eric Riml, Eric T Holmes, Ethan Richerson, Felipe Teixeira Holzmann, Florian Hübner, Francisco Pettigiani, Gary Williams, Gene Dvorchak, Geoffrey Nunn, Gilbert Stack, Gillian Wiseman, glacier68, Hollis Hale, Ian Godfrey, Ignacio Hernandez, J Keyes, Jacob Houck, Jake Peck, James Seals, Jason Kemp, Jeff Gillis, Jeff Lucarelli, Jeff Siadek, Jen, Jeremy Whalen, Joaquín Castro, Johannes Beichel, John Fredericks, John Kerpan, John Romero, Josiah Bradbury, Kyle Hahn, Lars Sundstrom, Lemos, Tucker J., Loïc Lahondes, Lucas Mackay, Lucia Eisner-Smerage, Luigi Amedeo Bianchi, Luke Palmer, Marc Simmons, Marcus Meira, Mary Nelson, Matt Gullett, Matthew Ipock, Michael Anderson, Michael Corrinet, Michael Garcia, Michael Lawhorn, Michael Rijsman, Mike Hutchinson, moonblack, Noah Portance, Orion Dooley, Paul Albietz, Phil Nicholls, Philippe Robillard, Pier Antonio Bianchi, Randal McDowell, Robert Lee Frazier, Rodney Sloan, Roger Barr, Scott, Scott Wight, Stefan Cachia, Steve Bollenbaugh, Stuart Wiltshire, Thomas Drevon, Thomas Walker, Tim Hunt, Tyler Cleere, Tyler Elkind, Tyler LaBonte, Venger Satanis, Vi, yosimoshe2

Thanks to 3 Line NPCs Sponsors

- [MyInfo Software](#)
- [NBOS](#)
- [Thistle Games](#)
- [Rite Publishing](#)

Legal Stuff

3 Line NPCs is copyright 2013 by [Johnn Four](#).

Product names, logos, brands, and other trademarks featured or referred to within this ebook are the property of their respective trademark holders. These trademark holders are not affiliated with Roleplaying Tips. They do not sponsor or endorse Roleplaying Tips or this ebook.



Check out the Hackmaster Combat Wheel over my left shoulder. What a crazy GM tool!

Register Your Book Now to Get Free Updates & Mysterious Bonus

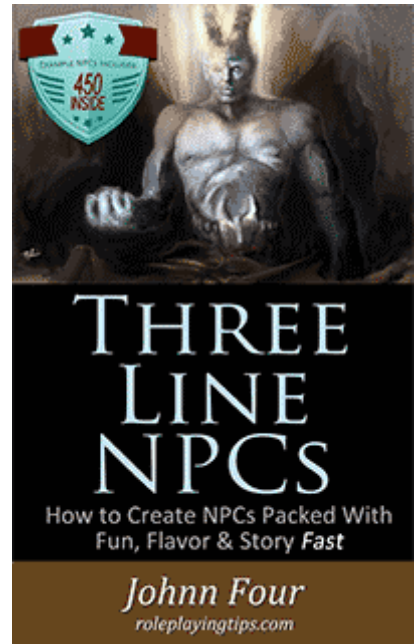
Thank you very much for grabbing 3 Line NPCs. I hope you get a lot of use out of this book!

And I also hope you'll [let me know about any errors or omissions](#) so I can make it even better.

Plus, **I have at least one bonus in the works.** I don't want to tell you about it yet, because it's not quite finished.

But I can say it'll be at least one cool little add-on to help you get even more use out of the 450+ NPCs in the following pages.

So please take a second right now to register your copy of this book so I can send you updated versions plus the bonus when it's ready.



To register just enter your email address here:

<http://www.roleplayingtips.com/register-3LineNPCs/>

Cheers,

Johnn Four
johnn@roleplayingtips.com

Table of Contents

Register to Get Free Updates & Mysterious Bonus	3
First, Some Simple & Effective NPC Tips	5
Simplicity Tip #1: Introduce a New NPC Every Session	6
Simplicity Tip #2: Whack an NPC Every Session	7
Simplicity Tip #3: Three Stages of NPC Roleplaying.....	9
Simplicity Tip #4: Crunch Out NPCs While You GM.....	14
How to Make NPCs Fast With the 3 Line NPC Method	16
Line 1: What the Players Can See	16
Line 2: What to Portray	19
Line 3: Progress the Story.....	21
Turning Coal Into Diamonds – How to Mine Backstories to Create Killer Campaigns ..	25
1. Mine All Sources for Details.....	25
2. Ready Your Mining Carts.....	27
3. How to Mine Your Backgrounds.....	28
4. Switch to Campaign Logging	31
A Few Miscellaneous Tips From Readers	34
Pointers from Gem Cutter Robert	34
Stuck For Inspiration? Start With the Occupation	35
Use Details to Fuel Stories	36
Try FATE's Aspects System	37
d100 NPC Secrets	39
d135 NPC Side Plots	44
d50 NPC Goals, Motives & Dreams	51
d1,000 NPC Traits.....	52
d40 Slightly More Verbose Traits	60
d50 NPC Fears.....	62
d65 Occupations.....	63
Need a Name? Here Are 40 Great Name Generators & Resources.....	64
450+ 3 Line NPCs	68
Want to Chat?	198

First, Some Simple & Effective NPC Tips

NPCs add life to any campaign, even dark dungeons full of monsters. They are so important I wrote my first book on them. However, lately they've been causing me problems. The way I was building them was taking too long. Because I need 1,000 NPCs for my Chaos Keep campaign.

I tried a random generator. But I wanted something more...playable...from the results. I wanted each NPC to add to my game and not feel like a random collection of data.

I tried a full stat block, using the best elements from NPC Essentials, and I got great NPCs from this. Awesome ones. But I could tell it was going to take too long to build up my Cast of Characters for Chaos Keep. (I don't really need 1,000 to start the campaign, but 50-100 would give me a solid group of notables.)

So I asked myself, "What are the essential bits of info I need to GM a great NPC?"

I made a bunch of notes in MyInfo. I crossed out stuff that wasn't necessary, like crunch, because most of the NPCs I use are for plot and roleplay purposes. Besides, there's a simple solution to that, which I will explain later.

I wrestled for a while and finally distilled what I needed down to just three simple elements.

Then Daniel Brouwer emailed me with a contest idea:

"I thought about what kind of generator I would want to see, and I may have come up with something people will enjoy writing in about. I was thinking, every RPG has small villages, and they can be home to interesting folk. Usually, these folk are the mayor, if the party is lucky his beautiful daughter, the local cleric, the local ranger, and the local fighter. And that's about it.

"How about a generator like the roadside encounters one, where people can write in with a 'person of interest' to put into a village?"

I emailed him back saying it was a great idea, along with my NPC solution. He suggested some changes, and we traded emails. This brings us to you and I, right now.

Today, I offer you the solution. A new way to create the foundation for NPCs that will help you build great but simple NPCs in under a minute. Not only that, the way you'll learn to construct them will make your non-player characters instantly playable.

Let's dig in. First, let me give you a few quick NPC tips before I describe the 3 Line Instant NPC method.

Simplicity Tip #1: Introduce a New NPC Every Session

If you add one new NPC to the world, the campaign, the story, you'll soon have a terrific Cast of Characters.

To start my new campaign I have one goal: introduce a bunch of NPCs.

I will use them like I always do, to build relationships with the players so the game world feels alive and interesting.

I will also use them to make my stories interesting. NPCs help drive the best stories.

I also want a bunch of NPCs in the hopper so I can watch PC reactions for good gaming opportunities (conflicts and affinities).

To make this a reality, I have a new GMing goal: introduce at least one NPC every session.

You should try this yourself and make it a habit.

If you add one new NPC to the world, the campaign, the story, you'll soon have a terrific Cast of Characters. This cast will making your games more dynamic, full of roleplaying, PC options and hooks.

However, you and your players will get overwhelmed if you add NPCs too fast to your campaign. "What was the name of NPC #53? Was he the elf with sniffles or the dwarf with the weeping eye?"

By drizzling out new NPCs at one or so per session, you keep the new information and relationships manageable and memorable.

Simplicity Tip #2: Whack an NPC Every Session

Create a compelling reason Why? even if the PCs do not yet know the reason.

Who's gonna *get it* this week?

Wouldn't it be wonderful if your players were excited – and a bit nervous – before each session, wondering if an NPC in the story is going to die, and whether the NPC will be a friend, a valuable contact or someone notable in the campaign? (I call notable deaths shockers.)

You have drama baked into your sessions without even rolling the dice because of how you've set up your story: no one is safe from the dangerous world.

Best case is an NPC gets whacked because of repercussions from PC actions a couple of sessions before.

Now we're talking full-on deep campaign, deep world, deep story! A critical hit!

The trick here is to plan the death. If a great opportunity comes up during play, take it. Else, put a few scenarios together and keep them handy. Pick your favourite for the session, but be prepared to pull out the best fit instead once the session gets under way.

Try to make the NPC's death (or disappearance, hostage-taking, cursing, or other terrible catastrophe) pertinent to the story and to the PCs.

It might be hard to find this sweet spot, but it will help a lot when you start introducing at least one new NPC every session. (Aha!)

Use [loopy session planning](#) to work out the ramifications of character actions and how NPCs and factions will respond. And make responses involve other NPCs – often new NPCs. (Aha!)

To avoid [Red Shirt Syndrome](#), keep establishing and building NPC relationships.

That way, when an NPC gets whacked, there's a real sense of loss because the players:

- Liked him
- Needed him
- Needed to meet him
- Heard about him and thought him interesting

And there's an effect on the story because a relationship was involved.

But here's the killer part (sorry about the pun). Not only must the PCs care for some reason about the NPC, **you must also create a compelling reason Why? even if the PCs do not yet know the reason.**

The Why? is the biggest and best part of this GMing technique.

- A useful NPC killed because of natural disaster is sad, but this does not do much for your story.
- A useful NPC killed because he knew too much and a stage boss wanted him disintegrated is much more interesting.

Even better:

- A useful NPC killed because he knew too much from talking with the PCs two sessions ago, and a stage boss wanted him disintegrated.

Even betterer:

- A useful NPC killed because he knew too much from talking with the PCs two sessions ago, and a PC's brother ratted him out for coin, and a stage boss wanted him disintegrated.

Betterest:

- A useful NPC killed because he knew too much from talking with the PCs two sessions ago, and a PC's brother ratted him out for coin because he needs to pay a cleric to heal his pregnant wife, and a stage boss wanted him disintegrated.

Now we've got a rousing story on our hands!

Just dole these facts one piece at a time through encounters, and watch your players twist and turn along with the story.

Good times, great GMing.

If I had to summarize this tip in one sentence for you to implement next session, I would put it this way:

Every session, whack an NPC with ties to the PCs, backed up with a compelling reason "why".

Simplicity Tip #3: Three Stages of NPC Roleplaying

NPCs who take believable and interesting actions make great plots.

Ok, that covers NPCs and story. Let's talk a bit about NPCs and roleplaying.

For new GMs nervous about running NPCs, I encourage you to tackle this in three steps. Work on the first step until you feel comfortable, then challenge yourself with step two. Once you're comfortable with step two, try step three.

Step 1: Think Like the NPC

And have him take action accordingly. In this step, you describe actions in third person, like you are working with a location or an item. Do not pressure yourself into roleplaying or portraying the character. Just start "thinking NPC."

Think about:

- What does the NPC do? How does he react?
- What motivates or drives the NPC?
- How does the NPC perceive the PCs? (Not how you perceive them, but how the NPC perceives them.)

Put the following on a note and paste it to your GM screen:

If you were the non-player character, who are you, why do you want what you want, and how would you react to what's happening right now in the game?

Once you start doing this well and out of habit in your mind, you've started Thinking NPC.

Meantime, your NPCs will get better and more interesting, because it will be less of you in these characters and more of the NPCs themselves your players will interact with.

As a bonus, you can use this skill to level up your real life. As soon as you put yourself in others' shoes and try to understand their viewpoint, your relationships will change for the better.

As they say, walk a mile in an NPC's shoes, you can stop fleeing because he's got no shoes!

Mastery at this stage goes beyond thinking like an NPC. You should learn how to think like an NPC in an amazing story.

NPC-as-plot is in effect here. **NPCs who take believable and interesting actions make great plots.**

For example, the PCs finally confront the brother who snitched on them to the stage boss, causing the death of Old Sarge, a valuable street contact and friend.

As the NPC (not you), think about:

- Who you are
- Why you sold out your brother
- How you will react to the PCs
- What would be interesting for the story

Do you play the family card, beg forgiveness, ask for help getting your pregnant wife to a cleric? That would work, but it's not got much story punch. But still, that's a great NPC roleplay scene, and you can always have an interesting encounter en route to the cleric or at the temple (say, with the stage boss's crew).

So, in this scenario the NPC propelled the story a bit by getting the PCs moving.

However, Thinking NPC + story might bring you to this:

“You leap out the window, triggering a chase scene followed by suicide-by-PC when finally caught.”

You kill an NPC this way, and create a dramatic combat where the PCs probably don't want to whack the NPC but he keeps attacking!

Or:

“You leap out the window and head to the stage boss's secret hideout nearby, leading the PCs into a trap. You try to escape during the battle.”

You trigger an encounter with the stage boss and his crew, plus the PCs learn the location of the secret hideout. And hopefully the brother escapes to become a recurring NPC (and the stage boss too!).

Or:

“You take your pregnant wife hostage. She's the reason for all this, because she's carrying the stage boss's baby!”

True or not, holy plot twist Batman. Plus, it makes sense why the brother would hit the stage boss up for money. Maybe the stage boss does not even realize the baby is his – more great plot revelations to come.

Stage 2: Portray the NPC

Stage two, when you are comfortable, is to "Show, don't tell."

Now that you're Thinking NPC, you want to bring them to life at the table, to get players imagining and interacting more.

First, get a solid feel for how the NPC will look and act in encounters.

Then turn this into body language and interesting voice use (download my PDF that talks a little about this: [7 Ways to Improve Your GMing](#) – it's free for Roleplaying Tips subscribers and customers).

Use body language to mimic key NPC actions and reactions.

You need not be a full-on actor with this. But, just like great storytellers, you accentuate roleplaying by portraying NPC actions. You're showing more, in addition to telling.

For example:

"He draws his dagger, puts his wife in a headlock, and screams 'One more step and I stick her. I don't wanna do it. Don't make me do it. Hell, it's not even my kid. It's that cursed Cole Blacksword's!'"

Meantime, you're standing up, pretending you've got somebody in a headlock. You're leaning over a bit because the wife NPC is shorter. Your left arm is out in bent position in front of you, like there's somebody's throat in the crook of your elbow.

And your right hand is held like there's a dagger in it (you might even have a pen in your hand as prop) being held in menacing fashion toward the hostage.

Why does this work? Well, how would you feel if your GM got up to portray a scene like this? It would be a lot more engaging than pure narrative. You could visualize better what's going on. It would be more visceral, getting your heart pumping a few beats faster. It's great storytelling at work.

Ok, now for the clincher.

You're standing there, portraying the NPC and the scene. It's not too uncomfortable, because you're still using descriptive narrative. "He draws his dagger, puts his wife in a headlock, and screams..." Same old GMing you're used to.

And you've got a simple pose going on that's pretty much stationery. No weird acting required. You're even using your own voice.

Still comfortable? Great. Here's a question for you:

When you say, "He draws his dagger, puts his wife in a headlock, and screams...." etc. are your eyes big and wide open, or are they squinty and darting around?

Each option portrays the NPC in a completely different light!

A simple bit of body language makes the NPC either scared and sympathetic or calculating and a villain.

And this simple thing changes the whole flavour of the encounter.

This is mastery as this stage. Subtle expressions and nuances you'll learn over time through trial, error and experience that takes NPC roleplaying and portrayal to a new level.

And it's proof learning how to portray NPCs (much easier now because you've learned how to think like an NPC) will have a huge effect on your game and storytelling. Good job.

Stage 3: Impersonate the NPC

Now that you're comfortable thinking the character and portraying the character, it's time to *be the character*.

Accents, acting, moving, body language, using your space, props.

Watch plays and research acting to learn how to step outside of yourself and your ego to think, talk and act like an NPC so well your players will forget it's you and think it's a real NPC.

I am not at this level. I'm still working on portrayal. I might never be a great actor. And, truth is, you don't have to be at stage three to GM awesome NPCs.

What counts most is your NPCs seem to think and do for themselves, they have an effect on the story, and you bring them to life by portraying them during encounters so they feel distinct and different from other NPCs.

However, if you want to try getting fully into character, stage three is here for you.

Mastery at this stage to me is when your players feel like your NPCs are real people and care about them just as much as the beloved and hated characters in their favourite books and movies. Further, your players can and do impersonate your NPCs at this stage, and are able to do so because they've been presented with vivid performances.

Be Awesome at One Stage

Do not feel pressure about mastering all three stages. If you become excellent at one of the stages, your NPCs will be engaging and memorable. You will stand out as a GM who does NPCs well.

I feel the stages build on each other, but you do not need to follow them in order. You might be a natural actor or be awesome at portrayal. So you might focus on just that stage to make NPCs interesting and distinct.

That's because it's better being very good at one stage than being mediocre at all stages.

I do poorly at Stage 3 and avoid it. Yet, my players always say they enjoy my NPCs.

Simplicity Tip #4: Crunch Out NPCs While You GM

Make NPCs fast – leave the crunch for later.

In rules heavy games like D&D and Pathfinder, unless you've mastered the rules it takes a while to fill out a character sheet.

So leave the stats for later.

Just assign skills and stats as you need them during gameplay.

For example, in Pathfinder I don't really need to know an NPC's ability scores. I just need their bonuses so I know how to modify dice rolls.

And I only need the bonuses when I'm about to make a dice roll.

Therefore, I assign the stat bonus the first time I need to make a dice roll for an NPC, not before. Also, I already have a basic description of the NPC, so I can make an informed decision about whether they're strong or weak, fast or slow, ugly or handsome.

You can further simplify by using a standard array of stat bonuses. For example:

- Flunkies: -1, +1, +1 (all others are +0)
- Stage Bosses: -1, +2, +2
- Villains: -1, +2, +4

As you assign the stats as you need them, the remaining ones fill themselves after awhile. For example, if a flunkie has already used -1, +1 and +1, you know his other scores are 0.

Do the same thing for skills. Think in terms of a point pool. If an NPC needs or uses a skill in-game, assign a total modifier and note that on the NPC's character sheet. Between sessions, if you like, work out the details (like what part of the modifier you picked is stat score, class bonus, feat bonus, etc.).

But really, at this point, does it matter? You've noted the modifier for future consistency. The NPC doesn't suddenly turn into an expert climber the next session, for example.

Also, as you've probably inferred during this tip, you create a blank character sheet (I use a MyInfo template) and fill it in as you play.

This requires zero time spent on crunch during NPC creation.

There's one exception here, though: NPCs likely to be involved in action scenes. For these, you do want to be prepared in case a fight breaks out. I'd note these NPCs as you

create them during the 3 Line Method so you remember to stat them out before the game.

And if it were me, I'd google and look in my books to find a published stat block I could use to make combat NPCs fast.

I also keep an ongoing Cast of Characters that gathers up all my NPCs from each campaign. Over time, this gets huge and offers an instant way to build a stat block.

I have a free video course about how I organize my campaign using software called MyInfo. Even if you already have GM organization software such as Evernote, One Note or a wiki, you can use this course to learn how to stave off information overload and have everything you need at your finger tips at all times.

And in the 16 part course, I cover how to create and maintain your Cast of Characters. It's pretty cool, check it out:

[Take the course for free »](#)

How to Make NPCs Fast With the 3 Line NPC Method

Ok, let's get into the meat. Here is the formula for the 3 Line NPC Method:

Line 1: What the players can see: NPC appearance and what the NPC is doing at the moment they meet

Line 2: What to portray: What the NPC does for a living and personality

Line 3: How to progress the story: Adventure or encounter hook

While these three items seem simple, which is proof NPCs built this way will take you little time, there is a whole lot more going on. Here's what I mean.

Line 1: What the Players Can See

Describe the appearance of the NPC in a few words. And focus on the important and notable stuff.

This makes descriptions in-game much easier for you. And it's faster to design just what PCs could perceive and save all the extra myriad details for when they become important.

You might call this just-in-time details, and it's very efficient. Plus, it keeps more GMing options open.

First, picture the NPC in your mind. I like to [use Pinterest to find great NPC portraits](#).

Then think about what the PCs would actually see, sense and detect. Well-hidden items and equipment and belongings stowed elsewhere are not important right now.

If you already have ideas on this stuff, by all means add it to your NPC description. But the 3 Line Method is meant to give you compelling NPC cores in as short a time as possible, with as little work as possible.

It gets rid of the extraneous stuff so you can free up your imagination and put on your storyteller's hat. So you only need to note what the PCs can perceive.

For some NPCs, you will need to go back and flesh out their character sheet with more details. But why do that when the NPC hasn't even joined the game, hasn't even met the PCs (and survived) and hasn't even become involved in the story?

Think of this as [minimum viable product](#) GMing – don't over-plan or over-prepare. Test your NPC first for "campaign acceptance" before spending a lot of time on him or her or it.

Ok, circling back to building the description, with mental picture of NPC in mind, the second step is to add the standard array of information as one word details: [Age, Gender, Culture, Race, Class].

Let your world and game system do the heavy lifting here. Assume all details are as written in your rules or setting unless the NPC is different. And therefore, you can leave those details for the books and make your core NPC description brief.

For example: **[Young Male Deep Dwarf Miner]**.

Your system or setting describes what values typical dwarves have for young age bracket, dwarf qualities, miner class or profession, and Deep Dwarf culture. Just let your dwarf inherit all these values without noting them, and then just remark on anything unusual in step three, like being extra tall, skinny, hairless, clean, whatever.

In this way, you pack in a whole bunch of details fast during NPC creation, and you don't bore PCs with details that don't need explanation.

You also have full control over what you describe during the game. Don't want to reveal race or class because the NPC is too dirty or in disguise? No problem, modify your verbal description accordingly – you still have the facts noted for reference and consistency.

Finally, the third step is to note at least three interesting things about the NPC. Use single words, if possible. You can flesh these out later, but right now you want to just figure out what makes this NPC interesting, unique, notable.

Plus, you want to mention anything players would think important and that the PCs could spot or sense. If you don't, your group will get frustrated at missing important details their characters would have noticed.

Here's an example description:

[Young Male Deep Dwarf Miner] +1 pick, pet weasel, sneer.

How long would it take you to write such a line? A minute until you've had more practice? Having a visual will speed this up even more.

In fact, if you use a computer at the game table, you can link to the visual and just show your players, and worry even less about the description.

And do you think you'd be able to use this line to extrapolate a few details for a decent description when the PCs meet this NPC? Hopefully it becomes easy, and it definitely does so with practice.

Also, notice I left dimensions out. This always kills believability for me. How can you tell if an NPC is exactly 5'4" tall or 167 lbs?

And while mundane details might interest some players, too much detail causes eyes to glaze and slows game pace.

If you just present what the PCs would notice so they can understand the NPC at a high level, you'll have done your job and can move on.

If a player asks, "Exactly how tall is he?" you can reply "Average for a dwarf" or find the dwarf height chart and pick a value if essential. Right now, we're 1 line into 3 line NPC, so leave this extraneous detail out. They're available elsewhere or you can fabricate them on the spot when needed. Every now and again you could even let your players fill in the blanks themselves. Especially with little things, use their creativity. It may even make them feel more part of the world.

Last point: feel free to expand and change keywords to suit your game. For example, if you use alignment and level, add those in where desired:

[LN Young Male Deep Dwarf Miner 8]

What's He Doing Now?

This was a great add-on by Daniel Brouwer, who helped me solidify these concepts over an email exchange.

Make your NPC feel alive by having them doing something instead of just standing there waiting for the PCs to appear.

You can change this as circumstances require, such as if a town meeting is called and the PCs meet the NPC there instead of his usual spot.

So let encounter situations override your write-up, but meantime, put your NPC to task:

- Building
- Fixing
- Telling a joke
- Cursing out someone
- Doing his job's main task
- Riding by
- Climbing a ladder

- Making a meal
- Doing his hobby
- Dancing

You might wait until you've completed Line 2: Portrayal in the next step to figure this out. That's great. An NPC at work is a way to show, not tell, more about who the NPC is.

In a campaign where NPCs are always doing something, your players will feel like your world is alive and your NPCs are more than bags of hit points.

So, what is your NPC up to?

[LN Young Male Deep Dwarf Miner 8] +1 pick, pet weasel, sneer; prying a cobblestone from the street looking for a coin he dropped.

Line 2: What to Portray

Most people have a place in their society. In modern times, we think of it as what people do for a living. In other times and in different cultures, profession might have stronger or lesser influence on identity.

Our dwarf IS a miner. A paladin IS a holy warrior. In Basic D&D an elf IS an elf (no class or other identity add-ons).

In many cases however, job, profession or skill set differ from rules, identity, race and other campaign elements.

If there is indeed an answer to what the NPC does for a living, note it here. Feel free to add an adjective to inject more flavour.

For example:

Appearance: [N Elderly Female Keshian] Sickly, noble garb, jewels – neck and hair; walking her tiger cub on a leash.

Portrayal: Stern head of household

Add Personality

Now we get into personality.

NPC personality has been covered in detail in previous Roleplaying Tips articles ([One Sentence NPCs](#) and [One Sentence NPC Generator](#)) and in my [NPC Essentials book](#).

But my big new tip here for you today is this: use a bunch of different trait types and qualities to make your Cast of Characters more realistic.

3 Line NPCs

For example, if you have a table of phobias, use this only for a few NPCs. When every NPC has a phobia, it gets silly.

If you have a chart of quirks, use it on every fourth or fifth NPC, else you get a quirky Cast of Characters that'll kill sense of disbelief in any serious or gritty campaign.

What kinds of personality ingredients should you throw into your NPC bag of Nuts 'N Bolts to make each one a whole new ball game? (This reference will only make sense to people my age, lol.)

- Quirks
- Traits
- Loyalties
- Motives, dreams, goals
- Jealousies, fears
- Power base
- Has a side plot
- Interests, knowledge, experience
- Secrets (my favourite)
- Mood, disposition
- Event

Can you see how distributing these different types of personality features and drivers amongst your NPCs will help you build a varied and interesting Cast of Characters?

One NPC has fleas, another fears heights and a third just murdered his neighbour. A fourth covets his brother's wife, another offers unwavering and hard-lined service to the Mayor and a sixth wants to start a bard troupe.

Feel free to layer on multiple personality traits, but for the purposes of creating 3 Line NPCs fast for easy gameplay, start with one and flesh out the character through gameplay, while updating his character sheet.

Alternatively, if profession is already covered in Line 1: Appearance (i.e., our dwarf IS a miner – it's his class and profession) feel free to add a second personality item.

Examples:

Appearance: [N Elderly Female Keshian] Sickly, noble garb, jewels – neck and hair; walking her tiger cub on a leash.

Portrayal: Stern head of household, vain.

Appearance: [LN Young Male Deep Dwarf Miner 8] +1 pick, pet weasel, sneer; prying a cobblestone from the street looking for a coin he dropped.

Portrayal: Chews and spits tobacco, has fleas.

In short, the second line is information the PCs don't necessarily see right away, but something they can find out about the NPC if they take the time to get to know them.

Line 3: Progress the Story

How can the NPC improve, extend and deepen your story?

In his book [Finite and Infinite Games](#), Carse explains the many differences between an open-ended (infinite: no end, no losers) and closed (finite: winners vs. losers) game.

One of the biggest aha! moments for me was players in infinite games such as RPGs need to make moves that grow, extend or open up the game for more moves.

That makes sense because you want the story to continue. You want players to riff off each other, collaborate and build a great campaign with you. You always want everyone in the group fired up and hollering to game another session.

(There are exceptions like one-shot games, convention games and single arc games. I'm talking about long-term regular game night style campaigns here.)

From a GM's view, we want to create game pieces that do the same thing. For example, we want NPCs to grow, prolong and open up more options for great gameplay!

An NPC with sniffles is fun to portray, but offers little to extend or expand the story.

However, an NPC who's trying to cover up a murder or who just lost his lucky gold piece (and now does have bad luck) does give us great story options.

Whether you wind these NPC hooks into your main plot, use them for PC side-plots, or make them part of an interesting background tapestry of news and events, your game grows – not shrinks – because of this simple line in your 3 Line NPC write-up.

Therefore, **Line 3 is about how the NPC can improve, extend and deepen your story.**

It can be a simple adventure or encounter hook, such as a [FedEx quest](#). I like secrets and events best, because they have more depth, are more subtle and tend to intrigue players.

For example, an NPC whose husband murdered a servant last night and does not want her husband caught. This opens up gameplay:

- The NPC finds the PCs trustworthy and asks for help disposing of the body and cleaning up clues and evidence
- The PCs find the body and do not suspect the NPC but do interact with the NPC several times
- The PCs are directed to the servant for some reason, but the servant has disappeared
- A PC is related to the servant
- A PC is hired as the servant's replacement – are they in jeopardy too?

As discussed last chapter, a critical component that helps develop your story is to ask Why?

Why is the NPC involved with the hook?

Why does the NPC want to keep the secret a secret, or want 10 dire scorpion tails, or want his lucky gold piece back?

The better and more compelling the why, the better your story and gameplay.

Imagine a campaign full of NPCs with plot hooks practically bursting out of them. You have them all in your back pocket to offer when you need to give the game a push. You can also use them to offer great results to players from PC actions.

Meantime, you can portray NPCs in encounters through the lens of their hook, depending on what the hook is, to make NPCs seem different and special.

For example, the normally stern noble woman seems distracted, stressed and confused around the PCs because the murder weighs so heavily, and she asks odd questions about corpses. The dwarf begins having bad luck and starts acting paranoid and distressed. A superstitious idea blooms within him that the PCs are responsible and they are also the solution....

Make your last line in your 3 Line NPC something that will expand, extend or add depth to your game.

Putting It All Together

Read all three lines, plus study the portrait if you chose one, to get a sense of who this NPC is and what they're about.

With appearance, personality and hooks in place, you have a complete picture.

Now do a quick review.

First, do a quality check:

- Is the NPC boring?
- Is the NPC silly or cartoonish?
- Will the NPC mesh with your campaign and story?

Second, think a bit about how you'll game them:

- How will you roleplay them? (Think and do)
- How will you portray them? (Body language, voice, behaviour)
- How might they fit into your story?

I'm often surprised – though I have no idea why, anymore – how a little meditation on an NPC helps me GM them a hundred times better. Even if it's just 10 seconds while killing time somewhere. I think visually, and so try to picture the NPC moving and talking and doing things.

When it comes time to GM the NPC, I have a lot more confidence and ideas than when I've done no visualization beforehand. Give it a shot yourself.

Meantime, fix any glaring error with your NPC and then create your next one.

Let's finish up our examples.

Appearance: [N Elderly Female Keshian] Sickly, noble garb, jewels – neck and hair; walking her tiger cub on a leash.

Portrayal: Stern head of household, vain.

Hook: Husband has murdered a servant and does not know what to do with body.

Appearance: [LN Young Male Deep Dwarf Miner 8] +1 pick, pet weasel, sneer; prying a cobblestone from the street looking for his lucky coin.

Portrayal: Chews and spits tobacco, has fleas.

Hook: If coin not found, luck truly turns bad and affects others.

Here's a 3 Line NPC Daniel wrote:

Appearance: An elderly woman with raven black hair, ice blue eyes, wearing a dark colored scarf and many rings with brightly colored stones.

Portrayal: Medicine woman of village, townsfolk support her and gather whatever she needs for her potions, which she makes and distributes for free.

Hook: Is last of a line of witches, always approaches people traveling through town to find out if there is a young girl she can pass her legacy and curse on to. Doing so involves a rather painful initiation: the death of a loved one.

With practice, the 3 Line Method will take you no time at all, and you'll be crafting awesome NPC cores fast.

As your game demands, flesh out these cores into full fledged NPCs with stats, backstories, relationship networks or whatever is needed.

The purpose of the 3 Line Method is to get you playable NPCs in a short amount of time. NPCs that expand your gameplay in terms of portrayal, interaction and story.

Turning Coal Into Diamonds – How to Mine Backstories to Create Killer Campaigns

Thanks to Roleplaying Tips reader Kate Manchester for inspiring the following article.

The topic has also been touched upon in issues before that. However, as I was editing Kate's article, several more tips came to mind, and I present these below.

Backgrounds, backstories, timelines and histories all cover the same thing – the past. This is compelling to game masters because it is static. The past has come and gone, and players cannot interfere with it. It gives you a body of information under your control for you to shape and use as you see fit.

GMs who are also creative writers find a wonderful outlet in this part of the game. Backgrounds can become short stories, or at least scratch the fiction-writing itch.

If you enjoy creating and working with histories for various elements of your games, then hopefully the following tips will help you get more benefit by extracting extra value from them.

1. Mine All Sources for Details

A game has several major elements, such as villains, adventures and NPCs. Each of these is a potential source for background details and inspiration. Mine these sources.

Some sources will be obvious to you, and some game elements that have minable histories might not have occurred to you. Here is a list:

- Game world
- Campaign
- Villains
- Adventures
- Encounters
- Locations
- NPCs
- PCs
- Magic items
- Factions

Game World

This will be your biggest background source. The setting itself will have a history, sometimes in the form of a timeline, and other times in the form of prose. Then there is a chance each element in the world will have a background blurb. For example, deities, races, countries, cities and religions.

Campaign

Many campaigns take the form of two or more factions in conflict, which spawns epic tales of how the sides became enemies and their past battles.

Villains

These major NPCs always have a backstory, sometimes a complex one.

Adventures

These almost all start with a background section. Some have a backstory that goes back millennia, and some have two or more sections with historical information, such as the adventure synopsis and the adventure background.

Encounters

Individual planned encounters often have setup information that includes a bit of background. At the least, you might have detailed the setup of who is doing what, where, how, when and why.

Locations

Whether part of a planned encounter or a notable place in the setting information, locations often have background information.

Every site with construction on it, such as buildings, monuments and engineered projects, has at the minimum a building project start and end date, plus the initial reason for the building. Other locations might be the sites of notable events, be the birthplace of important NPCs or have a history of interesting use.

NPCs

Some will have fleshed out backgrounds. Others might offer a few notes to explain their personalities and motivations.

PCs

You would be well-served by asking players to develop interesting backgrounds for their characters.

Magic items

Major items should have a backstory unless they are brand- new. Even minor items can benefit from a few background notes.

Factions

These are groups of NPCs who have organised themselves or become a community for one reason or other. Backstories for these game elements often include why a faction exists, how it was founded, and actions it has taken in the past.

As you can see, there are a surprising number of sources you can mine for historical information once you put them all in a list. This is excellent news!

You can also use this tip as a best practice checklist for what game elements should have background notes to help you weave together a better integrated campaign.

2. Ready Your Mining Carts

Before you gather all your sources and begin mining each, you need places to store and organise all the information you dig up. There is no point wielding your axes and shovels to build up a large pile of awesome nuggets that you do not then ever use.

Your first problem will be to organise the information in a way that helps you plan and design, then make it serve as an excellent and accessible reference during games. Solve this by using a small number of useful tools, many of which have already been covered in the newsletter:

Timeline

A simple chronology of events.

Gazetteer

A compilation of details about the setting and campaign.

Cast of Characters

A listing of NPCs in your campaign.

Cast of Locations

A listing of notable places in the world, campaign and adventures. Encounter locations can get added as they are planned or played out. This is not a map, though your cast might include one. If it does, be sure to use a coordinates system and add this information to a new column in your cast.

Cast of Items

A listing of notable mundane and magical things, their properties and last known location and possessor.

Pool of Hooks

Three key types of ideas – campaign facts, plot hooks and encounter seeds – to store as a to do list for development between games or as a handy inspiration list any time.

Campaign Facts

Bits of true information that pertain to any aspect of your game. Perhaps it is NPC trivia, setting tidbits or data about special items (people, places and things). You can use these facts later for building up adventure and encounter details or spawning news, rumours and clues.

Plot Hooks

These relate to your game at the story and plot level. Quests, side quests, adventures, conflicts and events.

Encounter Seeds

These form the basis of individual encounters or encounter sequences. Recording the seed gives you a drag- and-drop format for you to apply other game elements to, when needed, to flesh things out into full encounters.

3. How to Mine Your Backgrounds

Mining your backgrounds now becomes a simple and hopefully fun process of digging through all of your sources and loading any information you pick out into the most useful mining cart.

Events

If something has a date, record it in your timeline. Any notable event should go into your timeline as well, and if no date is provided, estimate one.

Develop an eye for recognising events, as these are important to the foundation of your campaign. It is tricky reading through backgrounds and spotting events, because you sometimes get caught up in the story and miss them or forget to add them to your timeline. Other times information about an event gets split up into different paragraphs or sections and you need to piece things together.

For example, note character birth dates, when things were founded and when conflicts occurred. Another way to look at it is to record who did what when.

World Building

Put details about your world and campaign into your gazetteer so it is always at your fingertips. Look through any world book, such as Eberron or Dark Sun, and you will see they are divided into chapters that are further divided into sections. Your gazetteer can mirror this structure, or you can create your own structure, so you can record information about gods, races, geography, cultures and so on.

Use the gazetteer as a bucket for any information that does not relate to history, people, places and things, as you can use the other mining carts for this information.

Allies, Enemies, Contacts and Relationships

Your world is full of people and you need a way to keep track of them all. Whenever you spot a person's name add it to your cast of characters plus any related information about who they are, what they do, where they are located, their relationships and their story roles.

Reversing the process, whenever an NPC is mentioned without a name record their info and generate a name for them. This improves the accuracy and integrity of your notes and helps you flesh out your campaign and world at the same time.

Notable Places for Name-Dropping and Encounter Re-Use

Authors use the names of places as a technique to make their stories believable and entertaining. Sometimes a name will pop up in conversation, be used as a curse or get attached to something to add detail. "This Velurian wine is magnificent."

For example, an NPC could sell a quiver full of arrows to the PCs and your game moves on. Alternatively, the merchant might offer a quiver of Red Forest elven arrows, and this could serve to add more detail to your campaign, offer a clue, give the elf player pause to consider what region his character is from, or all three.

Each time the material you sift through mentions a place, add it to the cast of locations. Use this as list of suggestions for world building, campaign planning and encounter design.

Celebrate Notable Items in Campaign Detail

The best examples are relics, major magic items and exotic equipment. Many adventures include a special magic item in the background that eventually finds its way into an encounter and then the PCs' hands. Few adventures take the opportunity to reveal the item's history throughout the course of the adventure to build up anticipation, so that when the group finally has its hands on it, it is a special moment.

For you, note any item mentioned in the materials. Named items are ideal. Anonymous items of significance should get added and then named. If you get stuck naming something, then name it after the creator, owner or place of origin. This trick lets you highlight NPCs and locations at the same time.

In most cases, an item is implied in some action or event described in a background. Become more aware of this by asking "How?" each time something occurs.

An assassination, for example, gets noted because a significant NPC falls. But how was he killed? Likely some weapon, poison or trap did the dirty deed. This becomes an ideal entry into your cast of items because there is fame and history attached to it. Whoever wrote the background probably did not think to consider how the assassination took place, and they were just fixed on the fact of the assassination and resulting consequences.

Let us say it was a dagger that killed Legathiel, an elven ambassador. I would enter into my cast of items "Dagger of Legathiel." If inspiration does not strike for bringing it into play immediately, then I at least have this in my list for future use. I would be inclined to make it a weapon sought after by enemies of the elves to use against them repeatedly throughout the ages, to not only kill special targets, but add insult and dishonour because a weapon with such a reviled reputation was used. The dagger is not even magical at this point, yet it has special significance with lots of plotting opportunities.

Use your growing cast of items as a shopping inventory tool as well. As in the Red Forest arrows example above, when the PCs go shopping you can drop in named mundane items for that extra bit of setting flair.

Track Your Open Loops

Record hooks for future inspiration and spontaneous in-game linkage. You also need to know what issues are raised that would impact the setting, campaign and adventures to prevent logic errors. "Hey, what about that weird shape in the sky mentioned in my character's background? It is still there, right? I look up."

- Look for conflicts mentioned in a background. Note who was involved and what the fight was about.
- Note events that might reoccur or that affect modern times in some way. Holidays are prime targets.
- Add to the pool dreams, goals and motivations of PCs and NPCs still living.
- List anything players would perceive as treasure. They might seek these things out, or you can turn them into objects of quests.
- Note anything mysterious, especially remote, unexplored and named places. These are all possible locations for adventurers.

- Encounters have three basic ingredients: a place, a conflict and a time. Add to your pool of hooks proto- encounters when you spot two or three of these ingredients colliding while parsing through background materials.

To summarise, read through any background material you can lay your hands on. Just about any fact will have a place in your system of mining carts to record it. Spotting useful bits of information takes practice, and you will get better at it as you read through more backgrounds and histories.

A nice rule of thumb is that if it has a date, name or action you should record it. Be on the lookout for anything you can use to enhance gameplay by creating immersive details or hooks.

4. Switch to Campaign Logging

Once you finish mining all of your information sources for juicy details, each of your mining carts becomes a real-time bucket for your ongoing campaign. When your campaign begins, you switch from mining mode to logging mode to help you track game details and opportunities.

As you make things up while planning or GMing, shovel this information into the proper cart. This will keep facts straight and give you deep references so you do not need to worry about having to remember everything.

Timeline

This becomes a log of what the PCs do and when.

Gazetteer

You will make things up on the fly as you run games. Add new items here that do not fit in the other mining carts. Add names or references during the game to act as a placeholder, and then add flesh them out between games.

Cast of Characters

This becomes a listing of NPCs met, and the relationships they develop with each other and the PCs. For example, in my current campaign I need to track NPC attitude towards the PCs so I know who will help and hinder them, who will give them great service and who will charge them double, and potential modifiers to any social skill rolls.

Cast of Locations

Players have the challenging habit of asking, where? Where is that store? Where can I buy this thing? Where does the NPC live? Where do I go for this service? Have there

been other reports of attacks, and if so, where? Where is the NPC from? Where are the chips?

As with the gazetteer, add into your locations list any place that gets created either by name or intent during games or planning.

Cast of Items

This becomes your treasure and equipment list. In my campaigns characters do not automatically determine the value of treasure until they get it appraised or appraise it themselves. Even then, I record the real value and the appraised value in case there is a difference for any reason.

For notable equipment, I want to know who is carrying it and where. I have found asking where a certain item is out of the blue tends to foil NPC actions, such as theft, scouting, breaking, and so on because it tips the PCs off.

For example, I prefer to know what magical signatures the PCs have without asking as an enemy mage invisibly casts detect magic nearby.

Sometimes items get lost in the shuffle as PCs fight over treasure or sell it. Your cast of items will ensure an accurate record of what stuff has actually been found. Do with this information as you see fit.

Pool of Hooks

For ideas, planning and logical occurrence of events. I outlined my current process for stocking my pool of hooks in [Roleplaying Tips Issue #488](#).

Summary

Histories, backstories and backgrounds are filled with rich veins of material to mine for your campaigns. Reuse as much of this as possible to add incredible detail, fidelity and immersion to your campaigns. Reused details mined from backgrounds are easier to remember. They also give you a frame in which to fit your adventures, encounters, treasure and NPCs.

Why invent something new every time? Instead, keep using existing details and add more depth to every reuse. Soon your world and game will feel linked together, integrated and alive.

To do this, start with the information you already have at hand: backgrounds. Almost every game element can come with a background. Read this information over. Mine out all the details. File these details into a basic system, such as the mining carts described above.

Once done, you should have a surprising amount of detail available for new adventures and encounters. When you start gameplay, build on all this detail by switching from mining mode to logging mode.

Keep your information organized in a system that lets you recall details fast for reuse. Tie details together so that more and more factor into each story. With this growing body of knowledge and experience, all sorts of roleplaying, plot and design ideas emerge on their own.

Start with mining your backgrounds today.

A Few Miscellaneous Tips from Readers

Pointers from Gem Cutter Robert

[Comment from Johnn: Robert, who edited this book, sent me some feedback while editing 3 Line NPC entries that I thought you might find interesting.]

I have finished editing a bevy of NPCs. I'm seeing some interesting patterns and lots of good NPCs. I really love this format!

As I read through these, a village of living, active characters is being built up around me. The people who fully get your 3 Line method are presenting you with NPCs that are alive and active, usually doing something completely mundane when the PCs walk onto their stage, and with interesting hooks to be revealed.

There have been some creative submissions, too, like this one where the NPC is dead. Not undead, just dead:

Appearance: [LE Adult Female Human Wizard] Once-beautiful, bedraggled, bloated, dead. Currently floating in a downstream river eddy. May be spoken to via Speak With Dead spell, or using a modified Magic Mouth spell as part of a triggered Contingency.

That Contingency spell guarantees the PCs are given a plot hook right away. It turns out she was murdered last night. By this guy:

Appearance: [LN Middle-aged Male Human Blacksmith] Fine clothes, rugged beard, suspicious squint. Currently haggling angrily with a merchant over the price of coal.

Portrayal: Assumes everyone is hiding something. Loses his temper when frustrated or mocked.

Hook: Murdered his wife's sister last night in a fit of rage. She was blackmailing him and had recently upped her demands.

I think the above is one of the best-crafted entries. Succinct and engaging. And I love that scene – arguing with someone over the price of coal! I can just FEEL the blacksmith's exasperation and frustration. He's naturally suspicious (based on his Portrayal line), and now he has a solid reason to be paranoid, given his Hook.

Most people are getting it. Though sometimes they don't have all the bits in the right place, but I move them around to fit the puzzle, and then the character pops into view.

For example, they might have part of Line 2 (how to GM the NPC) mixed in with Line 1 (what the PCs can perceive about the NPC), such as a detail that wouldn't be immediately known, but would easily come out in conversation or investigation.

And sometimes the initial action is buried in the Hook instead of being listed with their Appearance.

When an entry is weak or boring, it is most often because there is no initial action. There's a description of the character, but the character isn't *doing* anything.

That initial action is so important for establishing subtle details about the character.

Here are a couple of evocative examples of this opening action:

- Currently digging in an alley garbage pile for a discarded dagger.
- Haggling angrily with a merchant over the price of coal.
- A tall, stout halfling, swinging about with a tankard in his hand.

They don't need to be that overt, but there should be *some* mention of what they're likely to be doing when first encountered.

Stuck For Inspiration? Start With the Occupation

From Thomas Walker

I still think getting the initial kernel of inspiration is the difficult bit, and perhaps a random roll on your occupation and quirks tables can help with that, perhaps also in conjunction with a list of less quirky characteristics.

For example: <http://www.fiction-writers-mentor.com/list-of-character-traits.html>

[Comment from Johnn: Here are a couple of other links along the same vein that might generate ideas:

- [Bright Lights, Big City](#)
- [City Services, Landmarks And Businesses In A Fantasy Setting](#)
- [City People & Places](#)

Use Details to Fuel Stories

From manterakus

While playing around with the 3 Line NPC idea, I had a few observations to add:

Make Story Hooks Open Ended

Present each hook in such a way that it can lead to a larger story.

If the story part of your character dead-ends, so does the whole character (but then you have fodder for NPC elimination).

When you revisit characters in-game, look for ways to tie them back into the story or draw new plot lines with them.

Properly executed, a good story hook leaves you asking more questions. Answering these questions leads to more adventure!

Link Story Ideas Together

Given open-ended NPCs, use the questions implied by one of their story hooks as the focus for a new NPC.

Think about how the new NPC relates to the old one, and when filling in detail leave room for another mystery or connection.

Are there any special locations, hidden places or secret lairs in the area?

Connect NPCs to these as well. However, try to link them together in such a way that the new NPC can be recycled elsewhere if necessary. Players don't always follow the links you find interesting.

Turn GM Information into Rumors

Johnn hinted at this, but think about how the NPC's actions, quirks, goals or possessions can lead to whispered tales that get the players looking at your NPCs a second time.

Murders, thefts, blackmail, random acts of kindness, love and intense jealousy act as fertile ground for gossips and busybodies.

Did an NPC steal a sword? Then its owner offers a reward to get it back. Does your NPC harbor a secret love for the most beautiful girl in town? Then people will speculate about the identity of the person who keeps sending the belle such lavish gifts.

Try FATE's Aspects System

From Lars Sundstrom

Johnn,

I started playing [Fate](#). They have something called aspects, and they're used on everything. NPCs, PCs, regions, cultures, towns, roads.

Examples:

- The highway between Tularn City and the Misty Mountains. **Aspects:** trade caravans, raided by bandits, easy to travel.
- Guard Captain Nargog. **Aspects:** hates dwarfs, stubborn to a fault, likes his drink.
- Thieves' guild of Warkan. **Aspects:** very secretive, influential, unknown leader(s).
- Grak Woods. **Aspects:** dark, dense and gloomy, avoided and feared by humans, ancient evil.

By using these aspects I can quickly define and prepare the setting for the players. I don't always tell them all the aspects. The PCs will have to find some of them out by themselves.

This makes it easy for me to set something up if the PCs go off my pre-planned path.

I had chase going on where the PCs were pursuing a group of bandits. They chased them through a small village I had not prepared because I thought they would just ride through. But no, they stayed the night.

So I came up with: apple orchards, large old inn with secrets, seen better times.

This set the mood for the village quickly. The large inn implied that people from all over came there, the village was once prosperous, and that maybe the community had been on a major caravan route once.

So I will use Aspects as part of my 3 Line NPCs template. I will also remove the action as it is situational (or what the NPC is doing) and role play that (as described in your NPC Essentials GM book).

So my template will look like:

Line 1: What the players can see: NPC appearance » **Appearance**

Line 2: What to portray: **Aspects** (minimum 3)

Line 3: How to progress the story: Adventure or encounter hook » **Hook**

Also as part of Fate instant NPC "generation" I usually set the highest Skill. This pretty much determines the NPC level, so:

- Appearance:
- Aspects:
- Hook:
- Skills:

Hope that helps. Keep up the good work.

d100 NPC Secrets

NPCs with secrets add instant plot hooks for your game. Using a bit of GM showmanship, wait for the right time and place to drop the secret bomb on your PCs.

Even better, slowly dole out clues before the big reveal, then watch your players' faces as they search their memories and put the pieces together. They will call you a genius!

1. Accidentally killed a sibling as a child
2. Acts as if they are physically challenged (blind, one- legged, etc.) but really are not
3. Admires a criminal for his gusto
4. Deserted from the military
5. Enjoys a great reputation for some martial deed in the past, but it is a fabrication and they are actually cowardly
6. Fantasizes about being an adventurer
7. Fought for both sides in a war
8. Has a double life as both the villain and the hero helping the PCs defeat him
9. Has a hatred of other subtypes of his race (i.e. a shield dwarf who hates gold dwarves)
10. Has a position of authority, but all their work, plans, and ideas come from an unacknowledged underling
11. Has a treasure map tattooed on their scalp concealed by their hair
12. Has an illegitimate child
13. Has an intelligent magic item that communicates through telepathy
14. Has been slowly poisoning the food and drink of the sick relative they are looking after
15. Has committed a crime and the evidence is buried in the back yard
16. Has killed someone close to the PC and has befriended the PC as penance
17. Has no true wealth but makes it appear that they do
18. Hasn't paid taxes or tithes in 20 years

19. Is a dealer of an illicit substance or commodity
20. Is a disguised enemy who is sending the PCs on a quest to defeat him, confident of victory
21. Is a fallen paladin
22. Is a famous hero in hiding
23. Is a former evil warlord now living as a simple farmer to avoid destruction
24. Is a gambling addict and is stealing money from their work to cover their debts
25. Is a high level adventurer in disguise
26. Is a lost member of the royal family
27. Is a member of a shady or disreputable sub-culture (i.e. a biker gang)
28. Is a member of the secret police
29. Is a miser, socking away cash in their quarters
30. Is a mole or spy for another nation's government
31. Is a PC's child from a forgotten romantic tryst
32. Is a playwright in disguise who is using the PCs' adventures as the plots for their plays
33. Is a poor noble who supports their lifestyle through crime
34. Is a powerful figure, disguised to listen for rumors from the public
35. Is a racist but realizes that people don't share his views
36. Is a scout looking for potential recruits for the army, police, secret service, etc.
37. Is a terrorist or freedom fighter fighting against the current government
38. Is an actor getting into an upcoming role by living the life of their character
39. Is an agent in disguise for a good organization
40. Is an agent in disguise for an evil organization
41. Is an atheist who pretends to be religious to fit in
42. Is an ex-slave

- 43. Is an informant for the city watch, thieves' guild, dark cult, or other organization
- 44. Is an observer from another plane
- 45. Is an upstanding citizen who also owns a seedy tavern or brothel
- 46. Is bald and wears a wig
- 47. Is being magically controlled by another
- 48. Is blackmailing someone
- 49. Is deeply in debt to a protection racket and is afraid for their life
- 50. Is desperate for money and seeks to kill the PCs after being weakened from an adventure
- 51. Is dying of old age but concealing the fact with illusions
- 52. Is from a rival adventuring or mercenary group, subtly extracting information from the PCs
- 53. Is giving the PCs a job he himself was assigned
- 54. Is guarding an artifact of a lost culture
- 55. Is harboring a criminal
- 56. Is illiterate
- 57. Is in love with a PC
- 58. Is in love with a PC's parent
- 59. Is in love with their sibling
- 60. Is looking for an honest person
- 61. Is married to two spouses, neither of which knows about the other
- 62. Is masquerading as a different class (i.e. a sorcerer pretending to be a thief)
- 63. Is of one alignment but masquerades as another
- 64. Is on the brink of bankruptcy
- 65. Is plotting against their business rivals
- 66. Is plotting to kill someone for revenge

- 67. Is possessed by one of the PC's former opponents
- 68. Is psychotic or possessed but desperately tries to seem normal
- 69. Is searching for the magic sword their parent was wearing when killed
- 70. Is suffering a crisis of faith
- 71. Is sympathetic to the heroes' cause even though they work for the villain
- 72. Is the eyes for a local dragon
- 73. Is the local homeless drunkard, but the ever-present bottle in the brown paper bag actually holds water
- 74. Is the one who unleashed the problem that he is now sending the PCs to fix
- 75. Is the spouse, sibling, or offspring of one of PC's victims
- 76. Is the world authority on an obscure piece of knowledge
- 77. Is very young but pretends to be much older
- 78. Keeps coins in their shoes in case they ever have to run away
- 79. Knows how to cook gourmet meals but is too lazy to bother
- 80. Knows the best fishing hole in the area
- 81. Likes staring fires
- 82. Likes to torture small animals
- 83. Moonlights as a tavern singer but is ashamed to admit it
- 84. Once peed in the King's soup
- 85. Reads trashy romance novels
- 86. Recently lost their job but is pretending to go to work to maintain appearances
- 87. Recently won the lottery and hasn't told anyone
- 88. Spent many years in jail for a crime they didn't commit
- 89. Survived an execution and escaped to live a normal life
- 90. Suspects a PC of being attracted to their spouse

- 91. Their parents were brother and sister
- 92. Two NPCs are secretly one
- 93. Uses their middle name because they hate their given name
- 94. Wakes up each morning with blood under their nails but no wounds
- 95. Wants to be a musician
- 96. Was a member of an adventuring band and treacherously left their companions to die while making off with all the loot
- 97. Was friend of the PC's parents, and is now keeping a protective eye on the PC from a distance
- 98. Was once the King's loyal advisor or guard and is holding secret state documents
- 99. Wears a sword and talks tough, but has no idea how fight
- 100. Writes trashy romance novels

d135 NPC Side Plots

An NPC without a goal or something interesting happening in their lives is like an ice cream cone with no ice cream.

Add zest to your game by giving your NPCs a little somethin' on the side.

1. Is feuding with neighbor over grazing rights
2. Is a wandering amateur chef looking for new recipes and ingredients
3. Is a failed adventurer with much emotional baggage who seeks to sabotage other adventurers
4. Is a shrewd negotiator, but offers extremely valuable information in trade for new information
5. Is quiet, brooding, and short tempered due to medical problems
6. Is a pacifist who tries to convert the party to the ways of non-violence
7. Has a racial enemy or is banned from racially dominant areas
8. Fears being alone because of a recent incident
9. Is collecting parlor games from across the lands
10. Tries to recruit the PCs for some incredibly mundane task (i.e. labourer) regardless of PC objections
11. Knows of "lots of great adventures" that are, unfortunately, all dead ends
12. Is a historian, but all the facts are invented (compulsive liar)
13. Is a travelling madam with company, seeking new employees and better (wealthier) company
14. Is recruiting for the military or a special guild
15. Is an outcast for forgotten crimes
16. Is collecting donations for a charitable fund
17. Is looking for a particular person with critical spell components
18. Is on a secret military mission
19. Is in disguise (for reasons real or imaginary)

20. Imagines he/she is a ghost in spite of attempts to prove he/she is living
21. Believes (loudly) that wealth should be spread among all the citizens and tries to redistribute the PCs' wealth
22. Is paranoid and over-protective of their town
23. Is tracking down a villain and vows to kill him/her/it
24. Has an unhealthy obsession with another person
25. Is good-aligned and has recently run away from evil parents
26. Likes to play practical jokes on party members (without revealing culpability if possible)
27. Is celibate/chaste, but always attracts the opposite sex
28. Is the bastard son of a famous lord (hates his father; half-brothers would kill him on sight)
29. Myopic guard -- extremely nearsighted but compensates with well developed sense of hearing
30. Is a binge drinker who tends to get in trouble due to violent, drunken bouts
31. Trying to find lost love (who is a traveling with a troop of entertainers)
32. Spy keeping tabs on party for local leader or powerful NPC
33. Extremely lucky (never seems to do anything right, but somehow escapes any personal consequences)
34. A "wanted man" sought by a particular non-human good race (i.e. Elves, Halflings, Dwarves, etc.) for some past misdeed or misunderstanding
35. Greedy -- always demands first dibs and/or larger shares when dividing treasure troves based on exaggerated contributions to the party's success
36. Is unhappily married and will do anything to get out of it
37. Is a fan (to the point of fanaticism) of a spectator sport of the time (jousting, cockfighting, bearbaiting, whatever) and has gotten into gambling/stalking trouble
38. Is heavily in debt and is fleeing/hiding from creditors
39. Is an outspoken advocate of a controversial political position

40. Is an aspiring bard and uses the PCs as subjects of his/her newest songs without their consent
41. Is one of the top artisans at his/her craft, but circumstances beyond his/her control have forced him out of the trade
42. Is a proud parent and wants his/her child to become an adventurer
43. Was adopted as an infant and is in search of his/her bio- parents
44. Is an outcast in the community for no good reason
45. Is a self-proclaimed matchmaker and tries to set up at least one of the PCs
46. Is an unwitting thrall to a powerful vampire
47. Is searching for a lost family heirloom -- the heirloom may not have any value other than sentiment
48. Is on a personal quest for enlightenment, salvation, vengeance, atonement, etc.
49. Is on a personal quest for power and has made dark pacts with evil outsiders to accomplish this end
50. Is a vigilante who kills in cold blood convinced that the ends (i.e. eliminating a criminal element) justify the means (using excessive force, killing hostages, etc.)
51. Is the reluctant heir to some ancient, forbidding, or dark power
52. Will deal with the PCs only in a specific, non-monetary currency (i.e. gems, jewels, fine art, old whiskey, etc.)
53. Wants the PCs to "accidentally retrieve" an item while they are investigating clues
54. Is tainted in some way and tries at all costs to keep the taint a secret
55. Wants the PCs to deliver a letter to his mother – but he doesn't know that his mother is really that cackling night hag that the local lord wants hunted down and exterminated
56. Wants PCs to "lend" him the main plot item after they retrieve it, before they hand it over to the main plot instigator. The motivation could be pure (i.e. item needed to lift a deadly curse) or nefarious (i.e. item used to raise an army of undead)
57. Suffers from a skin condition which causes his skin to burn and peel in direct sunlight -- but is not a vampire

3 Line NPCs

- 58. Is a doctor who unwittingly spreads a deadly plague even while trying desperately to find the cure
- 59. Suffers from black-outs and is completely unaware of his actions, during the black-out
- 60. Is an unsuccessful playwright who has stolen the latest creation of a very well known bard
- 61. Is deadly terrified of shadows. He'll only meet with the PCs in places completely devoid of shadows
- 62. Has a craving for rare herbs and spices that unknown to the PCs are used to create a powerful narcotic
- 63. Is lecherous and married. Asks the PCs for help sneaking in and out of brothels
- 64. Is a voyeur who happens to be spying on the house where the PCs are adventuring
- 65. Is a worshipper of a death god(dess) or a necromancer who wishes to serve as a mortician of the city but needs documents proving his/her good intentions/standing
- 66. Is extremely obese and is attempting to travel a long distance
- 67. Thinks he's a duck because of a powerful enchantment
- 68. Is an anarchist attempting to recruit followers to overthrow the government
- 69. Has recently broken up with a lover and now laments
- 70. Is pregnant and the father is a noble/priest/etc.
- 71. Cannot stop complaining, and will complain to anyone near them but knows key information hidden among the complaints
- 72. Has an irrational fear of pants and attempts to "save" anyone who happens to be wearing pants
- 73. Sells rice cakes with magic rings inside
- 74. Tries to pass off lousy equipment as magical
- 75. Sells magical equipment that looks fake or non-magical
- 76. Is a lowly beggar with friends in high places who acts as a spy for a powerful wizard or guild

- 77. Sells rare and unusual spells
- 78. Is the most annoying person in town but befriends the PCs
- 79. Is trying to ditch the city guards, who are chasing him for a minor crime
- 80. Has had an operation to change his/her race, but still manifests cultural mannerisms of his/her original race
- 81. Used to be a powerful adventurer
- 82. Is promoting a new religion and tries to convert all who pass by
- 83. Is an artist trying to sell his works
- 84. Is a writer trying to sell his works
- 85. Is a noble trying to swap places with a peasant for a day
- 86. Is a very trusting foreigner
- 87. Acts as a local guide to the PCs
- 88. Has distinctly disproportionate limbs (i.e. one arm longer than the other, etc) that were altered through magic
- 89. Is a rich tax collector targeted by several opponents who feel that he/she is unfair or embezzling
- 90. Acts as a representative for the Black Market
- 91. Desperately needs an item only available through the Black Market
- 92. Is a disgruntled worker recently laid off
- 93. Is part of a group of traveling musicians seeking a benefactor
- 94. Believes that he is the only voice of a powerful god
- 95. Rants uncontrollably about unrelated things as if under the effects of a Feeblemind
- 96. At first sight, falls madly in love with one of the party members and becomes obsessive/stalks
- 97. Is in the process of creating their own masterpiece (painting, pottery, sculpture, etc.) and wants to use one of the PCs as a model/inspiration

3 Line NPCs

- 98. Is an opera house maestro who mistakes one of the PCs for the lead in his production and whisks them off to perform
- 99. Believes that one of the party members is a long lost relative
- 100. Is trying to marry off their eldest son/daughter to one of the PCs
- 101. Is being held captive in his/her own home
- 102. Has been replaced by a doppelganger
- 103. Is seeking political/religious asylum
- 104. A bitter rival was just elected into a minor position and NPC wants to ruin his reputation
- 105. NPC is a victim of spousal abuse
- 106. NPC has invented a new piece of equipment and is looking for a test subject
- 107. NPC is seeking support and election for a minor bureaucratic position with a long title
- 108. Is a guard or law official who seeks information about who, how and why he was framed for a crime that resulted in his dismissal
- 109. Is desperately trying to join a prestigious sports team/league
- 110. Is trying to find out how to join a certain secret cult
- 111. Is seeking his muse
- 112. NPC is squatting and claims an ancient family rite to the site
- 113. Is looking for his/her father who disappeared in the area 6 months ago
- 114. Seeks his/her father/mother/child who ran away from home
- 115. NPC seeks an ex-lover to claim child-support for their bastard child
- 116. Is going out at night and mistreating stray animals
- 117. Was recently injured in a random attack and seeks his attackers for revenge
- 118. Is hiding from local elves who seek him after recently telling several off-colour elven jokes in public
- 119. Is trying to fulfill a bizarre request of their employer, but with no luck

3 Line NPCs

120. Is an informant for the local thieves' guild with nothing to report and is ready to make something up
121. Loudly and publicly complains about the local lord
122. Is looking for a business partner
123. Is a barber who's invented a new hairstyle and is looking for customers
124. NPC's home burnt down last night
125. NPC is a merchant looking to open trade with other races and spot a non-human PC
126. NPC has an injury or disease and is saving up for a heal spell
127. A meek NPC has a valuable treasure but does not know who to turn to and trust for the sale
128. Is a skilled amateur gambler looking to break into the pros or find the "big game"
129. Has been falsely accused and has just posted bail and is now looking for proof of his innocence
130. Fears he's being watched and is looking for someone who he can trust to recover a valuable object buried nearby
131. NPC is looking to buy winter clothing and bedding for their orphanage but wool prices are up due to a local shortage
132. Is trying to drink himself to death
133. Has been given a task by his boss and his boss would punish him if it was known he was "wasting time" with the PCs
134. Wants the PCs to promote her business by wearing or using her product prominently whenever possible (fashionable cloaks, very tasty trail rations, a specific musical instrument, etc.)
135. Pumps the characters for details about their exploits, then goes around claiming that he himself did these things

d50 NPC Goals, Motives & Dreams

Here's another useful table of ideas. What does your NPC want? Roll a d50 to find out:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Make a new friend | 27. Raise an army |
| 2. Survive another day | 28. Learn how to use magic/technology |
| 3. Avoid duties or responsibilities | 29. Break a curse |
| 4. Do something important | 30. Revenge |
| 5. Become a landowner | 31. Make others laugh |
| 6. Somehow acquire the next meal | 32. Own a mansion |
| 7. Earn fame | 33. Travel to a new dimension |
| 8. Win friends and influence people | 34. Hide from the law |
| 9. Save a stranger | 35. Be accepted by peers |
| 10. Establish a certain reputation | 36. Make family proud |
| 11. Discover something new | 37. Become the best at something |
| 12. Earn wealth | 38. Complete a collection |
| 13. Regain sanity | 39. Not get noticed |
| 14. Get enough coin for another drink | 40. Increase their social class |
| 15. Finish a quest | 41. Find something lost |
| 16. Regain health | 42. Prove their worth |
| 17. Help ailing friend or relative | 43. Find their home |
| 18. Fix a broken relationship | 44. Reduce pain caused by something |
| 19. Win freedom | 45. Get more of something pleasurable |
| 20. Defeat an enemy | 46. Get a new job |
| 21. Find their parents | 47. Be useful |
| 22. Gain insight about something | 48. Become immortal |
| 23. Solve a mystery | 49. Discover the truth |
| 24. Resolve a past event | 50. Destroy the world |
| 25. Break up a relationship | |
| 26. Fix a horrible mistake | |

d1,000 NPC Traits

Use these as prompts to inspire NPC concepts or to serve as a personality seed:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Able | 32. Ambitious | 64. Babbling | 96. Calm |
| 2. Abrasive | 33. Amiable | 65. Babyish | 97. Candid |
| 3. Abrupt | 34. Amused | 66. Bad | 98. Capable |
| 4. Absent Minded | 35. Amusing | 67. Bashful | 99. Capricious |
| 5. Abusive | 36. Angry | 68. Beautiful | 100. Carefree |
| 6. Accepting | 37. Animated | 69. Belligerent | 101. Careful |
| 7. Accident Prone | 38. Annoyed | 70. Bewildered | 102. Careless |
| 8. Accommodating | 39. Annoying | 71. Biter | 103. Caring |
| 9. Accomplished | 40. Anti-Social | 72. Blames Others | 104. Caustic |
| 10. Action Oriented | 41. Anxious | 73. Blasé | 105. Cautious |
| 11. Active | 42. Apathetic | 74. Blowhard | 106. Changeable |
| 12. Adaptable | 43. Apologetic | 75. Boastful | 107. Charismatic |
| 13. Addict | 44. Appreciative | 76. Boisterous | 108. Charming |
| 14. ADHD | 45. Apprehensive | 77. Bold | 109. Chaste |
| 15. Adorable | 46. Approachable | 78. Boorish | 110. Cheerful |
| 16. Adventurous | 47. Argumentative | 79. Bored | 111. Cheerless |
| 17. Affable | 48. Aristocratic | 80. Boring | 112. Childish |
| 18. Affected | 49. Arrogant | 81. Bossy | 113. Chivalrous |
| 19. Affectionate | 50. Artistic | 82. Boundless | 114. Civilised |
| 20. Afraid | 51. Ashamed | 83. Brainy | 115. Classy |
| 21. Afraid Of
Commitment | 52. Aspiring | 84. Brash | 116. Clean |
| 22. Aggressive | 53. Assertive | 85. Bratty | 117. Clever |
| 23. Agnostic | 54. Astonished | 86. Brave | 118. Close |
| 24. Agreeable | 55. Attentive | 87. Brazen | 119. Closed |
| 25. Alert | 56. Audacious | 88. Bright | 120. Clumsy |
| 26. Alluring | 57. Austere | 89. Brilliant | 121. Coarse |
| 27. Aloof | 58. Authoritarian | 90. Brotherly | 122. Cocky |
| 28. Altruistic | 59. Authoritative | 91. Brutish | 123. Coherent |
| 29. Always Hungry | 60. Available | 92. Bubbly | 124. Cold |
| 30. Always Late | 61. Average | 93. Busy | 125. Cold Hearted |
| 31. Ambiguous | 62. Awful | 94. Calculating | 126. Combative |
| | 63. Awkward | 95. Callous | 127. Comfortable |

3 Line NPCs

128. Committed	164. Creative	200. Dependent	236. Disturbed
129. Communicative	165. Credible	201. Depressed	237. Dogmatic
130. Compassionate	166. Creepy	202. Deranged	238. Domineering
131. Competent	167. Critical	203. Despicable	239. Dorky
132. Complacent	168. Cross	204. Despondent	240. Doubtful
133. Compliant	169. Crude	205. Detached	241. Downtrodden
134. Composed	170. Cruel	206. Detailed	242. Draconian
135. Compulsive	171. Cuddly	207. Determined	243. Dramatic
136. Conceited	172. Cultured	208. Devilish	244. Dreamer
137. Concerned	173. Curious	209. Devious	245. Dreamy
138. Condescending	174. Cutthroat	210. Devoted	246. Dreary
139. Confident	175. Cynical	211. Dignified	247. Dubious
140. Confused	176. Dainty	212. Diligent	248. Dull
141. Congenial	177. Dangerous	213. Direct	249. Dumb
142. Conscientious	178. Daring	214. Disaffected	250. Dutiful
143. Considerate	179. Dark	215. Disagreeable	251. Dynamic
144. Consistent	180. Dashing	216. Discerning	252. Eager
145. Constricting	181. Dauntless	217. Disciplined	253. Easygoing
146. Content	182. Dazzling	218. Discontented	254. Eccentric
147. Contented	183. Debonair	219. Discouraged	255. Educated
148. Contrarian	184. Deceitful	220. Discreet	256. Effervescent
149. Contrite	185. Deceiving	221. Disgusting	257. Efficient
150. Controlling	186. Decent	222. Dishonest	258. Egocentric
151. Conversational	187. Decisive	223. Disillusioned	259. Egotistic
152. Cooperative	188. Decorous	224. Disinterested	260. Elated
153. Coquettish	189. Deep	225. Disloyal	261. Eloquent
154. Courageous	190. Defeated	226. Dismayed	262. Embarrassed
155. Courteous	191. Defective	227. Disorderly	263. Embittered
156. Covetous	192. Deferential	228. Disorganized	264. Embraces Change
157. Cowardly	193. Defiant	229. Disparaging	265. Eminent
158. Cowering	194. Deliberate	230. Disrespectful	266. Emotional
159. Coy	195. Delicate	231. Dissatisfied	267. Empathetic
160. Crabby	196. Delightful	232. Dissolute	268. Enchanting
161. Crafty	197. Demanding	233. Distant	269. Encouraging
162. Cranky	198. Demonic	234. Distraught	270. Enduring
163. Crazy	199. Dependable	235. Distressed	

3 Line NPCs

271. Energetic	307. Feisty	343. Fuddy Duddy	379. Guarded
272. Engaging	308. Ferocious	344. Fun	380. Guilt Ridden
273. Enigmatic	309. Fidgety	345. Fun Loving	381. Guilty
274. Entertaining	310. Fierce	346. Funny	382. Gullible
275. Enthusiastic	311. Fiery	347. Furious	383. Hagglng
276. Envious	312. Fighter	348. Furtive	384. Handsome
277. Equable	313. Filthy	349. Fussy	385. Happy
278. Erratic	314. Fine	350. Gabby	386. Hard
279. Ethical	315. Finicky	351. Garrulous	387. Hard Working
280. Evasive	316. Flagging	352. Gaudy	388. Hardy
281. Evil	317. Flakey	353. Generous	389. Harmonious
282. Exacting	318. Flamboyant	354. Genial	390. Harried
283. Excellent	319. Flashy	355. Gentle	391. Harsh
284. Excessive	320. Fleeting	356. Giddy	392. Hateful
285. Excitable	321. Flexible	357. Giggly	393. Haughty
286. Excited	322. Flighty	358. Gives Up Easily	394. Healthy
287. Exclusive	323. Flippant	359. Giving	395. Heart Broken
288. Expansive	324. Flirty	360. Glamorous	396. Heartless
289. Expert	325. Flustered	361. Gloomy	397. Heavy Hearted
290. Extravagant	326. Focused	362. Glorious	398. Hedonistic
291. Extreme	327. Foolish	363. Glum	399. Helpful
292. Exuberant	328. Forceful	364. Goal Orientated	400. Helpless
293. Fabulous	329. Forgetful	365. Good	401. Hesitant
294. Facetious	330. Forgiving	366. Goofy	402. High
295. Faded	331. Formal	367. Graceful	403. High Self Esteem
296. Fair	332. Fortunate	368. Gracious	404. Hilarious
297. Faith In Self	333. Foul	369. Grandiose	405. Homeless
298. Faithful	334. Frank	370. Grateful	406. Honest
299. Faithless	335. Frantic	371. Greedy	407. Honor Bound
300. Fake	336. Fresh	372. Gregarious	408. Honorable
301. Fanatical	337. Fretful	373. Grieving	409. Hopeful
302. Fanciful	338. Friendly	374. Grouchy	410. Hopeless
303. Fantastic	339. Frightened	375. Growly	411. Hormonal
304. Fatalistic	340. Frigid	376. Gruesome	412. Horrible
305. Fearful	341. Frugal	377. Gruff	413. Hospitable
306. Fearless	342. Frustrated	378. Grumpy	

3 Line NPCs

414. Hostile	450. Inefficient	486. Jittery	522. Loudmouth
415. Hot Headed	451. Inept	487. Joking	523. Lovable
416. Huffy	452. Inflexible	488. Jolly	524. Lovely
417. Humble	453. Inimitable	489. Jovial	525. Loves Challenge
418. Humorous	454. Innocent	490. Joyful	526. Loving
419. Hurt	455. Inquisitive	491. Joyous	527. Low Confidence
420. Hysterical	456. Insecure	492. Judgmental	528. Lowly
421. Ignorant	457. Insensitive	493. Keen	529. Loyal
422. Ill	458. Insightful	494. Kenderish	530. Lucky
423. Ill-Bred	459. Insincere	495. Kind Hearted	531. Lunatic
424. Imaginative	460. Insipid	496. Kittenish	532. Lying
425. Immaculate	461. Insistent	497. Knowledgeable	533. Macho
426. Immature	462. Insolent	498. Lackadaisical	534. Mad
427. Immobile	463. Instinctive	499. Lacking	535. Malice
428. Immodest	464. Insulting	500. Languid	536. Malicious
429. Impartial	465. Intellectual	501. Lascivious	537. Manipulative
430. Impatient	466. Intelligent	502. Late	538. Mannerly
431. Imperial	467. Intense	503. Lazy	539. Materialistic
432. Impolite	468. Interested	504. Leader	540. Matronly
433. Impotent	469. Interrupting	505. Lean	541. Matter-Of-Fact
434. Impractical	470. Intimidating	506. Lethargic	542. Mature
435. Impudent	471. Intolerant	507. Level	543. Mean
436. Impulsive	472. Intrepid	508. Lewd	544. Meek
437. Inactive	473. Introspective	509. Liar	545. Melancholy
438. Incoherent	474. Introverted	510. Licentious	546. Melodramatic
439. Incompetent	475. Intuitive	511. Light-Hearted	547. Mentally Slow
440. Inconsiderate	476. Inventive	512. Likeable	548. Merciful
441. Inconsistent	477. Involved	513. Limited	549. Mercurial
442. Indecisive	478. Irresolute	514. Lineat	550. Messy
443. Independent	479. Irresponsible	515. Lingering	551. Meticulous
444. Indifferent	480. Irreverent	516. Lively	552. Mild
445. Indiscrete	481. Irritable	517. Logical	553. Mischievous
446. Indiscriminate	482. Irritating	518. Lonely	554. Miserable
447. Indolent	483. Jackass	519. Loquacious	555. Miserly
448. Indulgent	484. Jaded	520. Lordly	556. Mistrusting
449. Industrious	485. Jealous	521. Loud	

3 Line NPCs

557. Modern	591. Not Trustworthy	626. Painstaking	661. Plotting
558. Modest		627. Panicky	662. Plucky
559. Moody	592. Nuanced	628. Paranoid	663. Polite
560. Moping	593. Nuisance	629. Particular	664. Pompous
561. Moralistic	594. Nurturing	630. Passionate	665. Poor
562. Motherly	595. Nut	631. Passive	666. Popular
563. Motivated	596. Obedient	632. Passive-Aggressive	667. Positive
564. Mysterious	597. Obese	633. Pathetic	668. Possessive
565. Nagging	598. Obliging	634. Patient	669. Practical
566. Naive	599. Obnoxious	635. Patriotic	670. Precise
567. Narcissistic	600. Obscene	636. Peaceful	671. Predictable
568. Narrow-Minded	601. Obsequious	637. Penitent	672. Preoccupied
569. Nasty	602. Observant	638. Pensive	673. Pretentious
570. Naughty	603. Obstinate	639. Perfect	674. Pretty
571. Neat	604. Odd	640. Perfectionist	675. Prim
572. Needs Social Approval	605. Odious	641. Performer	676. Primitive
573. Needy	606. Open	642. Perserverant	677. Productive
574. Negative	607. Open-Minded	643. Perseveres	678. Profane
575. Negligent	608. Opinionated	644. Persevering	679. Professional
576. Nervous	609. Opportunistic	645. Persistent	680. Promiscuous
577. Neurotic	610. Optimistic	646. Persuasive	681. Proper
578. Never Hungry	611. Orcish	647. Pert	682. Protective
579. Nibbler	612. Orderly	648. Perverse	683. Proud
580. Nice	613. Organized	649. Pessimistic	684. Prudent
581. Night Owl	614. Ornery	650. Petty	685. Psychotic
582. Nihilistic	615. Ossified	651. Petulant	686. Puckish
583. Nimble	616. Ostentatious	652. Philanthropic	687. Punctilious
584. Nit Picker	617. Outgoing	653. Picky	688. Punctual
585. No Purpose	618. Outrageous	654. Pious	689. Purposeful
586. No Self Confidence	619. Outspoken	655. Pitiful	690. Pushy
587. Noble	620. Overbearing	656. Placid	691. Puzzled
588. Noisy	621. Overweight	657. Plain	692. Quarrelsome
589. Nonchalant	622. Overwhelmed	658. Playful	693. Queer
590. Nosy	623. Overwhelming	659. Pleasant	694. Quick
	624. Paces	660. Pleasing	695. Quick Tempered
	625. Pacifistic		

3 Line NPCs

696. Quiet	731. Responsive	767. Scruffy	803. Silent
697. Quirky	732. Restless	768. Secretive	804. Silky
698. Quixotic	733. Retiring	769. Secure	805. Silly
699. Rambunctious	734. Rhetorical	770. Sedate	806. Simian
700. Random	735. Rich	771. Seductive	807. Simple
701. Rash	736. Right	772. Selective	808. Sincere
702. Rational	737. Righteous	773. Self-Centered	809. Sisterly
703. Rawboned	738. Rigid	774. Self-Confident	810. Skillful
704. Realistic	739. Risk-Taking	775. Self-Conscious	811. Sleazy
705. Reasonable	740. Romantic	776. Self-Controlling	812. Sloppy
706. Rebellious	741. Rough	777. Self-Directed	813. Slovenly
707. Recalcitrant	742. Rowdy	778. Self-Disciplined	814. Slow Paced
708. Receptive	743. Rude	779. Self-Giving	815. Slutty
709. Reckless	744. Rugged	780. Self-Reliant	816. Sly
710. Reclusive	745. Ruthless	781. Self-Serving	817. Small-Minded
711. Refined	746. Sacrificing	782. Selfish	818. Smart
712. Reflective	747. Sad	783. Selfless	819. Smiling
713. Regretful	748. Sadistic	784. Senile	820. Smooth
714. Rejects Change	749. Safe	785. Sensitive	821. Sneaky
715. Relaxed	750. Sagely	786. Sensual	822. Snob
716. Relents	751. Saintly	787. Sentimental	823. Sociable
717. Reliable	752. Salient	788. Serene	824. Soft-Hearted
718. Relieved	753. Sanctimonious	789. Serious	825. Soft-Spoken
719. Religious	754. Sanguine	790. Sexual	826. Solitary
720. Reluctant	755. Sarcastic	791. Sexy	827. Sore
721. Remorseful	756. Sassy	792. Shallow	828. Sorry
722. Repugnant	757. Satisfied	793. Shameless	829. Sour
723. Repulsive	758. Saucy	794. Sharp	830. Spendthrift
724. Resentful	759. Savage	795. Sharp-Tongued	831. Spiteful
725. Reserved	760. Scared	796. Sharp-Witted	832. Splendid
726. Resilient	761. Scarred	797. Sheepish	833. Spoiled
727. Resolute	762. Scary	798. Shiftless	834. Spontaneous
728. Resourceful	763. Scattered	799. Shifty	835. Spunky
729. Respectful	764. Scheming	800. Short	836. Squeamish
730. Responsible	765. Scornful	801. Shrewd	837. Stately
	766. Scrawny	802. Shy	838. Static

3 Line NPCs

839. Steadfast	875. Talkative	911. Ugly	947. Unselfish
840. Sterile	876. Tall	912. Unappreciative	948. Unsure
841. Stern	877. Tardy	913. Unassuming	949. Unsympathetic
842. Stimulating	878. Tasteful	914. Unbending	950. Unsystematic
843. Stingy	879. Temperamental	915. Unbiased	951. Unusual
844. Stoical	880. Temperate	916. Uncaring	952. Unwilling
845. Stolid	881. Tenacious	917. Uncommitted	953. Upbeat
846. Straight Laced	882. Tense	918. Unconcerned	954. Upset
847. Strange	883. Tentative	919. Uncontrolled	955. Uptight
848. Strict	884. Terrible	920. Unconventional	956. Useful
849. Strident	885. Terrified	921. Uncooperative	957. Vacant
850. Strong	886. Testy	922. Uncoordinated	958. Vague
851. Strong Willed	887. Thankful	923. Uncouth	959. Vain
852. Stubborn	888. Thankless	924. Undependable	960. Valiant
853. Studious	889. Thick Skinned	925. Understanding	961. Vengeful
854. Stupid	890. Thorough	926. Undesirable	962. Venomous
855. Suave	891. Thoughtful	927. Undisciplined	963. Verbose
856. Submissive	892. Thoughtless	928. Unenthusiastic	964. Versatile
857. Successful	893. Threatening	929. Unfeeling	965. Vigorous
858. Succinct	894. Thrifty	930. Unfocused	966. Vindictive
859. Sulky	895. Thrilled	931. Unforgiving	967. Violent
860. Sullen	896. Tight	932. Unfriendly	968. Virtuous
861. Sultry	897. Timid	933. Ungrateful	969. Visual
862. Supercilious	898. Tired	934. Unhappy	970. Vivacious
863. Superstitious	899. Tireless	935. Unhelpful	971. Volatile
864. Supportive	900. Tiresome	936. Uninhibited	972. Voracious
865. Surly	901. Tolerant	937. Unkind	973. Vulgar
866. Suspicious	902. Touchy	938. Unmotivated	974. Vulnerable
867. Sweet	903. Tough	939. Unpredictable	975. Warlike
868. Sympathetic	904. Trivial	940. Unreasonable	976. Warm Hearted
869. Systematic	905. Troubled	941. Unreceptive	977. Wary
870. Taciturn	906. Truculent	942. Unreliable	978. Wasteful
871. Tacky	907. Trusting	943. Unresponsive	979. Weak
872. Tactful	908. Trustworthy	944. Unrestrained	980. Weary
873. Tactless	909. Truthful	945. Unruly	981. Weird
874. Talented	910. Typical	946. Unscrupulous	982. Well Grounded

3 Line NPCs

983. Whimsical	988. Wise	993. Worried	998. Youthful
984. Wholesome	989. Wishy Washy	994. Worthless	999. Zany
985. Wicked	990. Withdrawn	995. Wretched	1000. Zealot
986. Wild	991. Witty	996. Xenophobic	
987. Willing	992. Worldly	997. Young	

d40 Slightly More Verbose Traits

Sometimes one word doesn't paint enough of a picture. Here are traits from the mega list above expanded out a bit to get you a bit more inspiration:

1. Absent minded.
2. Obsessive about being perfectly clean and neat.
3. If what's happening isn't about their interests or what they need, they slowly fade out into some unknown train of thought.
4. Constantly smooths out wrinkles in their clothing.
5. Wrings their hands.
6. Fears strangers.
7. Keeps looking over their shoulder.
8. Keeps shifting their weapon from hand to hand.
9. Has mood swings.
10. Gets angered at strange, specific things.
11. Paranoid, with extremely wide eyes.
12. Uses the same hand gestures in conversation as they do when casting spells.
13. Actively starts pacing whenever still for a period of time.
14. Obsessed with a specific weapon, item, person, place or monster, often telling long, boring stories about it.
15. Rolls their eyes when talking about other people.
16. Is easily cowed.
17. Gossips about other people and makes things up about others.
18. Cannot make decisions. Asks others what to do several times before deciding.
19. Bad flatulence.
20. Speaks slow and deliberately.
21. Flips hair out of the way arrogantly.
22. Chews lips and flip-flops over decisions.
23. Snooty. Talks with their nose up and looks down on people.
24. Uses a dismissive hand wave (fingers pointing down with a sweeping motion).
25. Belly laughs and rocks back and forth in their seat.
26. Nervous, darting eyes, wringing hands, quavering voice.
27. Speaks in a low, deep voice, pausing after every sentence to carefully choose their words.
28. Constantly changes their gaze, making eye-contact with everyone around them again and again, in rapid succession.
29. Near-sighted. Squints at whoever is talking to them.

30. Is well-bred and waves their hand around in the air all the time, as though to fan away the unpleasant odor of the PCs.
31. Has a nasal voice.
32. Has a whiny voice.
33. Has a breathy voice, like Marilyn Monroe.
34. Uses a "signature phrase" ("Jinkies!" "By the Sons of Warvan, you shall be avenged!" "Holy rusted metal, Batman!" "Tubular!" "Make it so!" "Shards and Shells!" "By your command.").
35. Uses a few words of gibberish that represents phrases from their native language. Works especially well for swear words and exclamations.
36. Uses the same vocal pause repeatedly (i.e. ummmm, er, like, and so, uh).
37. Speaksveryquickly.
38. Speaks slowly as if they are not intelligent.
39. Speaks very slowly as if it isn't their native tongue and they are translating things in their head.
40. Looks boldly at the PCs with tight lips and narrowed eyes.

d50 NPC Fears

Once in awhile define an NPC's personality by what scares them most:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. Being alone | 25. Making decisions |
| 2. The dark | 26. Crowds |
| 3. Loud noise or certain sounds | 27. Dentists, shaman, priests |
| 4. Heights | 28. Disease |
| 5. Open spaces | 29. Evil |
| 6. Water | 30. Clothing |
| 7. Public speaking | 31. Being robbed |
| 8. Other people | 32. Blood |
| 9. Politicians | 33. Travel |
| 10. Animals, certain monsters, races, creatures | 34. Failure, defeat |
| 11. Sharp things | 35. Insanity |
| 12. Other opinions or beliefs | 36. Machines |
| 13. Opposite sex | 37. Clouds |
| 14. Flying | 38. A certain colour |
| 15. Alcohol | 39. Being injured |
| 16. Untidiness, messiness, being dirty | 40. Vehicles, mounts |
| 17. Stairs or steep slopes | 41. Children |
| 18. Books, scrolls, writing | 42. Adults |
| 19. Plants | 43. Magic |
| 20. Bridges | 44. The sun |
| 21. Police, the law | 45. The moon |
| 22. Battle | 46. Wealth, money |
| 23. Cold | 47. Fire |
| 24. Clowns | 48. Beards |
| | 49. The sky or stars |
| | 50. Undead, ghosts |

d65 Occupations

Here are ideas if you're stumped about what an NPC does to put dinner on the table:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Baker | 34. Mason |
| 2. Barber | 35. Meat Butcher |
| 3. Bather | 36. Mercenary |
| 4. Beer Seller | 37. Mercer |
| 5. Blacksmith | 38. Oil Merchant |
| 6. Bleacher | 39. Old-Clothes Dealer |
| 7. Buckle Maker | 40. Painter |
| 8. Carpenter | 41. Pastry cook |
| 9. Chandler | 42. Plasterer |
| 10. Chicken Butcher | 43. Porter |
| 11. Chimney Sweep | 44. Purse Maker |
| 12. Cooper | 45. Rat/Pest Catcher/Poisoner |
| 13. Copyist | 46. Restaurateur |
| 14. Cutler | 47. Roofer |
| 15. Cutpurse | 48. Ropemaker |
| 16. Dandy | 49. Rugmaker |
| 17. Doctor | 50. Saddler |
| 18. Fish Merchant | 51. Scabbard Maker |
| 19. Fletcher | 52. Scribe |
| 20. Furrier | 53. Sculptor |
| 21. Glove Maker | 54. Shoemaker |
| 22. Harness Maker | 55. Spice Merchant |
| 23. Horse Merchant | 56. Squire |
| 24. Hatter | 57. Tailor |
| 25. Hay Merchant | 58. Tanner |
| 26. Innkeeper | 59. Town Crier |
| 27. Jester | 60. Water Bearer |
| 28. Jeweler | 61. Water Carrier |
| 29. Juggling Troupe | 62. Weaver |
| 30. Laundress | 63. Wine Seller |
| 31. Locksmith | 64. Wood Seller |
| 32. Maidservant | 65. Woodcarver |
| 33. Manservant | |

Need a Name? Here Are 40 Great Name Generators & Resources

Great names are critical for immersion. Name an NPC Bob and you set a bad tone for any serious campaign. However, even the best GMs get stumped occasionally on generating great names. Following are links to several online names resources, lists and generators.

Before diving into the links though, I have a naming tip for you. We'll use my Pathfinder campaign as an example. Make a list of all the cultures and races you will want names for. Next, make a list of Earth languages, past and present. Match one Earth language to each culture and race.

That's it. It sounds simple, and it is. But it makes planning and running games so much easier! It is fast to prepare because so many Earth name lists are available online. Once you have this all set up, you are ready for the whole campaign.

In my Riddleport campaign, I have built a names spreadsheet. Across the top are races and cultures. I give each two columns. In the first column I place male names for the group. In the second, female. When I need a Taldan male name, for example, I just go to my spreadsheet and pick the first name from the list. The list is randomized so NPCs do not appear in alphabetical order in my campaign. :) If the name sucks, I delete it and select the next.

To populate the spreadsheet, I did the following:

1. Made the list of cultures and races I needed names for
2. Assigned each an Earth language
3. Googled for the Earth language + name, or I went to one of several sites I have bookmarked
4. Copied and pasted into spreadsheet

Location names are a bit more tricky. My first tactic is to name a place after an NPC. That works like a charm, adds an instant hook to the location, and gives the PCs something tangible to research if they ever choose to investigate the location's history.

My second tactic is to use my names spreadsheet and mash two names together. I'll take the first half of one name (or the whole name if it's one syllable) and jam it together with the second half of another name.

My third tactic is to use [Google's language tools](#). I'll type a location name in English, using nouns and descriptors, and generate the translated version. For example, "Big Rock" in Czech is Velky Kamen, a great settlement name.

Online Generators

[Behind The Name](#). Lots of cultures. Includes first and last names, male and female.

[Squid.org](#). Includes fantasy and Earth names.

Rinkworks' oldie but a goodie [fantasy name generator](#).

[Yet Another Fantasy Name Generator](#). A tossed salad of results but offers interesting filter function.

[Seventh Sanctum](#). The holy of holies in random generation.

[The Pagan Name Generator](#). Fun times!

[Manbon's generators](#). Scroll down to see lots of random goodness.

[The Forge](#). Strange GUI, but interesting results. Enable pop-ups, then click Enter, then click TheForge.

[donjon's Fantasy Name Generator](#). Lots of generation options.

[Generatorland](#). You will not find exactly what you're looking for here, but it is worth a visit to just see what you stumble on.

[Toto, the Fantasy Random Name Generator](#).

[Abulafia](#). A wiki-based generator with lots of name choices.

[Schub's Online Fantasy Name Generator](#).

[Randomly Generated Identity](#). Best for modern and future games.

Baby Zone's [Baby Names Inventor](#).

Software Generators

[Everchanging Book of Names](#). Shareware. License purchase opens more data sets.

[Tablesmith](#). Awesome shareware app. Be sure to grab name sets from the Yahoo! Group.

Lists of Names

[Kate Monk's Onomastikon](#) (Dictionary of Names).

[Medieval Names Archive](#).

Phone book. Just google "phone book" + city or country.

Atlas. Just google atlas + city or country and use image results for faster reference. For example, [here are search results for "atlas china"](#).

[Baby Names](#). First names galore.

[Babyhold](#). Offers several cultures.

[Name Meanings](#). Several culture lists.

[Medieval Names Archive](#). Ye olde feast of names. Scroll down for the lists.

[803,423 Names by Category](#).

[The Canonical List of Evil Baby Names](#).

[A Collation Of Viking Names](#).

Resources

For synonyms, Old English and general inspiration use a dictionary or thesaurus: <http://thesaurus.reference.com/> and <http://dictionary.reference.com/>

[A list of colours](#).

Subscribe to word of the day lists. Each day you receive a word and its definition.

Many words will make interesting NPC names. Use the definitions as a hook for the NPC's personality.

<http://dictionary.reference.com/wordoftheday>

<http://wordsmith.org/awad/>, <http://www.wordthink.com/>

[Anagram names](#). Great for plot twists!

[Getty Vocabularies](#). Great for obscure or exotic words you can turn into names.

[Language Encyclopedia](#). Use the sample lists to generate names or to help you find good matches for Earth culture names to in-game cultures.

[Anagram generator](#). Great for names as clues and twists.

Great names make games more fun. Take a bit of time to create thematic names lists for your cultures and races. Offer these to your players when they make PCs to help them fit into the game world better and immerse themselves into the game.

450+ 3 Line NPCs

Here we go. The huge library of 3 Line NPCs. Thanks to all the Roleplaying Tips readers who sent in their NPC creations!

Drag and drop these NPC cores instantly into your campaign. Develop them out further if they survive contact with the PCs. Use them as example when trying the 3 line NPC method yourself.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-Aged Female Human] Tall, red-haired, with a sword scar on her left cheek. Several tattoos on forearms and scarring on her hands. Military bearing. Arguing with a smith about the cost of something.

Portrayal: Very agitated but controlled. Down on her luck mercenary looking to get her stuff out of hock.

Hook: Has a potential job, but can't pay for repairs on her gear. Doesn't trust elves or half-elves since they reneged on her last contract.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Gnome] Indeterminate gender. Completely covered head-to-foot in some kind of metal suit. His large backpack has broken and spilled mechanical components out on the street. The gnome is attempting to gather pieces but is hindered by its outfit. Most bystanders are ignoring it, but some street urchins are grabbing pieces up.

Portrayal: Local inventor, eccentric but competent. He purchased a broken construct from some adventurers on his way home. Intends to fix it. Will be grateful for help from the PCs and will offer to fix any of their gear for free.

Hook: Eventually, he'll want to field test the construct by accompanying PCs on a short adventure.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Muscular human male holding a heavy purse, gesticulating, and haggling with a weary armorer.

Portrayal: Just diagnosed with the incurable "rotting sickness," this anxious, former soldier yearns to buy back his armor so he can die honorably in battle, preferably in the service of a cleric.

Hook: If aided, he will be loyal until death, throwing himself into danger to protect his master and to avoid the maturation of the disease (at present, only his fingertips are numb).

≈≈≈

Appearance: In the depths of an evil wizard's lair, the PCs find a gorgeous woman sitting cross-legged in a pentagram of silver lines on the floor, making finger drawings in the dust, a dejected frown on her face. When PCs appear, she stands and silently motions for them to come closer. She seems excited but scared.

Portrayal: She is a genuinely reformed devil, cast out of hell by her masters and given to an evil wizard as a plaything in exchange for his demented soul.

Hook: She dreams of one day becoming a paladin and correcting all her evil deeds, especially by reforming those she previously corrupted, starting with the cruel and evil wizard who trapped her here. She's scared the evil wizard might discover the PCs and attack them, and that the PCs might then slay the evil wizard before she can redeem his soul. She long ago succeeded in breaking the pentagram but stayed anyway to continue her work. Just when the PCs hear all this, the evil wizard enters the room...

≈≈≈

Appearance: Fair, chestnut-haired female, human bard. Heavysset, lightly armed, entertaining an inn full of townspeople with ribald songs accompanied by her own mandolin.

Portrayal: Bard and storyteller. Outgoing, lyrical, quick-witted, always observant, on the lookout for fodder for new material to sing about, has a talent for songwriting.

Hook: While not desirous of experiencing danger and mayhem first hand, would be interested in picking the memories of the adventurers she meets for news of the road and of the world.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Wizen, elderly male elf scholar. Dressed in severe formal wear, somewhat dusty but not unkempt. Making inquiries among the rabble at the local tavern.

Portrayal: Court librarian. Maintains a collection of tomes for the royalty, and a few privileged members of the keep.

Hook: Has had a tome of some import stolen from the library and wishes to recover it. It is about the royal genealogy, and while the scholar doesn't reveal this to those he hires

to recover it, there are pieces to a puzzle about the royal lineage that could prove scandalous in the wrong hands.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A scarred, white-haired veteran soldier resting under the shade of a tree.

Portrayal: The oldest and most experienced among the keep's guards. He is difficult to anger, and it is always a pleasure to talk to him. He has many stories to tell, most of them based on real events.

Hook: There's a rumor that he has been offered multiple promotions over the years, but refused them all.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LE 9-year old female street urchin] Dressed in rags, carries a small bag with all her possessions, moves gracefully, and has a disconcertingly piercing stare.

Portrayal: She will be the first to volunteer when the PCs need someone to deliver a message or run an errand. Will try to eavesdrop if she can get away with it.

Hook: A gifted, bitter, cunning, and evil character. The orphaned child of a famous monk who travelled the lands ten years ago, and a prostitute who died a violent death half a decade ago. With a burning desire to be at the top instead of at the bottom, this girl could be villain material.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Human male, middle age, wearing the green, purple, and gold garb of a court jester. He is obviously drunk, drinking the finest Elven wine from an ale mug.

Portrayal: He is the former fool of the local lord. "I should have become a wizard's apprentice. Not a fool. No one respects or fears a fool."

Hook: Fired for stealing a spellbook from the lord's wizard. Wants to learn magic, but would also take his court jester job back, if offered.

≈≈≈

Appearance: An inviting woman with luxurious auburn hair and plain clothing, but a curiously sturdy physique. She is examining a young girl's ripped dress in the street.

Portrayal: Want a tear to disappear from your most expensive dress? She's the tailor to see and is admired for her dedication to both her job and the community.

Hook: Powered by a history of abuse, she is determined to start a school of self-defense for young girls, but has been met with opposition by the male community and her own family.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Female Half-Orc Inquisitor] Grimaces a lot, eyes frequently shift, hand always on sword's hilt. Badgering a commoner with intense questions about his whereabouts a month ago.

Portrayal: Trusted by the local lord for her thoroughness; has a soft spot for abandoned or orphaned children, because of her own upbringing in an orphanage.

Hook: Has discovered that homeless children have been disappearing, but no one will believe her without evidence.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Modestly dressed young woman; carefree, attractive, polite. Reading a book under a tree.

Portrayal: Dutiful daughter of the guard captain; strong willed.

Hook: Is preparing to run away to become an adventurer like those in her stories.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Young guardsman; handsome, preening, carrying well-maintained but pre-owned equipment. Returning home from a night shift.

Portrayal: Powerless poor kid now getting first tastes of power; slightly arrogant.

Hook: Is having an affair with his squad leader's wife.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A disaffected youth, wearing well-made clothes but slouching in an alley like a hoodlum and giving everyone a sour expression.

Portrayal: His parents run a very successful apothecary in town, and he's known for being increasingly troublesome.

Hook: A deeply sensitive boy, his brother's death is creating a serious interest in death and necromancy. His dabbling may spell trouble for the village!

≈≈≈

Appearance: An enchanted rock. One that talks, and rolls very slowly.

Portrayal: Rock has a long career behind him as the member of a bandit gang in the big city (being a +1 rock), and a scintillating sense of humor.

Hook: Rock has quit the bandit gang and would like to be polymorphed into something with limbs to start his career as a bard.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged human soldier] +1 short sword, dressed in full keep uniform with travelers cloak overtop. In the local tavern speaking to a group of ruffians.

Portrayal: Lieutenant commander of the keep. His sword is cursed; it gives him visions of grandeur.

Hook: Because of his weapon's curse, he is stirring up a revolt. May attempt to hire PC's as mercenaries; if reported to the authorities there will be no proof, and the PC's will make a powerful enemy who will seek revenge.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young Half-Orc male, simultaneously trying to look tough and avoid notice. He is dressed in tattered clothing with a travel-worn hooded cloak (barely) concealing his face. He is sitting in the shadows in the back of a tavern, nervously watching the crowd.

Portrayal: Despite looking like the lowest form of brigand, this fellow is actually an accomplished scribe and poet. He will act all gruff, but is very intelligent and well educated.

Hook: He normally doesn't frequent taverns or bars, (too many people want to fight or kill him when they discover his Orcish heritage), but he is here tonight to deliver a book of poetry commissioned by a nobleman who is meeting him here due to a desire for the origin of these poems to remain unknown. The nobleman intends to claim them as his own creations and has hired some actual brigands to kill the half-orc after he acquires the poetry.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Male Halfling Bard] Average height, short reddish brown hair. He is sitting on a bench in front of a tavern playing music on his mandolin.

Portrayal: Friendly and carefree, a charmer. Always singing songs or telling tales of one of his many adventures.

Hook: He is actually the owner of the tavern where he plays. He has recently purchased and renovated the tavern, with the apparent plan to settle down and retire from a life of wandering adventures. The truth is, the tavern is actually a front and he is actually the leader of the local thieves' guild.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [N Young Adult Male Nobirian Wonderworker 9 (Wrathbringer Template)] Loose-fitting, exotic-looking toga, staff that looks like a snake turned to wood. Painting holy symbols on a bare-chested young soldier.

Portrayal: Messiah of a snake cult. A holy man who can cast magical spells and priestly supplications. Wandering the lands to amass followers to his cthonic god, truly concerned about the spiritual well-being of his followers, very judgmental.

Hook: Highly addicted to diluted snake venom and being manipulated through it.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Elderly man, dark skin, black eyes. Talks fast, bright, very religious. He's sitting on his wagon, looking for a passenger.

Portrayal: Wagon driver. He can't stay in silence for long, and talks about everything he can, no matter how non-conventional the subject is.

Hook: He is the personal driver of the king's famous advisor, and also one of the queen's spies.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Male Kobold Perfumer] Carrying several bottles of perfume, wears a red silk cravat tied around his neck. Spraying his wares on unsuspecting passers-by hoping to make a sale.

Portrayal: A pretty terrible perfumer – all his scents are horrible. Dedicated and ignorant.

Hook: Actually an alchemist, spraying people with a loyalty potion. Over time they'll come to accept him as their leader. Plans to overthrow the castle.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CN Adult Male Human] A dashing swashbuckler with a jovial personality and an eagerness to help. He refers to everyone by a title and treats them as valued. He is seen surrounded by some of his friends as he helps a lady find the perfect dress.

Portrayal: A man of many connections. He knows people...a lot of people, and is always looking for opportunities to branch new connections. He is clever and ambitious but seeks social power over personal wealth.

Hook: He is using his connections to start a thieves guild or spy network in the area. He will keep it a secret from the nobility while trying to make sure he can get them whatever their hearts desire, they don't need to know they are feeding the black market.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LG Young Male Human Wizard Apprentice] Digging through the bar's trash heap for his spellbook. Wearing an attempted peasant disguise.

Portrayal: Nervous about his master finding out, just plain gullible

Hook: Last night, he took an ill-advised trip to the bar with a shady friend; This morning he realized that he lost his spellbook somewhere in the revelry.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CN Aging Male Dwarven Fight-club Manager] Short and shady. In a bar, flattering and buying drinks for the toughest PC.

Portrayal: He's a fighter manager for the city's fight-club. Quick-talking, deal maker.

Hook: He's in debt to the Thieves Guild, and needs a fighter to win tonight to keep him from ending up room temperature.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LG Young-adult Human Female Monk] Beautiful young woman, neat white robes, standing at a street corner. She is alert and chanting quietly, ignoring harsh taunts of nearby streetwalkers.

Portrayal: This now-homeless monk is a young idealist who seeks to deal out justice; her meditation training helps keep her white-hot temper in check. Dislikes paladins.

Hook: Her order was recently disbanded by the decree of a ruling nobleman amid accusations of illicit activities and links to organized crime. She seeks aid in her investigation to restore honor to her monastic order, and to punish those responsible for its fall. (The criminals may have been inside or outside of her order, the GM can decide.)

≈≈≈

Appearance: Signs of a scuffle in the dirt leads to an unconscious Tiefling in the bushes. He was dragged there and left for dead. Fortunately, he's breathing. His clothing is ripped. He has no weapons or other items.

Portrayal: If touched or spoken to, he awakens in a fright but quickly realizes he is no longer in danger. He appears to be in his early twenties and wears the tatters of middle-class clothing. He claims to have been attacked by those who take offence at his race. His father is a professor at the magic college.

Hook: He has started a relationship with the daughter of the local judge. He loves her, and she him, but her family disapproves. Her two older brothers and a pair of friends are the ones who attacked him.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Male, young-adult half-orc, wearing a bar apron. Being "talked to" by two sinister-looking humans as he makes furtive glances in your general direction.

Portrayal: New owner of popular inn, trying to maintain its success. He treats the PCs with suspicion, suspecting them of causing trouble.

Hook: Inn was inherited from his brother, who was killed by assassins' guild for hanging around with undesirables (i.e., the PCs' associates). The humans are guild representatives encouraging him not to repeat his brother's mistake.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Male Human Child, 10 years old, something clutched in left fist. Currently rocking on his heels, waiting outside a closed shop (alchemist, fortune-teller, or gemcutter).

Portrayal: 2nd-in-command of a youth gang.

Hook: Budding sorcerer – strange things tend to happen around him, often out of his control.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Grumpy, grizzled, elderly male human peddler, accompanied by his hat-eating mule.

Portrayal: Sells trinkets and minor magic items from his saddle-blankets and packs along the roadside or in market squares. His mule is trouble.

Hook: Always has interesting maps, old books, minor magics. Knows who can supply what, and where, for miles around.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Late-middle-aged human male farmer, red-faced and loud-voiced. Shouting at his wife and sons to unload the market cart faster.

Portrayal: Local farmer, known for his excellent crops.

Hook: His farm is being raided every night, vegetables are being stolen from his prize bed for the annual fair. He's convinced it is his neighbor and main competitor for the blue ribbon.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Male Elf Noble] Short, blazing fiery orange eyes, green band of silk across his forehead; sneaking around in the shadows, but failing horribly.

Portrayal: Royal guard, carefree and aloof, bad with money.

Hook: Major gambling problem, and owes a few thousand crowns to some undesirable people. He can't tell anyone, because it was lost in an illegal, under-the-table game. Hunted by those whom he owes.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LE Middle-aged Female Human] Housekeeper at farm. Keeps the office and farmhouse clean.

Portrayal: Bitter service worker.

Hook: Runs the farm dungeon; she is the jailor and executioner for enemies and prisoners of the Nobleman.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A tall, stout halfling, swinging about with a tankard in his hand. He seems a lot paler than some of the other halflings about, and seems to have quite the assortment of profanities, from what you can hear.

Portrayal: This halfling is a particularly odd fellow. From a young age he was raised with a clan of dwarves instead of the usual halfling caravan. Nobody knows why he was left there as a child, but the dwarves took him in as one of their own, and taught him all aspects of dwarven culture.

Hook: He has a significant debt, that continually increases and is uncontrollable. This is due to the weak drinking prowess of the halfling in comparison to his dwarven

brethren (as the dwarves didn't teach him how to hold alcohol). A few groups are now looking for the halfling for payment against some of his debt.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Wiry human, sun-baked beyond his young years despite his wide brimmed hat.

Portrayal: His well-worn woolen clothes would give him away as a shepherd even on those rare times he's away from the widow Briarage's flock.

Hook: Had apprenticed in the guard until the captain shattered his right elbow sparring and will not forgive.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Elderly Male Human Wizard] with a scraggly beard, squinty eyes, and an awful stench. Putting 'Help Wanted' signs on walls with a pot of glue.

Portrayal: Mood (grumpy), Secret (kicked out of Wizard's Guild).

Hook: Looking for hapless adventurers to acquire spell components for him, because he can no longer buy them through guild channels.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged Male Dwarven Bard] with wild hair, bloodshot eyes, and a boisterous demeanor. Dancing on a table in a pub, singing along with drunken patrons.

Portrayal: Jovial, Conspiratorial when approached alone.

Hook: Party Bard is a cover, he is actually a broker of information. Served as a spy for the Dwarven Thanes, retired to the keep. But old habits die hard...

≈≈≈

Appearance: Female Human Farmhand, Simple but decent earth-tone clothing (petticoat, dress, and an apron), feeding chickens and gathering eggs for market in the coop beside the family barn.

Portrayal: Middle-class Farmer's Daughter, learning to eventually take over her father's holdings, in charge of market days. Headstrong and shrewd, but sympathetic and compassionate.

Hook: Is really a Greater Doppelganger with two other personalities in town. Hums "La Vie en Rose" whenever working/bored/waiting, no matter which persona she's in. Farmer raised her from childhood, she really does love him as a father.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Younger Male Human Soldier] Carries a rapier instead of standard issue longsword, nautical tattoo on neck. Interviewing travelers entering the city/keep gate.

Portrayal: Corporal of the Watch, his job is to ask people entering what their business is, and to watch for wanted persons, illegal goods, or suspicious behavior.

Hook: He uses his position to try and figure out who he could leave this place with, so he can get back to the ocean where he grew up. He also knows who all the shady characters are, and will point you in their direction for the right incentive.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Older Male Human Trapper/Herbalist] Grizzled, bearded, skinny, dirty from tromping around the woods all day. In town he is encountered trading his concoctions for food or other things he needs; outside of town, he can be encountered in the woods checking his traps and collecting herbs.

Portrayal: He's a survivalist and outdoorsman, a loner but still friendly and helpful with people, making things they need if they bring him ingredients (and a little extra for him). He fishes down the creek if he's got nothing better to do.

Hook: He's always looking for exotic items to mix into his concoctions (he'll pay), and is willing to create potions/poultices/salves for travelers for the cost of ingredients and a good story. He also knows a lot of stories that others have told him.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-age Male Human Mercenary] Grimy, shifty-looking eyes. Always looking for work, he can be found eavesdropping on conversations in the tavern at night or the square during the day.

Portrayal: He nibbles on dried, salted meat constantly, and feeds it to his dog as well, alternating bites.

Hook: He's looking for work, so he eavesdrops on people at the tavern/inn/town square, offering his services, and using his watchdog as a selling point ("Ain't nothin' gonna bother us with 'ol Fang around, and if they do his keen nose is gonna give us early warning!").

3 Line NPCs

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Old Male Half-orc Vintner] Purple-stained apron. Dusting a rack of fine wines.

Portrayal: Winemaker extraordinaire. Calm, classy, and a bit smarmy.

Hook: Actually abstains from drinking! Goes through great lengths to keep up the impression that he at least tastes his product.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Female Orc Page] Well-used bodice dagger. Running an unspecified errand.

Portrayal: Page for an Orc Knight passing through. Dreams of bigger adventures.

Hook: Amazing at the knife game.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adolescent Male Human Woodcarver] Various cuts and scars on hands. Idly whittling a small rabbit out of a hickory branch.

Portrayal: Somewhat of a local artist. Seems pretty dull when speaking to him, though.

Hook: Has a phobia of ducks, and will not carve one.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Ancient Female Half-elf Glovemaker] Dressed in fine linens. Hawking her wares.

Portrayal: Glovemaker to nobility and peasant alike, her work is widely renowned. Generous, but curt.

Hook: Prides herself on using the best materials possible – even illegal pelts.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Ancient Male Kobold Speakeasy owner] Wearing two eye patches. Bumbling around along the sewer grates.

Portrayal: Runs an illegal speakeasy in the sewers. In public, acts weak and defenseless, due to his blindness and old age.

Hook: Both eyes work just fine – it's a cover.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Child Male Halfling] Exceptionally furry toes. Lounging by a tree, eating an apple.

Portrayal: A jolly, carefree child. Not poor, but far from rich or noble.

Hook: He is a fairly accomplished thief, despite his young age. He managed to pilfer a pair of gloves from the glove maker!

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Youthful Male Elf Sailor] Missing right ring finger. Tying up his modest ship.

Portrayal: Ship-for-hire, works for anyone with the right price. Comical and aloof.

Hook: Cut off his own finger on a bet. Doesn't back down when money is involved.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Youthful Male Machination Beggar] Dented chestplate. Limping convincingly, as if something is wrong with his hip joint.

Portrayal: Panhandler. Lays on the drama – THICK.

Hook: Exiled noble servant. He stole a jewel from a queen.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Youthful Female Ratman Barbarian] Eye patch over left eye, bandaged tail. Drinking a tall one at "Levitating Libations."

Portrayal: Warrior for hire. Dangerously uncouth.

Hook: Her tail isn't actually damaged. She believes the bandage to be lucky. If any harm comes to the bandage, she will react violently. She's pretty volatile.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Middle-aged, huge, boisterous man with a beer belly and strong arms. Worn, functional armor under simple but very expensive robes.

Portrayal: Great singer and loves a party or a brawl equally, iron stomach impervious to martial arts blows/blunt trauma and resistant to poison.

3 Line NPCs

Hook: Good friend of the Prince, looking for adventurers to root out the "mole" in the Prince's staff who tipped off the bandit lord about the prince's attempted raid last week.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Young, black-haired, black-eyed female (fire mage) with short black cape. Rides a wild, unbridled destrier that seems to only respond to her.

Portrayal: Haughty, arrogant, easily angered, especially if someone is an incompetent rider or cruel to horses.

Hook: Can't control her fire magic and 1/4 times will result in 10x size of flame.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Elderly bespectacled man with baggy pants, hands soft from easy living, memory failing.

Portrayal: Steward of the well-built but now-rundown manor and friend of an elderly noblewoman for the past 60 years.

Hook: Knows a historical artifact was hidden and well-protected with traps at the noble's crypt, but only can remember roughly where when he's having a "good day".

≈≈≈

Appearance: Slim, brown-haired and yellow-eyed former barmaid in rough green shirt. Never initiates small-talk and answers questions with minimal words. Never shows fear. Probably skinning an animal.

Portrayal: 2 hidden +1 daggers with nearly worn-off relief (what animal is that – hard to tell) on hilt, efficient worker either in kitchen or as housekeeper.

Hook: Always seems to appear when there's a fresh kill and asks to skin it. Is that blood smeared on her face afterward?

≈≈≈

Appearance: Halfling, guardsman clothes, glint of chainmail beneath, holding spear, eyes dart around (nervous-like). Currently watching a wagon passing through the gate (very intently).

Portrayal: Newer city guard trying to prove himself.

Hook: Slowly poisoning the guard captain, who always disrespects him.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A slightly overweight middle-aged human merchant who is well-dressed in bright colors; he actively sells magic items in that particular shop, although he owns several other smaller businesses (i.e., more mundane shops) as well. Most likely encountered chatting with prospective buyers.

Portrayal: He lives well off his merchant's wealth and is very friendly, often chatting with prospective buyers in his magic item shop and learning what they have been doing (in much the same style as the traditional barkeep). It is also well-known that he can commission custom magic items (for a relatively high price), although his sources of these items are unknown.

Hook: He leads an underground doppelganger ring who have covertly infiltrated his opponents' businesses and performed both discrediting acts and assassinations in order to promote his own business by contrast.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A quiet, dark-eyed halfling busboy, clearing tables, with dark and curly hair and bags under his eyes.

Portrayal: Although quiet, he is quite intelligent. He works long hours to both support his sister (who is blind from a childhood disease) and to buy books to study wizardry every night (which is why he is always tired). His sleepiness, however, causes him to seem perpetually distracted, although he takes delight in his books and reads them with vigor.

Hook: Being a busboy is boring, and so he is constantly listening in on other's conversations. Sometimes, he is an even more knowledgeable figure than any particular barkeep, because he works with (and therefore talks to) barkeeps in bars across town and listens to conversations which people don't think he can hear. This can work either for or against the PCs!

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young human man dressed in regal purple with an arrogant countenance, amplified by his long nose, riding through town on a horse that looks more expensive than most of the local houses.

Portrayal: The son of a lord from a castle of unmatched splendor, he always expects more than the entire city can provide. He doesn't see why his money can't buy him more food, better housing, etc. and is constantly writing to his father to protest the conditions of this "commoner hamlet." He remains, however, because his father needs him to be there to talk to other higher-ups.

Hook: Although he believes the best of his father, his father took his power illegitimately; when presented with undeniable proof of his father's guilt, his world will be seriously shaken.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Two young human men, identical twins, wander around the temple; one looks bright and happy, bouncing between tasks. The other looks calm, even annoyed, and follows reluctantly.

Portrayal: The two are clerics. The former brother (Ronny) is very idealistic and the latter (Tommy) very cynical. Ronny will heal anyone for free, whereas Tommy demands not only money (since he knows everything runs on money), but proof that the PCs did not do anything to cause their own harm.

Hook: Ronny is, simultaneously with his cleric career, developing sorcery, but Tommy suggests that he keep it quiet. Meanwhile, Tommy has taken over a local thieves' ring and now uses it in a Robin Hood fashion, since he knows by his cynical nature that no good will be done without harm to another.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Markus is a half-elf man in a uniform with many badges proclaiming his many honorable achievements in battle. If asked, he can list his various achievements (most of which involve fighting off some monster or another). He is training with a set of +1 returning throwing axes, and he doesn't bother to retrieve them from his target since they return to him.

Portrayal: He takes his job very seriously, and trains his fighting almost constantly. He is well-known for his abilities with the axe. Although rather dull (which is why he has not advanced very far in the militia), he has a natural commanding aura and is a very good fighter.

Hook: His father was an evil wizard, and his mother was a wild elf; she fled his father when she became pregnant in order to keep Markus safe (she has since died of disease). His father was never caught, and is still present somewhere. Markus' greatest dream is to seek out his father and kill him, thus removing what he feels is a stain on his reputation (although he has told no one of his past).

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Male Half-Orc Pickpocket] Fancy clothes, whip-marked, dresses all in black. Cursing out someone for incompetence.

3 Line NPCs

Portrayal: Holds an important position within his guild; loyal to his guild for saving him from slavery.

Hook: He wants to settle a family feud that has existed for ages, so he can return home.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Adult Female Half-Elf Librarian] Pallid, dusty robes, pierced nose. Reading a scroll while walking absent-mindedly down the street.

Portrayal: Has a powerful financial backer for her research; afraid of blood.

Hook: Has made an erroneous judgement against an innocent, and now suffers in guilt and shame for the mistake.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Old Male Halfling Thief] Has fleas, smells funny, high-pitched voice. Napping in a chair leaned up against the wall.

Portrayal: Suspected of having ties to local rebels; afraid of the open sky (has been attacked by flying monsters on multiple occasions).

Hook: Has recently had a terrible conflict with a loved one, who has fled and cannot be found anywhere.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Adult Male Human Man-at-arms] Deaf-mute, missing a hand, an unusual pet. Practicing his weapon skills.

Portrayal: Seems to know everybody; never brought down by his circumstances.

Hook: Has recently been wronged by a madman, who is still at large.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Old Female Half-Orc Magus] Tattered clothing, stutters, nimble. Riding by on a flying carpet.

Portrayal: An important member of a secret cult; is harboring a criminal.

Hook: Seeks to recover a lost loved one, who disappeared without explanation a few years ago.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Male Orc Raider] Well-worn armor, filthy, masterwork scimitar. Gambling with cards or dice.

Portrayal: Is the trusted servant of a powerful warlord; overconfident.

Hook: Suffers at the hands of an arrogant tormentor.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Old Male Half-Elf Oracle] Gaudy jewelry, fancy blue cloak, speaks in rhyme. Staring into smoke, divining someone's future.

Portrayal: Has influential enemies; wants to avoid duties or responsibilities.

Hook: Wants to kill or otherwise remove his lover's husband, so he can marry her.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Female Human Warrior] Bruised, austere clothing, white forelock with jet black hair. Methodically repairing her armor.

Portrayal: Has influential friends; afraid of alcohol.

Hook: Has been forced to sacrifice the hand of her beloved younger sister to a creditor, and wants to pay off her debt so she can stop the wedding.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Male Human Air Elementalist] Sings more often than he speaks, magical staff, pet falcon. Hunting with his falcon.

Portrayal: Has influential friends; loyal to his magical order.

Hook: Seeks to negotiate with an enemy for a tome of ancient lore and lost aeromancy spells.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Adult Male Dwarf Hermit] Obese, slurred speech, dirty knees. Stealthily harvesting herbs from a commoner's garden.

Portrayal: Speaks with an extraplanar being through a gate in the woods; wants to learn how to use magic.

Hook: Following the instruction of his otherworldly "patron," he seeks to perform a ritual that will open the gate and allow passage from the "Other Side" to this world

3 Line NPCs

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Adult Male Half-Orc Priest] Extremely thin, swarthy, grunts a lot. Tending to the wounded at the local temple.

Portrayal: Considered a talented healer by the elders of his temple; really wants to be a famous chef instead.

Hook: Seeks the means to run away to a distant city, where he hopes to study the culinary arts.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Adult Female Half-Elf Sheriff] Wears the local lord's heraldry, magical sword, missing an ear. Patrolling the streets, looking for threats to the local lord.

Portrayal: A trusted servant of the local lord; paranoid.

Hook: Has been forced to trade family heirlooms to save her younger human brother from slavery.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Adult Male Halfling Adept] Speaks softly, large nose, unusually brawny. Sitting in the tavern, appraising every woman with a slight smile on his lips.

Portrayal: Enjoys the power of his magic use; has no purpose in life at the moment.

Hook: Has made an erroneous judgement against an innocent adept, forcing them to be exiled from the community, and now suffers in guilt and shame for the mistake.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Female Half-Orc Cultist] Gaudy jewelry, magical ring, thick accent. Arguing with the manor guards, demanding an audience with the local lord.

Portrayal: Holds a high position within her cult; afraid of horses and other mounts.

Hook: Has been accused of wrongdoing, and seeks the judgment of the authorities for vindication.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Female Human Evangelist] Gaudy holy symbol, ice blue eyes, voluminous robes. Riding by on a palanquin carried by temple guards.

Portrayal: Holds a position in Court as an advisor to the local lord; feels that the local lord will fulfill an ancient prophecy within his lifetime, but cannot tell him.

Hook: Seeks to protect the local lord's daughter from a secret plot to abduct her to use as leverage against the local lord in an upcoming important matter.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged Male Halfling Bard] Thick braided hair, flamboyant mannerisms, haughty speech. Juggling colored spheres while telling jokes.

Portrayal: Has great wealth and success, particularly in the last year; wants to make others laugh.

Hook: Has stolen and sacrificed a noble's magical coronet to a demon in exchange for a year of success, and that year is coming to an end soon.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Male Half-Ogre Fighter] Weathered, missing an arm, well-kept appearance. Guarding a merchant's shop from a protection racket.

Portrayal: Has influential enemies in the criminal underworld; takes great personal pride in the quality of his work and his professional appearance.

Hook: Believes that one of the local children is the illegitimate heir of the local lord.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Male Human Pickpocket] Missing an eye, beggar's clothing, thick accent. Scaring small children by taking his glass eye out and playing with it.

Portrayal: He is a respected member of his guild, but currently working for someone else, subtly extracting information from the PCs.

Hook: Mistakenly suspects that his spouse has been unfaithful.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CG Middle-aged Male Ghost] Wearing a wading suit, missing an arm and leg. Haunts the moat around the castle at night.

Portrayal: Longing for lost love, desperate.

Hook: Lost a magical wedding ring in the monster-guarded moat.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A lone half-elven worker leaning against a pillar that his construction crew just finished creating, lighting up a pipe in the middle of his shift. He scowls at anyone who walks by, unless he knows them (but denies the scowl if they confront him).

Portrayal: He is known simply as “ol’ Wilkes,” a worker who just showed up out of the blue one day and was immediately put to work by the foreman. No one seems to object to him being there, despite his lazy nature. When he wants to be, he is quite charming, and he prefers talking his way out of a situation rather than fighting.

Hook: He is actually a sorcerer, fleeing from his deranged master, and came to town to hide. He charmed the workers into accepting his place in the company, including the foreman who allows him to stand aside and let the real workers work.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A simple, young (preteen), male. He is unassuming, mild, polite, and otherwise blends in with urban surroundings.

Portrayal: Mouse (a nickname of which he is not fond) is the son of a locksmith and has just about taken over his father’s position. His father drinks heavily, ever since the loss of his wife. When the characters meet him, Anscom (real name) is answering a summons for his father to repair a complex lock. The client (Inn Keep, Banker, Jailer etc...) is upset that the kid comes instead and rails about the drunk locksmith. The kid, instead of going away, fixes the lock in blinding speed and it's obvious he is a Master Craftsman.

Hook: The PC's might be in need of a companion that can open a special lock?

The kid has a secret place he goes too, accessed by a series of hidden passages, that the PC's also have a need to get into. But Anscom is very protective of his "private refuge" and they must first gain his trust.

The kid also has a dark past surrounding his mother’s death. The adversary the heroes face is the same person who murdered her. Thus, their friendship deepens as they go after the villain. And of course, Anscom will perish in the climax, because he is not an adventurer, but an accomplished mechanic.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [NG Female Human] Dirty beggar with children, dagger. She is a tall and thin middle aged woman, might look attractive if she wasn't smeared with dirt with bedraggled hair. She is carrying a small, equally dirty child on her hip while picking through a pile of food waste.

Portrayal: Scavenger and beggar, she has reserves of strength and moxie that have kept her alive on the fringes of society. She cares for quite a number of local orphans and waifs who look to her for food, safety and comfort.

Hook: After being shunned from polite society for having a child out of wedlock Lydia has survived off her own wits for many years, scavenging, pilfering, doing odd-jobs and occasionally offering more personal services. She is fully aware of the dangers that a child or solitary woman face around here, and will be more than willing to share her suspicions in the event of a kidnap or assault.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Child Male Halfling] Is currently laying jacks on the ground.

Portrayal: Paperboy for local newspaper. Rough-and-tumble sort, but you can tell he's never been in a scuffle.

Hook: Extremely squeamish.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Male Dwarf Blacksmith] Carries silver tongs, has a blackened iron dagger on his side; hammering a nice set of pauldrons.

Portrayal: Local blacksmith. Extremely generous and tactful, for a dwarf.

Hook: Dagger on his belt is cursed – it is infused with the blood of a murdered prince.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged Female Human Cleric] Gold ring on her left index finger. She is walking through the market in search of candles.

Portrayal: Local priestess, kind and considerate to all, though staunchly feminist.

Hook: Secretly a master thief and confidence woman.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A man of average height, in his early forties. His face is disfigured by a scar and the hair on half of his head is gone. The scarring looks it was caused by a fire. His clothing is worn and is mostly covered by his thick cloak. Slung over his shoulder, he carries a leather strap holding five large dead rats. The man is hunkered over, whispering to a large, brutish-looking dog and a smaller terrier.

Portrayal: He is a rat catcher. A perception roll would notice he has a hand crossbow underneath the cloak. A very good roll would also notice throwing knives under the cloak. He is a man of few words and can only talk in a whisper because his throat has been damaged. He keeps an eye on the surroundings, and has many contacts.

Hook: He is an ex-assassin for the thieves' guild. He had a falling out with them many years ago (10+), they think he died in the fire. He has stayed in the city keeping an eye on his daughter, who does not know that he is alive. She sometimes feels that she is being watched and believes that she has a guardian angel. He has good contacts in the city. He has kept his skills up, silent and deadly. He may be persuaded to engage in activities against the thieves' guild in return for money/services that could help his daughter.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young half-elf wearing fairly expensive clothes, rather rich-looking for a stable boy. He is moving hay at the stable. He wheezes a lot and seems to always be trying to catch his breath. An older gentleman is berating him for his clothing choices. Rogue.

Portrayal: Roguish stable boy with expensive tastes. He lives with the older man, who is also the stable owner.

Hook: He is an illegitimate son of a noble and the stable owner is being well-paid to keep his secret. The boy has an unbelievable ability with sleight of hand (pick pockets) and very expensive tastes. The stable owner tries to dissuade him from wearing expensive clothes but to no avail.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Early/middle-aged Male Elf] Dusty and travel worn, he has an unusual number of weapons visible but not much armour, watches the crowd through slitted eyes.

Portrayal: Sitting on the edge of the fountain watching EVERYTHING; looks relaxed but oozes menace whenever someone meets his penetrating stare.

Hook: This former soldier turned-bounty-hunter has been on the road for a long time, looking for the villain who has besmirched his family's honour. If he finds the culprit, he will immediately call them out for a duel to the death.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Old human male, short beard, plain grey robes, gathering herbs outside of town, gigantic satchel to carry herbs in. Very "touchy feely" and will touch people

even if he doesn't know them. Bad hearing, will have the players repeat themselves once in a while.

Portrayal: Local healer, very loved because of the services he provides.

Hook: Used to be an adventurer. Will trade strange or magical items for healing potions and scrolls. Will heal the players without being asked. Could be met outside of town after a violent encounter. His former adventuring partner is now a major villain in the area. He won't directly prevent the players from fighting his friend. But he might betray them in some way: Poison a wound? Trade them a malfunctioning item? Sell them out while they are recuperating?

≈≈≈

Appearance: Female soldier in her 30s. She's a veteran wearing highly polished armor and a roguish smile. A faint scar on her face. Her armor is more ornamental than the regular troops. Short hair and a quick laugh.

Portrayal: Draft sergeant, in charge of hiring new soldiers. She is an excellent judge of character, she'll play the game if people try to fool her and laugh it off. A solid warrior with a rogue's attitude, she has connections all over town.

Hook: Excellent contact to have because she is easy to find and easy to like. The big bad also likes her. So does the thieves guild. And the smugglers... In fact, she'll drink and chat and reveal secrets to anyone and everyone.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Female Child] Anxious, drab clothes, bright eyes; playing with a ring that has a rather nice-looking red stone.

Portrayal: She is a street urchin who sarcastically brushes people away.

Hook: The ring is a ring of fire nova, and the girl unknowingly might just set it off, in the middle of the busy market. How did she get it? How many will die?

≈≈≈

Appearance: Human-sized gargoyle statue made of limestone. The gargoyle features are a different color or shade than the human features. The gargoyle is very slightly wiggling.

Portrayal: This was the Wizards apprentice.

Hook: Was turned to stone and made to look like a gargoyle. If reverted, he can share plenty of rumors and tales. In his time as a gargoyle, he has accumulated a lot of knowledge about the townsfolk, especially that rich, pompous, evil Wizard.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Hans is a lanky human shepherd who appears to be in his twenties with brown hair and wise grey eyes. He wears ordinary peasant clothes and a backpack. He carries a strange rune-engraved battlehammer on his belt that seems out of place, given his feeble arms and build.

Portrayal: Wandering shepherd with a good, caring soul but personality varies (see below).

Hook: Hans had no idea what he was getting himself into when he found the Chaos Twilight Hammer in the woods near his village 400 years ago. The ancient artifact ripped his very essence in half creating a diabolic twin that roams the mortal world instead of him every second month from newmoon to newmoon. Helplessly Hannes has to watch his dark brother's deeds from the astral world, trying to right those deeds in the month to come, until the day with no moon and no sun when they will finish their eternal struggle for good.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Young human male about 17 years old. Skinny, wild eyed, black hair and dark skinned. Probably being chased by a shopkeeper or guards. He gets away.

Portrayal: No one knows where he lives. He survives by stealing food or selling information and rumours. He is sometimes seen climbing over dangerous areas, towers, or jumping from roof to roof to avoid capture. Agility is his strong asset. Guards consider him merely a pest, so he is not wanted for any crimes other than some petty thefts.

Hook: The party is given the task of retrieving a family heirloom from the cellars of an abandoned house. They are followed by the young thief, who is just curious to see what they are up to. He means no harm and might even help them in their goal of retrieving the heirloom by assisting them with puzzles and traps, and fighting heirloom guardians.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A thin half-elf with an eyepatch wearing anachronistic clothing and gear (past or future) suddenly appears nearby, disoriented. He readies his odd weapon in defense, but doesn't seem to want to use it.

Portrayal: Murphy is a quirky, absent-minded, confident mercenary. He is willing to do any job for sufficient revenue, but always demands precious metals or gems, because they are valuable across all time and space.

Hook: Murphy reveals that he was cursed by a powerful enchantress for gravely insulting her. The curse dislodged him from time and space, and he randomly shifts to new eras and environments. Wherever he is, he searches for someone able to cure him, and he'll risk much for such a service.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Plump, jolly and matronly halfling cook at the local tavern. Smells of cinnamon, sugar and spice.

Portrayal: She is always handing out minor treats to folks around here, giving the smallest/skinniest/saddest child the biggest and sweetest treat.

Hook: Cannot get the rare spices needed for her annual baking of harvest-cakes for the fair.

Needs to find someone to go to larger town and buy them for her because the peddler she normally buys from (Ofergenga?) hasn't yet arrived.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged Male Human Peasant] Sickly, tattered clothing, one shiny gold ring, missing many teeth; threshing some grain.

Portrayal: Bread-winner for a small family of four, severe and brutal in all his work.

Hook: Wife is suffering from an illness, and needs expensive medicine. He plans to kill the pharmacist because he cannot afford the medicine.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Ancient Female Dwarf Clan matron] Gaunt, gruff, looks old as the mountains themselves. She is pouring over some records in her clan's Book of Grudges.

Portrayal: Clan matron of a clan of banker dwarves, serious, slow, emanates intelligence.

Hook: Secretly responsible for the deaths of thousands of her own clan, but through clever propaganda, has blamed it on the elves. She is passing through the keep on a "diplomatic" mission, attempting to "mend" some fences, so to speak. This is really just an alibi for a hired hit on a high-ranking elf noble.

3 Line NPCs

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CN Adult Male Outcast Goblin Rogue] A short goblin with greasy black hair and keen yellow eyes. Quick, emaciated, impoverished. Currently digging in an alleyway garbage pile for a discarded dagger.

Portrayal: Outcast from the Rat-Tickle tribe. Eager to help anyone who shows a hint of mercy, especially food. Flees from perceived threats, real or otherwise.

Hook: Witnessed a murder last night and is now searching for the murder weapon. The dagger is a masterwork and shows very few signs of use.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LN Middle-aged Male Human Blacksmith] Fine clothes, rugged beard, suspicious squint. Currently haggling angrily with a merchant over the price of coal.

Portrayal: Assumes everyone is hiding something. Loses his temper when frustrated or mocked.

Hook: Murdered his wife's sister last night in a fit of rage. She was blackmailing him and had recently upped her demands.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LE Adult Female Human Wizard] Once-beautiful, bedraggled, bloated, dead. Currently floating in a downstream river eddy. May be spoken to via Speak with Dead spell, or using a modified Magic Mouth spell as part of a triggered Contingency.

Portrayal: Used her mastery of divination magic to ferret out the secrets of her fellow citizens and to blackmail them. Always seemed to know when someone was trying to hide something.

Hook: Recently murdered by one of her marks. She was deeply in debt to a creditor and often paid in information delivered to "anyone wearing a ruby ring in the shape of a tentacled skull."

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LE Adult Doppelganger Spy] Appearance varies, but it tries to assume unremarkable guises. Occasionally it wears a ruby ring in the shape of a tentacled skull or a condescending smirk.

Portrayal: May take on the appearance and mannerisms of nearly anyone, often after murdering the object of its imitation. Tends to overplay the quirks and personalities of his victims, and may sometimes reveal a certain contempt for lesser beings.

3 Line NPCs

Hook: Pays handsomely for information about the Keep, especially for detailed plans or locations of hidden passages. Heads an information gathering network for Nagortharalax.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Old hunched man who walks with a stoop. He is short and always wears brown robes.

Portrayal: He is the caretaker of the archives, carefully keeping every document in his archive in place and in good condition.

Hook: The players might want to research something for their new quest and this is the place to go. First time they go, the archives or library is empty and they catch him peeping at the neighbour who happens to be a beautiful young lady.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A middle-aged male who has burn scars covering the right half of his face (from a chemical experiment gone wrong). The party encounters this NPC in a quiet part of town. They hear a commotion and see a group of young lads throwing small stones and pebbles at this NPC. Will the players help?

Portrayal: Called "The Freak". Everyone shuns him and is afraid of him; they think of him as some kind of monster.

Hook: He was a wizard's apprentice, but after the accident he became reclusive. He deals in uncommon and rare potions, for a price of course. He might even have a spellbook or two.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LE Young Male Nobleman] Wears dress robes, perfect blonde hair, has entourage of at least 3 people with him at all times.

Portrayal: Snobby backstabbing heir to a horse farm.

Hook: Has contracted lycanthropy, doesn't want anyone to know.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CG Young Female Dancer] Long blonde hair, shapely. Does exotic dancing at local tavern.

Portrayal: Single mother trying to make a living.

Hook: Has upper class bloodline heritage, cousin to Nobleman. Unaware of family members. raised by foster parents.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LG Middle-aged Male Dwarven Scientist] Always wears goggles, runs alchemy/enchantment shop in town.

Portrayal: Hard working chemist.

Hook: Has discovered a formula for a potion of everlasting life.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CN Middle-aged Female Thief] Dresses as a beggar with long, dirty, blonde hair.

Portrayal: Boastful pickpocket.

Hook: Related to Nobleman and Dancer. Wants revenge on Nobleman for framing her for theft and sending her sister to an orphanage at a young age.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LG Young Female Human Escort] She always follows Nobleman on his left, wears various styles of dresses. Hair is always up in a bun.

Portrayal: Naive follower.

Hook: Working for city spy agency, investigating Nobleman for various crimes. Does not know he has lycanthropy.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LE Young Female Human Escort] Always follows Nobleman on his right, wears various dresses that match Left hand escort. Her hair is always back in a ponytail.

Portrayal: Naive follower.

Hook: Is the original werewolf that gave Nobleman lycanthropy. Unaware that the other escort is a spy.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LE Middle-aged Male Bodyguard] A beefcake type of guy, strong and silent and carries a large sword.

Portrayal: Angry bodyguard.

Hook: Is actually just an angry bodyguard, and good at being one. Surprisingly agile and powerful fighter.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [NE Elderly Male Dwarven Businessman] Operations manager of the horse farm Nobleman owns. Fat and bald, sits in his office at the farm.

Portrayal: Stingy pencil pusher.

Hook: Runs illegal smuggling ring. Nobleman is aware of this operation. Can be swayed to join NPCs if Nobleman and Escort werewolf are defeated and younger brother is recruited.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [NG Young Male Human Farmhand] Takes care of the stables. Lives in the farmhand hut with his younger brother. Chews on a reed constantly.

Portrayal: Simple horse handler.

Hook: Gifted with a bow and arrow, potential follower/defender.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [NG Young Male Human Farmhand] Younger brother of stablehand. Shaggy hair and loose hand me down clothes. Always has his dog with him.

Portrayal: Reckless scamp.

Hook: Has mental link with Dog, potential to become a powerful ranger.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CG Young Female Fairy] Disguises herself as dog. Acts as a guardian for the farmhand's brother. Real form is that of a beautiful woman.

Portrayal: Loyal dog.

Hook: Is trying to rid the world of werewolves, and keep her humans safe. Knows of all the dark affairs at the farm.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CE Elderly Male human prisoner] Kept in torture chamber in dungeon under farm. Chained to wall, long natty hair and horrible teeth.

Portrayal: Raving lunatic.

Hook: He is unable to die due to the town Chemist's tinkering with the formula for an everlasting life potion, but he was driven insane. He is now used for "experiments" by a local Nobleman.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [NG Elderly Male Dwarven Mechanic] Works on farm equipment. Dirty clothes, always smells like horse.

Portrayal: Overly-Eager tinkerer. Younger brother of an accountant.

Hook: Gifted mechanic. Can be useful blacksmith/crafter if recruited.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Old Human Male Fighter/Rogue] Poor, scarred, old warrior, (eye patch, missing part of left hand, most of right foot), wears old-fashioned, polished leather armor and short sword. Sits on a park bench with a crutch obviously enjoying smoking a pipe. Quiet, observant, polite.

Portrayal: Retired veteran of long military service; enjoys simple pleasures since he survived very tough times. Loves pet cats, pipe weed, and good ale (but not too much).

Hook: Special agent long hidden in the guards and now forgotten; "tunnel rat" who served in covert actions, knows much unpublished local history, forgotten tunnels and dungeons, highly trained in unusual and exotic trap lore. He talks in few words. Photographic memory.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A small, young woman in simple clothing nearly runs into one of the party members while they are walking through town. She glances up nervously and her eyes widen in fear when she looks at one of the party members (a fighter/warrior/well-armed member). She pulls the small satchel she is carrying tighter to her chest and turns to run.

Portrayal: The young woman is currently an indentured servant for a merchant in town. She is very meek and never looks directly at anyone who speaks to her. She is very anxious and continually glances around during any conversation with the players.

Hook: The satchel she is carrying contains a number of documents that prove her to be the rightful heir to a local manse, properties, several businesses, and large amount of wealth. Her uncle had her sold off into indentured servitude when she was very young after her parents were killed. He claimed that she died of a sickness shortly after her parents' passing. The uncle had and still maintains some loose connection with the local thieves' guild and there was some talk that he may have been behind the death of the girl's parents. She managed to steal the documents and is currently being pursued by her uncle's thugs. As luck would have it, one of the party members happens to look a little like one of her uncle's henchman. If the party can help the woman and safely escort her to the regional magistrate (his official residence is in a nearby town – her uncle owns most of the local officials in this town), she would be exceptionally grateful. In fact, if she regains all of her inheritance, she will offer to become their patron and fund their operations/expeditions.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Sitting on a bench outside a local tavern, you notice a large imposing-looking human in dark studded leather armor. He has a scar on his left cheek that starts just below his eye and continues through his black beard leaving a hairless streak through the beard. A great sword and crossbow lean against the bench next to him. There are four throwing knives on a bandoleer across his chest. He is currently using a very large knife to carve bite-sized chunks off of a small wheel of cheese that is sitting on the bench next to him. When he notices the party, he stops and pulls out a leather bound valise and starts flipping through the pages within (a sharp-eyed character may notice that there are portraits sketched on the papers). After a moment he seems to be glancing from one of the documents to the party and back again several times. He will then wrap up the valise and while the party is passing he stands and begins to strap on his great sword in a slow and practiced manner.

Portrayal: The large burly man is a bounty hunter and one of the party members has attracted his attention. He is gruff and very sure of himself. His temperament is continually calm, regardless of the situation or impending peril. He is methodical and very persistent when he is pursuing his targets. (Think Clint Eastwood in the Outlaw Josey Wales, but with Schwarzenegger's Conan physique and armed with medieval weapons and armor.)

Hook: One of the party members bears an uncanny resemblance to a wanted individual with a very large bounty on their head. Fortunately they are wanted alive. The bounty hunter may decide that there are too many party members for him to take on his own and will set up a distraction (like paying some local thugs to ambush/rob the group, or hitting them while they are in a crowded tavern) so that he can more easily take the

“wanted” individual. If he succeeds (and he won’t stop trying), the players may be in for a bit of a chase as they pursue his returning his bounty for payment.

Is the party member really wanted? If so, why? If not, has an old rival or someone they have wronged in their past put a price on their head in order to extract revenge? Or is their likeness to the portrait on the wanted poster merely an unfortunate coincidence? Perhaps the party can persuade the bounty hunter to work out a deal with them and let them accompany him back for his payment, and then they can deal with whoever put the bounty out (he does not care, just as long as he gets paid first).

≈≈≈

Appearance: An aged dwarven blacksmith with white hair, a red swollen nose, strong arms and the knowing eyes of a long life. He wears heavy, worn leather boots, crimson pants, a blacksmith’s apron over his bare chest, and dirty work gloves. He is carrying two arms full of fine daggers, swords and battleaxes across the village square and seems to be heavily drunk as he dangerously sways and stumbles frequently.

Portrayal: He is a master blacksmith who was banished by his clan when he tried to rediscover the forbidden secrets of rune magic. His bitterness and grief over his exile have made him an alcoholic and he is usually suspicious and grumpy when not intoxicated.

Hook: Whenever he gets really drunk, he hears a voice in his head that guides his hands to create weapons of unmatched quality and most eccentric design. It was that voice that lured him long ago to meddle with the forbidden craft of rune magic.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A human farmer in his twenties who lives alone on a run-down farm at the village periphery. He seems to be very poor as he only wears shabby pants, an often-patched shirt and no shoes despite the cold weather. His thin, blond hair hangs down in his face as he struggles to till a stony field with something that looks like an old, rusty halberd.

Portrayal: He is a poor farmer who inherited the farm when his family died of the fever a couple of winters ago. He leads a miserable life and would have left the village years ago if he had not such a great sense of loyalty to his parents farm and the few animals left. He just can't give up.

Hook: The halberd he uses for field work has been in the family for many generations but nobody has ever wondered why the rusty thing never broke. The weapon is actually an iconic magic artifact enchanted to look old and would probably sell for a king's ransom, if only he knew.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A male, 10-foot tall Wolfen with long black fur, golden glowing eyes, yellow fangs and a scar running across his snout. He wears a ceremonial leather garb with many totems, amulets, and animal skulls attached to it. He wields a long wandering staff and a great battle axe on the belt under his garb for self defense.

Portrayal: A wandering shaman who has dedicated his life to find and assist a legendary Wolfen Warrior that, according to prophecy, will unite the 14 clans and lead them to victory against their human enslavers. Despite his scary appearance, he is actually a very peace-loving person, who offers his healing abilities for free to those in need.

Hook: He is the warrior of the prophecy, but he will never realize it himself.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [N Young Female Half-Orc Commoner 1] As the orc guards draw their falchions and step up to meet the party, a ragged half-orc slave rises from cowering behind a table to swing her chains at the nearest guard.

Portrayal: A slave, captured during a raid some twelve winters ago. She is tall, but stooped and scarred from her years in servitude.

Hook: Her given name is happens to be the same as the same as a female human PC, or the first female NPC she meets. She will remember this when she hears the name spoken.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A short, pudgy girl, with long, sandy-blond hair and with thick glasses that magnify her large brown eyes. Her shoes are usually in need of repair but she keeps her hands fastidiously clean and her nails short. She is typically found either running errands for, or with, her father, a human hedge wizard.

Portrayal: She dislikes sorcerers: they don't have the discipline she feels she has already demonstrated. She is partial to half-orcs and half-elves because they share her pain of not looking like everyone else and not quite fitting in anywhere. She is always looking to make a coin off of getting access to her father, but will also put in a good word for those whom she likes.

Hook: Her errand-running gives her access to odd rumors around town, which she shares for a price.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Dirty blond, once-slender, middle-aged woman. Greasing the chains that lift the drawbridge. Watches those entering and leaving.

Portrayal: Drawbridge Maintenance. Curious, amazing memory, can move as quietly as a cat when she wants to.

Hook: Has huge, unrequited crush on leader of the keep. Often sneaks into the keep and stalks the object of her crush. Has learned much valuable information, but would never intentionally use the knowledge to hurt her beloved.

≈≈≈

Appearance: 8-foot tall, male ogre, old, slightly translucent. Sitting on wall near garbage pit at night looking at stars and then down into the pit.

Portrayal: Ghost of an ogre who suffocated under the garbage pit 200 years ago. Has grown contemplative (for an ogre).

Hook: He had just taken a large and very valuable sapphire before he slipped and fell into the garbage pit. If characters are willing to talk with him using small words and discuss the meaning of life he will tell them about the gem.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A 10-year old boy who is very dirty, dressed in rags and lacks shoes. He volunteers to hold the characters' horses (or other odd job like opening doors for them, shine their boots, run an errand).

Portrayal: Friendly and eager to please. Just wants to earn a copper piece.

Hook: While eager to please on the outside, he is anxiously looking for the opportunity to steal something valuable he can give to the fort's greedy healer to procure medical help for his younger sister.

≈≈≈

Appearance: 20-something handsome man in clean but inexpensive clothes. He wears a worried expression while desperately looking on the ground and retracing his steps.

Portrayal: He will ask the characters if they have seen a lady's locket.

Hook: Fears that someone might have found the locket which will compromise his lover, who is married. Without her love he will revert to a beast that will start killing those near him.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Fat, balding, middle-aged man with bad acne who smells like wine and cheap perfume. His clothing is high quality but blood stained. He is preparing to set a broken leg while arguing with the patient that he deserves a higher fee.

Portrayal: Local physician to the upper class. Greedy and unscrupulous.

Hook: He's stolen a locket from one of his patients correctly recognizing that he got the keepsake as a sign of the favor of a lady. He is planning a little blackmail.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LE Female Erinyes Rogue 4] Attractive prostitute in one of the more affluent houses of pleasure that operates under license in the town surrounding the fort.

Portrayal: This devil-in-disguise appears to be a comely 16-year old prostitute. She is a favorite of the higher-ranking guard officers as well as some of the low- and mid-level lords who attend court with the local baron.

Hook: She has her hooks in many of her customers. When her true lord requires, she uses charm monster on the appropriate courtier or officer to set actions in motion to direct the course of local politics. These actions may be small, but can result in significant downstream effect. The party may fall into her trap, discover her operation, or use her as a source of information (but beware to whom she may be informing on the party).

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged woman, still fascinating despite age] Finely dressed, she's throwing out a young girl from her brothel with the help of a young guy.

Portrayal: She runs the local brothel, and can do this due to her accommodating attitude.

Hook: She knows many secrets and facts at many levels, thanks to the prostitutes.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young man in his 20's, dumb, tough] Simply dressed, unarmed. He is literally, and effortlessly, throwing a girl out of the brothel a girl as the PCs walk nearby.

Portrayal: He is the "bodyguard" of the brothel's madame. Kind and friendly.

Hook: Actually the madame's son; he's looking for his father. Perhaps he bears a strong resemblance to a PC whose father is from or frequented this town.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A stringy young man is awkwardly swinging a 2-handed sword that is far too large for him. He is aiming at (and missing) three large clay pots resting on fence posts.

Portrayal: Panting and angry, he can hardly get three words out without stopping for a breath.

Hook: Two days ago, his father made the “soft boy” vow to the gods that he would sever three orc heads in one swing of the family’s sword before being allowed to marry his sweetheart.

≈≈≈

Appearance: 20-year old brunette female human in a torn, red silk dress, trying to escape an angry man on a street corner at night.

Portrayal: Prostitute. Afraid and tired of this life after only six months, the young woman is parrying slaps and inching away, trying not to invoke his further wrath.

Hook: If helped, she'll share that she is really afraid because the pimp recently murdered a rich young man who humiliated him (you've heard that the family is offering a reward for news of his whereabouts).

≈≈≈

Appearance: 40-year old stocky human male with bad teeth, scarred face, and squinty eyes, wearing heavy gold rings and carrying a dagger. Slapping around a wayward prostitute.

Portrayal: Pimp. Cold, brutal, and sadistic, he feels the need to reassert his control over the neighborhood, though he is seldom found out during the day, when nobles and soldiers are about.

Hook: He is slapping her around because he is afraid, for a mysterious stranger has been killing his girls and leaving cryptic notes for him.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CN Adult Male Human Wizard] 35-year old who looks like 50. Shoulder length grayish-brown hair, gray stubble on his cheeks and chin, wrinkles around the eyes and mouth that indicate he spends much of his time scowling or frowning. Sitting alone at a table in the local tavern, drinking and studying his tome of spells.

Portrayal: Likes to be alone, hates to be disturbed, does not like to talk with other people. He is very loyal to the few (maybe five) friends he does have, though is still stand-offish, even with them. To many, he seems demented and sadistic, at times.

Hook: Wears a gold band on a finger of his left hand, set with an emerald that seems to glow on foggy nights. He disappears once a month, only to come back with a new scar on his right arm.

The ring enhances his magical power. It was given to him by a ghost, who demands a sacrifice once a month, to be allowed to drink his blood.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CG Adolescent Male Thief] 16-year old with short-cropped dark brown hair, hazel eyes, and a slim build. Quick to smile, full of life and fun. Usually found outdoors, hiking, climbing, and goofing off, as would be any sixteen-year-old. Is almost always seen in the company of a large, middle-aged man with black hair and black beard.

Portrayal: Happy and fairly trusting, quick witted and very intelligent, lots of common sense.

Hook: Is secretly the head of a thieves' guild. Found the leader dead under a tree, and was caught digging through his pockets by the large, middle-aged man. The large man offered the boy the job as guild master, and would be his personal guard. The boy has good thief skills because of a set of rings found on the previous, now-dead leader. He has a sister, a mage, who knows his secret.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LG Adult Male Merchant] Middle-aged man, 45-ish, with peppered brownish-blond hair and blue eyes. Of a medium build and average height. He is typically found with two of his sons combing over paperwork and speaking with merchants and business owners.

Portrayal: Very intelligent, hot tempered, expects things to be done when he says, as he says. Has little patience for poor quality work in a job.

Hook: Runs a “banking” business – takes shipments of gold and offers parchment receipts that may be exchanged for gold at a distant location. The business actually belonged to his wife’s father. Unknown to him, his 16-year old son is secretly the new master of the local thieves’ guild.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CG Adult Male Wizard] Young man, in his early thirties, with short-cropped black hair and a clean-shaven face. Strong build, wide-set shoulders. Wears red robes and carries a waist-tall cane. He also wears a gold amulet that bears the resemblance to a reptilian foot. Looks up from writing in a journal to yell at someone, likely a PC, for blocking his light.

Portrayal: Quick mind, quick tongue (to mock), slow to trust others. Very arrogant, but has the skills to back up his attitude.

Hook: The amulet is an item that can be used to control dragons. He found it near the nest of a red dragon. When confronted by the dragon, he did not use its powers, earning the friendship of that dragon, who now travels with him and protects him, as a friend. In the last four years, he has written two treatises: one on red dragons, one on black dragons. He is working his way through all the dragon types.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LE Adult Male Thief/Assassin] Older man, for an assassin, usually seen in a suit of fitted black cloth. He has short black hair, dark eyes, and pale skin. When he talks, his voice is baritone, very smooth, very soft, but strong.

Portrayal: Cares nothing for the lives of others, and will use anyone he has to in order to get what he wants. Expects complete loyalty from those under him, and will quickly remove anyone he finds to be a danger to his freedom.

Hook: He is the head of the only thieves' guild in the region, one that is spread through three or four different settlements. He is ruthless, as are the thieves in his guild. His guild has earned recognition throughout the surrounding regions, as well. He is considered a scholar – reads much and writes much.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LG Adult Female Noble] Local governor. Middle-aged noblewoman with waist-length black hair and striking green eyes. Fair, pale skin, very toned muscles, slender body with curves in the right places.

Portrayal: Follows the rules of etiquette to the letter, and believes others should, as well, though she knows they won't. Expects the laws of her land to be followed, and is disappointed when a citizen breaks the law. She has little sympathy for outsiders who break the law.

Hook: She is one of a small number of female governors, and is very good at the job. All of the male governors in surrounding settlements admire her and listen to her judgment. She has no interest in romance; she cares only for the people in her care. She

is considered a scholar, and has written a number of treatises on culture and human interaction within a culture.

≈≈≈

Appearance: As you travel a road, you can barely hear shouts of anguish in the distance away from the road. As you approach you see a naked Drow tied and staked to the ground with numerous wounds suffering as the morning sunlight is burning him slowly.

Portrayal: He is of adult size but could be any age. He begs you to free him and cover him with a blanket. Says a deal with another Drow went terribly wrong and he and his associates did this to him. He is grateful for the PCs' help. As he talks, he avoids making eye contact and keeps looking around as if his enemies might be near (this is an act).

Hook: He is young and has ventured to the upper world to hone his skills in stealing and killing. He was captured by a group of hunters and staked out to die.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A pixie flies out of the nearby woods and circles around the PCs looking them over carefully. She is eight inches tall with color tones of gold and tan in her wings and a body the color of maple wood.

Portrayal: She stops in front of the tallest PC and says, "I seek a powerful fighter or mage to rescue my animal friend who has been captured by a magic user who lives near and plans to experiment on him."

Hook: All she can offer the PCs as payment is a bag of pixie dust (good for 2 uses per PC; fly one turn up to six spaces). Fluffy is a full grown male bear.

≈≈≈

Appearance: You hear a man calling in a tired voice, "Elder, where are you?" He stands on a hill just outside of town looking intently around. He is a middle-aged man with a shaved head wearing a plain brown cloth robe and simple sandals.

Portrayal: He is a brother from the nearby abbey. He looks worried and keeps reaching into a pocket with one hand. "When the Elder did not appear for morning vespers, I checked his room and the grounds with no success so I came to this hill to look for him."

Hook: "If you seek him out and return him to us, I can offer you food and healing. There was a note on his bed which I read and pocketed." He pulls the note out from the pocket he keeps checking. It says in red ink, 'Your sins have returned with a vengeance.

≈≈≈

Appearance: LG Adult Blue Dragonborn; lightly armored, lightning bolts tattooed on the back of his head. Found washed up on the shore of a beach. Survivor of a shipwreck. Goes on and on about a goddess he saw in a vision when he was drowning.

Portrayal: Asks to find the nearest temple of [goddess of protecting others]. If battle occurs when he is found on the beach, he picks up a large piece of driftwood to use as a shield. It is obvious that he has strong fighting skills and that he is doing his best not to harm the PCs.

Hook: Was once a slaver for a blue dragon across the sea until a near death experience (drowning) gave him a vision of his goddess and converted him to protect others, but the Dragon wants his best slaver back.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A Kobold rogue by himself in a dungeon (filled with any creature other than kobolds). He seems to be tinkering with something.

Personality: Refers to himself in the third person, speaks quickly, yells at PCs to stay away while keeping his focus on the object. If a PC gets too close too fast, a trap goes off. The kobold gets mad and tells the PCs he was trying to disarm it but “stupid [insert pc race]” got in his way. If PCs allow him time to disarm the trap, he will act calmly and introduce himself. He wants to be an adventurer and will offer to travel with the PCs and disarm traps for them, for a price.

Hook: If the kobold travels with the PCs, he will try to steal from them while they sleep. He is a kleptomaniac, thus will steal any shiny object he sees. Has recently stolen something valuable from a traveling noble and is recognized if the PCs bring him back to town.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A middle-aged human ranger with a weathered face. Mid-length greasy brown hair obscures a large scar on his face that makes it look like the left eye and corner of his mouth are drooping. Wears a long brown cloak with hood to obscure his features. Encountered when PCs notice him watching them in the woods.

Portrayal: Lonely and self conscious about his scar. He craves company, but years of ridicule about his features has made him untrustworthy of people.

Hook: He has befriended a witch in the nearby woods. She has disguised herself and has been building up trust with him over several months. He knows her secret, but is

hoping the friendship is genuine. He is helping the witch and intends to save her. The favors he does for the witch are blurring his lines between what is right and wrong.

≈≈≈

Appearance: An aging vagabond ambles through the streets, singing, talking, and laughing to himself as he goes along.

Portrayal: The vagabond is bold enough to walk up to random people and try to speak with them, even going so far as to interrupt private conversations. If he comes up to the party, they will smell alcohol on his breath.

Hook: The vagabond is actually an agent [NG human rogue 20] working for a local noble; the noble believes that if he can make them paranoid enough, any thieves and brigands lurking within the town will become discouraged by the seeming lack of privacy and move on.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young human girl [CN acrobat 1] in bizarre clothing screams hysterically as she races down the street.

Portrayal: The girl appears to be legitimately frightened and in desperate need of assistance, but her outfit and her panicked nature are too much for the local commoners to bear, causing them to turn her away.

Hook: The girl was previously a member of a traveling circus that was actually a cover for an assortment of dangerous criminals. At first she was an ignorant pawn who performed her routine without question, but when she learned the truth she fled the camp in the hopes of finding someone who would believe her.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A half-elf artist [CG bard 3] stands next to his mount, sketching the commoners as they go about their daily lives.

Portrayal: Even for an artist, the half-elf is rather eccentric; anyone who approaches him is subjected to a random and seemingly nonsensical conversation about art, which he lectures them on while continuing his work.

Hook: The half-elf is actually a member of the town militia; at the end of the day he takes his sketches back to the guard house, where they are compared to the myriad of wanted posters on the walls in the hopes of spotting any criminals that might have taken up residence in town.

3 Line NPCs

≈≈≈

Appearance: A dwarf [LG fighter 15] with a crossbow is counting his coins by his cart.

Portrayal: The dwarf has had a good day at market, and so is quite pleased with his take; he will be quite jovial towards the party if they hail him for conversation, but hostile if he feels they are trying to sneak up on him.

Hook: The dwarf is an expert marksman when it comes to crossbows, such that any crossbow in his hand is effectively +1 on top of any other modifications or enchantments. If he believes that the party serves the cause of good, then he will train them in its use in exchange for a nominal fee and a keg of good ale.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A cloaked figure with fair skin on his hands and lower face lurks the alleys of the city.

Portrayal: The figure cautiously eyes any adventuring parties that travel in and out of town, especially those with clerics and/or elves in their ranks; he is elusive if approached.

Hook: The figure [CG elf ranger 12] has tracked a group of poachers to the city, but after a previous encounter he believes that the poachers' dogs have his scent. He needs a reliable band of adventurers to assist him in tracking them down and gathering enough evidence for the town militia to intervene.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A human woman dressed in fine but modestly cut clothing, patiently waits by the entrance to town, an infant boy in a carrier on her back.

Portrayal: The woman kindly greets and converses with those who talk to her, but keeps glancing through the entryway as if awaiting someone.

Hook: The woman is a "retired" adventurer [NG multiclass fighter / sorcerer 12] who is waiting for her husband, another adventurer, to return. Today is the day his message said to expect him. Anyone thinking her an easy mark will soon be on the wrong end of her hidden +5 short sword and her spells, which she can cast without vocalizations or gestures.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A large bear of a man who is dressed in adventuring clothes and carrying a sinister-looking great sword on his back arrives in town, pulling a sled laden with the spoils of his adventures. He is warmly greeted by a woman, obviously his wife.

Portrayal: Although intimidating, he and his wife warmly greet each other, and he even allows her to take her choice of several obviously magical pieces of jewelry that he gathered on his travels. The nature of their conversation is such that they seemingly both know the magical properties of each piece just by looking at it.

Hook: The husband is a powerful and infamous adventurer [CG human multiclass fighter / wizard 30] whose vorpal great sword and incredible cunning are feared by brigands and warlords alike. He is forever being asked to provide assistance against the latest evil personage or monster, and so if the party gets in his good graces he may forward on to them some of the job offers he receives.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young, human woman [NG bard 1] wearing fine garments sits by the fountain, crying. She has been doused with flour, water, grease, and one or more adhesive substances.

Portrayal: The woman is near to hysteria with fear and mortification, and keeps praying to her preferred deity in order to know what she's done to deserve everything that she's been through. If asked, she will explain that she has been enduring a series of misfortunes and mean-spirited pranks ever since being given the lead role in an upcoming performance.

Hook: The woman got the starring role ahead of the company's usual starlet [NE bard 10]; the woman does not know this, but the starlet has been trying to make the actress quit so that the starlet can take over her role, and has no qualms about turning it into a magic-on-magic and blade-on-blade battle if it means getting the spotlight back.

≈≈≈

Appearance: An obviously frustrated cleric [LG human 6] wearing wrinkled vestments sits amidst a pile of books and scrolls.

Portrayal: The cleric is angrily alternating between reading the materials in his pile, reading a series of writings, and writing something in a journal. The more he reads and writes, the angrier he grows, such that he is now muttering oaths and curses.

Hook: The cleric is busy examining a series of arguments and proposals put forth by would-be reformers of his faith, who feel that the cleric's order has gotten theologically bloated and corrupt. In his anger and moral outrage over the remarks and comments, he

has forgotten himself and so is now desperately searching for any teachings or other “evidence” that he can use to prove the reformers incorrect, if not heretical.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A brightly dressed street entertainer [NE Halfling thief 10] plays an accordion while a trained monkey dances by his feet.

Portrayal: The entertainer is quite cheerful, and banters with the passerby in the hopes of getting them to stay and watch the show.

Hook: The monkey by his feet is but one of five trained monkeys in his employ; the others [thief 1] lurk in the shadows to pick the pockets of anyone who stays too long to watch.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Adult human male, tall, large round eyes, sawing blocks of ice on the back of his cart.

Portrayal: Ice Miner and importer of illegal goods, tough, self-sufficient.

Hook: Has a consignment of stolen goods/illicit drugs/poached venison at the bottom of his cart and is waiting for his buyers to appear.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Adult human female, muscular, soft hands, foraging in a meadow for flowers to be used as ingredients.

Portrayal: Dessert Cook in castle kitchens and ice-sculptor of table decorations for feasts; honest and hardworking.

Hook: Would be shocked and appalled if she knew of her husband's illegal dealings.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Young adult human male, tall, thin, small teeth, offloading blocks of ice from the back of his father's cart.

Portrayal: Apprentice Ice Miner, aspiring artist, and wants to be an ice sculptor like his mother.

Hook: Is looking for evidence of smuggling to pressure his father into releasing him from ice mining so he can pursue his dream of being an ice sculptor.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Teenage human female, tall, very muscular, hooked nose, throwing ice balls at pedestrians from Ice House window.

Portrayal: Apprentice Cook, bored, troublesome, wants something more exciting, such as to travel to the mountains to mine ice with her father.

Hook: Is prepared to break the law if it means an escape from her mother's control.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [ASPECTS: Too cute to punish, Curiosity killed the Bear, 9 lives...and counting] Tuffty Bear is a Norwegian Forest Cat (a breed of domestic cat) with long silky hair in contrasting gray and white coloration, gray on top and white beneath. He peers at the world through intelligent green eyes. He is a little hefty for a domestic cat his size, due in no small part to the human food he prefers to steal off any given unattended plate.

Portrayal: Tuffty is in actuality a centuries old magician who made one too many Faustian deals with forbidden powers. Due to a poorly worded wish made to a Power who was not in a charitable mood that day, the words "I want eternal life and youth in a form most pleasing to women," took on a whole new meaning. Now imprisoned in this overly adorable, undying body that lacks thumbs, Tuffty waits out the end of all existence by causing mayhem to the unsuspecting fools that take him in.

Hook: Tuffty has recently caused the deaths of his prior 'owners' by a series of 'accidents' that culminated in a house fire (cat doors make excellent escape hatches). He has now charmed his way into a new household where domestic bliss is about to meet an adorable end.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CN Male Human Child 8 years] He is a spirit, he was murdered and now is wandering looking for help to properly bury his corpse, hidden nearby.

Portrayal: He is very sad, can't speak (without magical aid), but can guide anybody to his corpse. He will enrage if ignored.

Hook: Within his corpse, a precious signet ring may be found, probably from a noble or merchant house.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LN Male Human Old Mature] Bald, grey hairy ears and nose, inky fingers. Sitting in front of a long table covered in parchment rolls and papers. He is nervously coughing, checking several cargo lists.

Portrayal: He is the Port Officer, knows who takes what, who pays, and who don't. He is conceited and ironical, but for the right price will tell any information.

Hook: Although he is in pay of the Thieves Guild, he has been keeping the information about their shipments, who, what, and where it goes, just as a safety measure.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CG Female Human Child, 10 years] A barefoot, dirty street urchin, thin, dressed with tatters, with long tangled dark blonde hair. She is dancing with her trained monkey for some copper coins.

Portrayal: She is intelligent but suspicious of adult males (due to past bad experiences). She maintains some little orphans with her gains in a forgotten basement, accessible only from a street level little window in an alley.

Hook: The basement where they live is very old, and has a stout stone door, from where strange noises sometimes come.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CN Male Human, 14 years] Short, thin, but harder than stone, he is the leader of a small gang of young criminals. He has a crippled hand, a punishment made by an older boy years ago. He is squatting in the shadows of an alley, playing dice and smoking black leafs with other younger children.

Portrayal: He is clever, ambitious and unmerciful. He is always aware of what is happening around him because he is a little paranoid and trusts nobody out of his gang.

Hook: The boy that crippled his hand is now a low leader in the thieves guild. He will do whatever he can to fulfil his vengeance upon his enemy.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young man with messy, brown hair is idly fondling an amulet on a chain as he nibbles at his long-cold meal.

Portrayal: Overly fond of his amulet, has no interest in food except for social convenience. Once he notices them, he is afraid that the party may be a group of assassins come to kill him.

Hook: In a stroke of good fortune, the mage has created his first big discovery: an amulet that restores the bearer's life-force by the light of the moon. However, he fears that his former master may seek him out to take the amulet for himself, and then kill the mage for good measure.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A man in his late twenties, with unruly black hair and a drawn scowl, leans against a wall, watching the new arrivals closely. His eyes bear witness to the trials of a much older man, and his hand tightens on his halberd as you approach.

Portrayal: An overprotective and overly rule-bound Captain in the town watch.

Hook: Recently promoted to his rank after the death of his father. He blames his father's death on his former best friend, a wandering adventurer not unlike the party members.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Beneath the building's awning you see a tough-built woman with a scar above and below her right eye, as if it had been protected by an eyepatch. Her wavy red hair cascades over her muscle-bound shoulders. The look in her eyes convince you that further scrutiny will draw her ire...or perhaps her interest?

Portrayal: The strong-willed daughter of the local blacksmith, well-trained but stifled by her overprotective father.

Hook: Is secretly a member of a local assassins' guild, forging arms for them by day and breaking their less-talented members out of prison by night.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A white-skinned humanoid creature of an unfamiliar species, shrouded in a dark hood and cloak so stained its original color is indiscernible. The being seems vaguely feminine.

Portrayal: Sad and quiet, she speaks wistfully. Her words indicate a great distance between herself and both men and nature.

Hook: A member of an order of beings more than usually devoted to the worship of nature, akin to dryads. She was sent away because she wished to teach humans to become better connected with nature. She has recently learned that an attack on her coven by unknown assailants has left her the last of her kind.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A large, dark-skinned man in a dark robe, his bald head gleaming slightly in the light. He talks to anyone at the bar, asking for details about anything he overhears.

Portrayal: A jovial gossip-monger, whose ring and pinkie fingers on his left hand twitch slightly whenever he is complimented or asked the source of his rumors. Particularly keen or magically enhanced eyes might spot a ring with an unusual sigil magically concealed there.

Hook: Worships the god of secrets. Travels far from his temple to make coin off the rumors his divining rituals reveal. If his cult, who values the keeping of secrets more than life itself, ever found out, they might take extreme measures to silence him.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CN Teen Female Human] Pretty, dirty, old worn clothes, smith's apron, tomboy, scowl. Bringing in a new horse to begin shoeing it.

Portrayal: Daughter of the Lord's blacksmith. Grew up as the lord's daughter's best friend. Helps her father in the smithy. Mother died in childbirth. Has no skills that make her a desirable wife, but she is a good farrier (not a position for a woman). Feels that she is destined to be single the rest of her life.

Hook: Has twice helped the lord's daughter escape the keep to meet her secret love, a ranger's son who lives in the king's forest. She has liked the ranger's son for a long time.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [NG Teen Male Human] Handsome, well-groomed, dressed functionally. Riding toward the farrier's corral to swap horses, carrying a parcel, smiling at the (female) farrier.

Portrayal: Flirtatious, witty, practical, knows he can have any girl in town and has fun with it but is not inappropriate with any of them.

Hook: All of the parents in town like him, he realizes that none of the girls in town would survive the type of life he wants to live as a ranger, except the smith's daughter, whom he likes very much, especially when she is dirty from working hard. Has twice met with the Lord's daughter for a midnight rendezvous, he thinks she is too prissy, but would marry her for her station.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LN Middle-aged Human Male] Distinguished, well-dressed, bartering with a customer in his clothing store.

Portrayal: Fashion conscious, his store is his livelihood and his life. Has learned that sometimes agreeing to a slightly lower price than he wants will keep the customer

coming back. Always looking for someone he can dress up in the latest fashions. He is very good at what he does and takes pride in his work.

Hook: He is ostracized by others in the clothing business for his "hipster" fashion ideas and because he likes women (instead of men). He makes "private wear" for the local lord and lady, they like a lot of leather.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young, somewhat tall, and athletically built human man [CG] in his early 20s is in his shop counting out the day's receipts before returning to his home outside of the keep. His clothing initially appears to be that of a normal worker or laborer, but the material is of an unknown type that is incredibly durable. He wears an armband on his left bicep that bears a bright orange symbol.

Portrayal: He is part of a network of scholars who collect, translate, and transcribe rare and ancient books for sale to the general public. He is a consummate businessman, and always appears serene.

Hook: The guild is actually a cover for an ancient order of powerful sages, warriors, and clerics that serve as peacekeepers and peacemakers; the man is a powerful spell-sword [level 25 multi-class cleric / fighter] and grappler who knows several forgotten spells and fighting techniques, and if the party is willing to meet his price (a price based on karma and poetic justice), he will teach them some of what he knows.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young, petite human woman of about 19 or so [CG] who is speaking to a man – her husband – while tending to their infant son. She wears similar clothing, but wears the bright orange symbol on a headband.

Portrayal: As both his wife and apprentice, she assists him with his work as best she can. She is polite and cheerful under normal circumstances, but can flash a cold ire when angered or show concern when worried.

Hook: She is a skilled adventurer [level 15 multi-class cleric / rogue] possessed of several powerful healing and protection spells and an absolutely divine recipe for fruit pies. She'll gladly heal the party and will also cook for them for a nominal fee, but will similarly require a steep fee before she'll give up her secrets.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young defender of the faith [LG Human Cleric 10] who wears the tunic of his order over nobleman's clothing. It's the same faith as a PC. He alternates between praising the faithful and condemning the heretical.

Portrayal: He places a higher priority on “maintaining the ‘proper’ order of the faith” than practically anything else, and so eagerly welcomes those who follow his deity while being belligerent towards those of other faiths or sects.

Hook: He legitimately but wrongly believes that there is a conspiracy by “outsiders” to subvert his order and destroy it from within, and so is paranoid to the point of secretly organizing a separatist movement of “true believers” who can be trusted to defend the faith to the last. If the movement cannot be convinced to establish their own colony elsewhere, there is a great risk of the cleric and/or the individual members becoming physically violent towards those not of the order.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young human woman [NG aristocrat 5] whose harsh clothing cannot hide her fair skin or well-manicured hands. She is tending to the poor.

Portrayal: Although she freely speaks with the poor and will answer questions if asked, she makes it a point to keep her face hidden from others and is evasive about her identity.

Hook: The woman is actually the “wife” of a prominent nobleman by way of an arranged marriage. He regards her the same way he regards the lower classes: nothing more than pawns to be used to further his own ends. She has been secretly stealing money from his vaults in order to provide food, medical care, and education for the poor of the region in the hopes of lifting them from their status, at great risk to both her person and reputation. She will gladly leave the nobleman and join the party if she believes their cause is just and that they can help the poor, but her doing so will make the party a powerful enemy of the nobleman.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A baker [CN gnome wizard 10] sings to himself as he works with a large quantity of dough on a table outside of his shop.

Portrayal: The baker is friendly and professional enough when conducting business, and will even recommend places for the party to stay if they do not already have lodging, but an obvious sadness and frustration intermittently fills his voice.

Hook: The baker was once a prominent inventor who actually has several inventions scattered throughout the shop, but was forced out of his town when an act of sabotage by an more prominent rival resulted in several grievous injuries. The baker longs to return home, but cannot do so unless he can clear his name.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adolescent Male Gnome Hay Merchant] Wears overalls and plaid shirt. Busily forking some hay into his small cart.

Portrayal: Sells hay for the local stables. A bit uneducated, but always friendly.

Hook: Actually quite learned, but acts like a fool so that people won't expect more from him. He doesn't want to go to university, he likes the simple life.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Ancient Female Human Illuminator] Wearing high-middle class clothing, and a brooch. Drinking some wine.

Portrayal: Illuminates manuscripts. Very kind, but a bit racist against dwarves.

Hook: "Ancient" is very appropriate for her – she's been around for 300 years at least! Secretly a witch who dilates time around her to keep herself alive. The people in the keep don't seem to notice.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged Female Orc Roofer] Hammer, nails, and hacksaw at her belt. Talking to the carpenter about where to find some crossbeams.

Portrayal: Puts roofs on houses and stables. Loves to work with her hands.

Hook: Enjoys the alcohol a bit too much. When drinking, never stops before she's completely passed out, which takes several pints of lager.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Old Female Drakeling Cooper] Heavy black rubber apron. Flame-hardening a barrel.

Portrayal: Makes the best barrels and buckets in town. A bit smug.

Hook: Uses treant wood, which causes a bit of a controversy with the local CAP ("Creatures Are People!") group.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Youthful Male Halfling Beer seller] Clipboard, pen. Talking to a local barkeep out back of their pub.

Portrayal: Sells beer in bulk to the local taverns. Happy.

Hook: Overcharges to skim profits.

3 Line NPCs

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Male Human Brothel keeper] Exquisite clothing. Counting silver coins on the counter.

Portrayal: Keeper of a house of nightly entertainment. Jovial and welcoming.

Hook: Frequents the rooms of his workers himself – so often that he rarely turns a profit!

≈≈≈

Appearance: A halfling with a mischievous grin on his face. He's dressed for travel, and several daggers and wands are tied to his belt.

Portrayal: A thrill-seeking, roguish fellow. He's good-natured and generally good-hearted, but he often finds himself on the wrong side of the law. He's skilled as a thief and with some magic.

Hook: He picked up his magical skills from a fellow inmate during a stint in jail, then he used those skills to break out!

≈≈≈

Appearance: A tall figure in blue and white hooded robes covered in arcane swirls. He carries a wooden staff, which is topped with a jagged blue crystal. He approaches a PC wizard and offers to sell him the staff.

Portrayal: He is an accomplished wizard and craftsman. He enjoys making and acquiring magic items, which he often sells to other adventurers he meets on the road. His intelligence shines through his eyes like a flame, which makes some people nervous.

Hook: He has been keeping a magical eye on his little sister. Though he has not seen her in years, he knows of her plight, and searches for heroes he can bring to her aid.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A fair-skinned young woman with black hair and steely eyes. She wears a long, dark coat with a puffy red cravat stuffed in the neckline. A curved sword hangs at her hip; its hilt is carved into a raven's head.

Portrayal: She leads a rag-tag resistance group. She's a brutal and unorthodox tactician, a trait that allows her forces to stay alive and deal damage to the enemy.

Hook: She left home as a girl and soon met up with a mercenary band. From them she learned how to fight. It didn't take her long to become the leader of the crushed

3 Line NPCs

resistance. She organized them and soon lead them to overcome the orc raiders who were oppressing her village.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [NG Doppelganger, looks like a Middle-aged Male Halfling Baker] Cheery rotund baker being scolded by his wife.

Portrayal: Very accommodating, imitates any overheard suggestions on how to act. Bumbling and hesitant.

Hook: He found the the original baker's body floating in the sewer, and is now taking over his life because he wants someone to love him.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LN Middle-aged Male Elven Assassin] Long dark hair, fencing sword dangling from his belt, dark mustache. Staring at the PCs from across the street or room as they conduct their business.

Portrayal: He always honors his word. Confident and cocky.

Hook: Killed someone last night. One of the PCs looks just like the contact who is supposed to deliver the second half of his payment.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A grizzled, short man in a rusty chain shirt and dented helmet with the emblem of the city watch etched into the side. He leans against the city wall looking bored.

Portrayal: Is actually a very tall dwarf, Senior corporal in the watch, has no motivation for advancement so he only works to rule.

Hook: Has a stash of stolen valuable evidence that can prove the innocence of several prisoners.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A dirty, human girl with a mop of red hair dressed in rags made of what were once fine clothes. She is sitting in an alley holding out a tin cup for coins with a large black hound laying nearby.

Portrayal: Orphaned recently, daughter of merchant. Spunky

Hook: Her father was murdered recently and she witnessed it. She is afraid of going to the authorities because one of the murderers was a prominent figure in the town, will seek out outsider adventurers though.

≈≈≈

Appearance: An ancient orc shaman covered in painted sigils and faded scars, one eye is a vacant white orb. Wandering through the forest in search of inspiration.

Portrayal: Proud, grounded in the old ways, mutters to himself constantly.

Hook: Has foreseen that the actions of the chieftain's impetuous son will bring ruin to the tribe and seeks allies to arrange his demise before it is too late.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Looming, muscular orcish warrior with a broken tusk.

Portrayal: Loud, brash, seeks self-aggrandizement at every turn.

Hook: Tired of being held back by his over-cautious father and his lying, scheming worm of a shaman, he seeks to blame them for a number of his raids and draw the wrath of the humans, slipping away as their “heroes” take their revenge on those responsible.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Broad shouldered and stout, thick, black beard. Sheriff's badge displayed on his tunic.

Portrayal: Gruff and no-nonsense. Points at those he's addressing.

Hook: Seeks heroes to deal with a rash of raids by orcish warriors.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Youthful Female Faerie Samurai] Fairly comical looking, with a sword several times her size. Flitting steadfastly by the market stalls.

Portrayal: Samurai guard for the local Fey colony. Serene and poetic, but deadly.

Hook: Sent on a peaceful diplomatic mission as a distraction, so the Fey can amass an army of treants to attack the keep!

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Youthful Female Orc Saddler] Work-worn hands. Marking some leather for an elk saddle.

Portrayal: Makes saddles for the keep's mount merchant. Enjoys her job, but doesn't skip a beat when it's quitting time.

Hook: A runaway from her family, she's taken up residence in the keep to forge a life for herself on her own terms.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adolescent Female Half-Orc Torturer] Crumpled up black apron stuffed in her back pocket. Negotiating a price for a new set of tongs from the blacksmith.

Portrayal: Torturer for the keep's dungeon. Serious and grave. A bit masochistic.

Hook: Moonlights as a dominatrix. Seriously.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged Female Half-Elf Town Crier] Extremely loud voice, well dressed. Shouting the day's headlines.

Portrayal: Town crier, on the corner of a busy intersection in town. Weary and worn. Would love to sit and have a beer with someone.

Hook: Secretly dreams of being a master thief!

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Youthful Female Human Hatmaker] Ribbons in her hair. Pinning flowers to a hat.

Portrayal: Assistant in her mother's haberdashery shop, she does a bit of everything. Outgoing, cheerful and aloof, oftentimes while holding sharp pins. It can get scary.

Hook: Suffers a bit from mercury poisoning – mad as a hatter!

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Child Female Elf] Extremely long hair, cheerful. Dancing through alleyways.

Portrayal: Just a wandering child. Intelligent and carefree.

Hook: Has crazy photographic memory, and can draw incredibly accurate street maps from memory alone. Already a master cartographer, but she doesn't know it.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged Female Elf Knight] Shining mythrill scale mail, juxtaposed with a broken, rusty, iron sword. Leading a contingent of knights towards the keep.

Portrayal: Knight of the keep. Loyal and steadfast.

Hook: Secretly killed one of her own officers and collected the head to present to her higher-ups, in order to incite a war with a neighboring nation. Aspires to claim the vanquished land as her own.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CN Young Male Halfling] Ragged and pale, hovering around people in the marketplace.

Portrayal: Used to be a smuggler, now a pickpocket; scared and jumpy.

Hook: Every time he falls asleep 2/3 of what he managed to collect during the last day disappears. He'd like to find out what happens, but he certainly can't turn to the guards for help.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [N Middle-aged Female Elf Aristocrat] Wears rich clothes, looks down on everyone. Talking to the guards in front of the guardhouse.

Portrayal: Last of a noble elven family, she longs for power over other people. She hates enriched commoners and makes a living out of blackmailing and reporting to the guards.

Hook: She comes to know any misdeed the PCs have done in the area and blackmails them into killing a rogue agent of hers. Alternatively she holds information that would clear a PC from false accusations.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged Human Bard] Long white hair, surprisingly well kept for a traveller, has a bigger than average lute. He is complaining with everyone that he has been sacked by the inn he used to work for, and now he needs a new gig.

Portrayal: He is used to appreciation and really wants a new job in town because he doesn't want to travel anymore, but he's too proud to ask around.

Hook: Every time he sings the song "The Tower of Greenford," he falls into a trance. The song is different every time, without him noticing, and he's actually narrating in an obscure way something that is happening not far from where he is (some sort of clairvoyant).

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Male Half-Elf Ranger] Shirtless, short and very hairy. He is setting up some animal traps in the forest.

Portrayal: He is a hunter, living by himself in a hut. Stinks a little too much and talks to himself a lot.

Hook: He is wearing a ring with a stone that shines from time to time. He hasn't been able to remove the ring and some thief who wanted it couldn't even cut the finger off.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young girl, redhead, blue eyes, her dress is white and full of beads] Calm, quiet, bright, religious. She's helping a priest with his prayer.

Portrayal: An orphan and secretary in the temple. She's used by the priests as the face of the temple.

Hook: Her devotion to the place of worship is for the surface only. She is destroying the temple from within, slowly but steadily, in preparation for the true real god.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LG Adult Female Human] Very beautiful, lithe oriental girl of a powerful merchant family with flowing black hair and fine clothes. She pages through a book of ancient text and looks up briefly with an adventurous smile to ask a servant to move a box of candles and symbols into the next room.

Portrayal: Recently engaged to a man she doesn't know, arranged by her father. Eagerly wants to break from the strict life she is living. She hunts for adventure and a way out. Much smarter than she lets on.

Hook: She has been studying a book of ancient magic along with other old ritual books. In conducting some of the rituals in those books she accidentally summoned a creature which she couldn't handle. That creature has taken over her mind although she desperately tries to fight it. Outwardly the creature continues to play the innocent dubious daughter but it has much darker plans.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LN Adult Female Human] A young farmer's daughter, very attractive with long blond hair, quiet. She sits on a chair on her porch as her father yells at several boys to stay away from his daughter.

Portrayal: She feels cloistered by her father and wants a strong vibrant relationship with a man, yet she doesn't want to cast aside the high opinion her father has of her. She is a hard worker and has taken care of her father and her family on more than one occasion.

Hook: She isn't the innocent daughter her father thinks she is. In fact, she slept with one of the noble boys. It was thrilling until a few weeks later when she realized that she is pregnant with the noble's child. She doesn't dare say anything because she worries about stirring up trouble with the noble family.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CN Adult Male Human] Powerful and skilled nobleman warrior with a kind smile and a gentle hand. Eager to help damsels out of their predicaments. He's currently talking with several noble girls as they giggle and blush.

Portrayal: He tries to be everything a woman would desire and painfully wants to be accepted and loved by a woman. He doesn't take well to failure and will eventually force his way with a woman if she won't come to him willingly; he has issues.

Hook: This skilled warrior is really an illusionist wizard. He is a thin, pale boy with high cheekbones and a frail frame. He uses illusions to portray himself as the man he thinks women want and it instills a confidence he lacks. Recently he failed seducing one of the noble daughters and used a charm on her to convince her to sleep with him. It's all detailed in his diary. He's moved on to a new love interest now.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [NG Adult Male Halfling] A large Halfling, almost as tall as a short man and nearly equally wide. His greasy hair and big black eyes look towards several humans as he beckons them over to his wagon.

Portrayal: Clever and Capable he never misses a deal and he has a silver tongue to make sure he comes up on top if he wants to. In the rare cases where a deal can't be made, sometimes he'll find himself in possession of the item he wants anyway, due to his connections.

Hook: He's recently pawned off a very powerful magic item and several other black market items to various people in the city. Since he sold the object, people have started disappearing.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CG Adult Female Human] An attractive noble girl with shoulder length black hair and a very aggressive demeanor. She is challenging her brother to a swordfight as he declines, saying he doesn't want to embarrass her.

Portrayal: She hates her position as a woman in society and wants to stand out and be an adventurer. She comes off as a tom-boy of sorts.

Hook: Part of her adventuring nature is a cover. She recently uncovered she has a family blessing/curse, which she had believed to be myth. When certain conditions are met she turns into a small blue wyvern. She doesn't fully control herself or the urges that come with this 'gift.' She uses the adventuring as an excuse for why she disappears for several days at a time.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CG Adult Female Elf] A curvy female in heavy full plate with a beautiful voice and very graceful movements. She is asking passerby for directions to the inn.

Portrayal: She is skilled with many weapons and never shows her face or takes off her armor, calls herself the Black Knight. She is trying to atone for darkness in her past, but feels in order to do so, she must keep herself hidden. Otherwise, her enemies could very easily find her.

Hook: She is really a Dark Elf who escaped from the Underdark, fleeing from powerful enemies. Her family has many operations going on with the surface and she is trying to thwart them. She believes she won't have many friends if people knew her true origin.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CN Adult Female Human] Disheveled girl on the street with matted hair and ragged clothes curled up in a horse blanket. She pulls back when one of the men of the town comes a little too close. She looks to be under the influence of several strong drugs.

Portrayal: Prideful and frustrated, she takes the drugs to hide from her past and her personal problems. She fears very much that the people who killed her family will come for her and she still has nightmares about the fires.

Hook: She is actually the last survivor of once the most prominent family in the area. Believed destroyed in an attack several years ago, no one has looked for her. The reason she has not come forward is because though she was a little girl at the time, she knows that it was the crown itself that struck out at her family and murdered her parents. She want's vengeance, but it seems so impossible that for now she tries to just kill the pain.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [C Middle-aged Male Anti-Paladin 4 (Slayer Template)] Nicked and scratched plate armor, wicked-looking blade, scarred face. Brooding over maps and unit markers.

Portrayal: One of the leaders of his lord's army, eager for conquest and personal glory.

Hook: Got involved in a cult years ago, a true believer, soon will face betrayal from the cult's leaders.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [N Adult Male Fighter 9 (Lancer Template)] Noble clothes that have seen the wilderness for years, heirloom sword and shield with family crest. Walking among his soldiers and speaking encouraging words.

Portrayal: Heir to the throne, forced to live his life as an outcast, assembled an army of brigands to take back his birthright.

Hook: His army is outnumbered, but he is desperate to take any chance to get back on the throne. He is willing to pay any price for assistance and will pay dearly for that later.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [C Adult Female Mage 8 (Eunuch Sorcerer Template)] Completely bald, expensive robes, beautiful voice. Sitting in a meditative pose while some snakes peek out of her robes.

Portrayal: Agent of a snake cult. Rumored to have lost more than 15 husbands already.

Hook: Only interested in personal power, and distributing the cult's snake-venom drugs. Became infertile through the study of forbidden arts and now sees her pet snakes as her true children.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [L Middle-aged Male Assassin 9 (Bounty Hunter Template)] Left eye replaced by a dwarven gadget, simple yet expensive noble garb with silk gloves. Signing important documents of the realm.

Portrayal: One of his arms had to be replaced by dwarven machinery as well, recently became the lord of the surrounding lands.

Hook: Orchestrated the downfall of his former liege lord and took over the land through marriage and secret pacts.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged Male Fighter 9 (Guardsmen Template)] Polished plate armor, yellowish skin tone, almond shaped eyes. Practicing with his soldiers in the drill yard.

Portrayal: Rumored to be very rich, recently was granted a title of nobility.

Hook: Responsible for the disappearance of political enemies and became rich by taking their gold. Conspired against his former liege lord.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [L Adult Female Bard 9 (Beguiler Template)] Beautiful and young looking, wears fancy noble clothes, has the voice of a great singer. Talks to a few peasants, listening to their pleas and troubles.

Portrayal: Very popular with the small-folk, lord of a swampy hellhole of a village and the surrounding lands.

Hook: Gained possession of an old and powerful reliquary but the vampire clans of the swamp want the hollowed out bones of their forefathers back.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [black hair, brown eyes, tall and thin] Looks for trouble, secretive, charming. She is drinking a cup of coffee.

Portrayal: Housemaid. She's usually depressed, with short intervals of extreme happiness.

Hook: Once the subject of the king's desires, she now tries to cope with the "mysterious" death of her husband.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Silvery hair, blue eyes, dressed in black] She is reading a book, a sign lies besides her.

Portrayal: Activist. She is an ideologist who believes in equality for all. Will talk openly and loudly.

Hook: She's in love with the king's daughter, but afraid to tell anyone. She protests against the king to escape from the truth.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young boy, about 14, black hair, short] Ugly, clever, unlikeable. He's buying some groceries while, wielding a stolen axe.

Portrayal: Unemployed, narcissist. He is planning the robbery of a noble's house.

Hook: He ran away from his house a while ago, his parents are still looking for him.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Male Dwarf Horse trader] Full, light brown beard. Wears a wide brimmed hat, long sleeve shirt, and leather trousers. He rolls the shirt sleeves up to his elbows on warm days. Can be found standing on a fence watching his brother work with a horse, or buying supplies in the market district.

Portrayal: Charismatic and friendly, a salesman at heart. Beard is full of bits of straw. Works the need for a horse into any and every conversation no matter what the subject.

Hook: His younger brother left to seek adventure several years ago and just returned a few months back. Since his return the younger brother refuses to say a word to anyone, including his older brother. He desperately wants to know what happened to his brother and whether or not there is anything he can do to return him to his old self again.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Human male] A scraggly looking fellow, with soot-covered clothing and a mouthful of yellowed teeth shambles past you holding the ugliest bouquet of flowers you've ever seen. He looks around nervously before ducking down a nearby alley.

Portrayal: Walks with slight though noticeable limp. Repeatedly scratches at the scraggly hairs on his face. Looks around a lot as though he is afraid of being seen, or worse followed. If detained for any reason he will become increasingly agitated and run at the first chance, if at all possible he will also attempt to maintain control of the flowers.

Hook: A small time player in a local criminal organization. The bundle of flowers he is carrying actually contains information to be used in the blackmailing of a local noble family. The NPC is unaware of the specifics of the information, but he does know of its existence, as well as the cost to himself should he fail to deliver.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Human female] A young woman with long, blond hair and dazzling blue eyes sells freshly picked flowers to passers by from a small flower cart. The flowers are all quite beautiful with the exception of one truly sad-looking bouquet near the back. When she sees you looking at it she replies, "sadly not all flowers are beautiful."

Portrayal: Happy and carefree, she is always humming a tune or chatting with her customers. Her soft features and child-like mannerisms make her seem the picture of innocence.

Hook: While this innocent-looking flower girl does legitimately make a living selling flowers, she also allows a local criminal organization to pass information and small items through her shop by the use of the ugly bouquet mentioned above. To anyone who seems interested in the flowers she will say "sadly, not all flowers are beautiful" if they reply with the pass phrase, "true, but all beautiful women are flowers," then she will sell it to them (for a modest price). While she knowingly participates in this activity the question is her motivation. Is she a member of the organization, just looking to make a profit, or perhaps trying save or protect a loved one?

≈≈≈

Appearance: A middle aged gentleman, with goatee and moustache, dressed in black robes with a white turban on his head, holding a chunk of cheese in his left hand and taking a bite of an apple in his right hand, deeply engrossed with reading a large book on a stand.

Portrayal: A bit absent minded, appears self taught and highly knowledgeable in the arts of elemental manipulation, namely fire, and continues to eat, while talking with his mouth full of either food item.

Hook: Forgetting to put down the cheese and apple, will entertain the party with manipulation of fire, initially resulting in a baked apple and "fromage fondu," but watch out for that "left hook" around the corner fireball as he gets on a roll if angered.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A breathtaking, natural beauty, "two-looker" of a woman, in a white gown with the semblance of swirling smoke in the cloth, holding a short black staff while surrounded by hundreds of six-inch tall green, brown and gray figures sitting on the floor around her.

Portrayal: Sometimes known as the "Goblin Queen," she has been jilted by her "Goblin King" lover, so she now has control of his portable army in a chest.

Hook: The small portable chest holds ten companies of goblin kind, each of one hundred various soldiers, waiting for a fight, only she has lost the key to the chest, which is what allows her to return the shrunken army back into the chest.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young, Male] Facial features common to the noble house, wearing a plain brown robe, trying to wash ink stains off of his hands.

Portrayal: Booksmart, but has no understanding of politics, does not understand sarcasm.

Hook: The 4th son of a noble house, he was sent away as a babe to be a monk (the studious kind). Unbeknownst to him the old manuscript he is copying contains dark secrets that many would kill for.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Pretty middle-aged woman with long black hair wearing a long skirt, a top with a small coat and lots of jewelry. She is sitting by a tent where she is using cards to tell the fortunes of bystanders. For a small fee.

Portrayal: A fortune teller and a nomad.

Hook: She has travelled to lots of places. She will say nice things to the PCs, up until the moment when a card will make her say that something terrible will happen to them.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Old man wearing a simple garment, has long beard and hair, face full of wrinkles and a big walking staff. He waits on one side of the street.

Portrayal: With the walking staff he moves slowly and talks to himself. He is blind and needs help crossing the busy street.

Hook: An old priest, he knows stories of the prophet by heart. He will try to convince others to join his religion or be more active on their own. He has a holy relic under his garment, which he will give to the one whom he “sees” worthy of receiving it.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Regular child, walking down the street, licking a lollipop.

Portrayal: He bumps into one of the PCs, sticking the lollipop on his/her leg.

Hook: Child will start to cry and be annoying. Will call the attention of all adults nearby. What a way to begin the day in a new town!

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged Human Male] Dirty brown hair around which buzzes a small swarm of flying insects, leather eye patch covers left eye, beggar's clothing, appears to be suffering from some illness. Bumps into PCs during a fit of coughing.

Portrayal: Nervous, eyes always searching back and forth, paranoid and desperate. Frequently coughs and then wipes his arm across his mouth.

Hook: Is actually a spy in the employ of a neighboring country. He is not here by choice, but because he is desperate to save someone he dearly cares for (wife, family, relative etc), who is being held captive.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young-adult Human female] Average height, long reddish brown hair. She is leaning on the bar, arguing with a patron while wiping out a glass with a grungy-looking rag. Though she is attempting to be discrete, her anger and frustration are evident.

Portrayal: Generally friendly, she often looks tired and dissatisfied with her life behind the bar. Though her slim, feminine figure might suggest weakness, any patron caught trying to cop a feel soon discovers that she hides a well toned body beneath her ruffled skirts.

Hook: She seems like little more than your average, well-spirited bar maid. She actually runs with the local thieves guild at night. Last night she made off with a small fortune from the home of a local noble, but was spotted by a member of a local crime family while making her escape. Now they are threatening to expose her unless she performs a dangerous and potentially deadly task for them (she might ask the PCs for help or they could potentially be her new mark).

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged Human Male] Below average height, above average mid-section, brown hair and blue eyes, his clothes are expensive-looking but dirty. He wears a small jeweled dagger on his left hip, though he rarely draws it preferring to let the two goons at his side do all of his dirty work.

Portrayal: He is arrogant and rude, and shows no concern for anyone or anything other than himself and his business. Looks down his nose at others when he talks to them.

Hook: A mid-level criminal in a local organization, he oversees a small area of the city for his boss. Last night one of his boys saw someone sneaking out of the second story window of a local wealthy home. He plans to blackmail the thief into giving him a share

of the loot and to perform a dangerous job for him that, if successful, will significantly raise his stake in the organization.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Twenty-something Human Male] Blond hair and blue eyes, wears the clothing of a farmer but is tall and well built like a seasoned soldier. He is arguing with a creditor and two armed guards in the marketplace.

Portrayal: Honorable, and a bit prideful, he is distrustful of new people and he has great disdain for the politics of the city. Walks with a slight limp and squints slightly when he talks to someone almost as if he is questioning every little thing they say.

Hook: The NPC and his wife have recently left the army in order to pursue their dream of owning and operating a ranch in a nearby valley. Things were going well until someone or something began stealing their livestock.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young Human boy, wearing fine clothes, looking lost.

Portrayal: Completely quiet, he doesn't seem to notice anyone who approaches him.

Hook: Despite feeling quite solid, he is actually the ghost of a dead child who doesn't realize he is deceased. To allow him to progress on to his deserved afterlife, someone must realize his condition, solve the mystery of his murder eight years ago, and ensure the murderer is exposed and punished. Once all this is accomplished, he will fade away, leaving behind a document detailing the whereabouts of a hidden treasure -- the original reason for his murder.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LN old male Dwarf miner 10] Bald, scarred on half of his face. Looks like any roughneck dwarf. Trying not to look like he's watching the PCs.

Portrayal: Leader of a band of thieves and "retrievers;" always recruiting. Jovial facade.

Hook: Has his henchmen steal an item from or kidnap a PC. Hired by a foe of the PCs.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Male cat, all black, golden eyes [intelligent; normal cat]. Apparently stray, it seems to take a liking to a PC.

Portrayal: He is inquisitive and gregarious.

Hook: The cat is a low-level mage's familiar, being used as a spy for a villain or foe.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Travelling human pedlar with a small cart or large trunk; threadbare clothes. Apologetically approaches PCs, asking for their business.

Portrayal: Meek, blends in when he isn't hawking his wares.

Hook: Actually a changeling. Maybe pursued by fey or witch hunters; maybe looking to cause harm.

≈≈≈

Appearance: The Halfling beggar who sits on a tree trunk by the roadside must be the ugliest representative of his race ever seen. His broad face is covered with warts, he is missing a couple of teeth and is slightly squint-eyed. His greasy brown hair hangs down to his shoulders and the rags he is wearing barely cover his hairy body and enormous belly. The shabby hat that lies at his feet is almost full of coins (not only copper but also silver and gold). It seems that every villager that passes by tosses him a coin and quickly walks on.

Portrayal: The Halfling beggar who calls himself "Mighty" is a mean bully who terrorizes the villagers he "protects" enabled by his superhuman strength. He always uses the foulest language, usually tries to provoke strangers to make fun of his name or looks, and loves to beat them up with the tree trunk he is sitting on (especially nobles on horse).

Hook: "Mighty" is actually a Mountain Troll that has been cursed by the Moon Goddess to take on the shape of his favorite food for harassing her fairy folk. He had to flee from his tribe in order not to be eaten but the transformation also gave him the possibility to freely roam among the fair folk. He retained the physical abilities of a troll and he can do pretty much as he pleases with the villagers until he can no longer control his cannibalistic cravings and another "incident" forces him to relocate.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A 2-year old blond girl is playing on the dirt road in front of her parents' house under the vigilant eyes of her loving mother who sits knitting on the front porch. The toddler wears a simple blue dress embroidered with flying birds and tries to feed mud to her straw doll.

Portrayal: She is a cute toddler whom every villager loves and protects. She is very curious, friendly and loves music. Just the happy kid of a respected merchant family. Sometimes she starts to cry with no apparent reason or starts to roll with laughter.

Hook: She can see glimpses of a person's future when she looks at them, but so far nobody believes her due to her age.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Through the window of a candlemaker's shop you can see an old, bald human man with white shirt and a leather apron sitting at a workbench, intensely focused on dipping a candle into a copperpot of wax.

Portrayal: The candlemaker is a weird, old, grumpy guy who barely speaks with anyone and is totally obsessed with candles. Actually nobody has ever seen him do anything other than work on his masterfully ornate candles.

Hook: Only the oldest villagers remember that he showed up in the village many years ago clad in a black robe. He walked up to the village square, raised his arms, opened his mouth as if to deliver a speech when his eyes fell on the shop of the previous candlemaker. Then suddenly he seemed to change his mind, walked into the shop and just started to work which he has done for the last 29 years. He is actually a Demon Lord from Hades who wanted to burn the village to ashes but somehow got sidetracked.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Middle-aged, male dwarf, chainshirt, club, metal headband. Boldly screening travelers.

Portrayal: Wizard, discharges static electricity from one hand to the other, grumpy, extremely hygienic.

Hook: Expelled from dwarven city for wizardry, looking for adventure, to become famous and be allowed back into the dwarven city.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A grizzled Human Male in his mid-40's, wearing a guardsman's uniform. He is looking suspiciously at all passers-by.

Portrayal: He is gruff and all business, mildly paranoid and suspicious, but generally a fair and just man of the law.

Hook: He is slowly going senile. His increasing paranoia is matched only by his growing forgetfulness. He usually believes all adventurers are most likely plotting against the keep. He recently caught a small group who actually were plotting against the keep, and thus no one suspects there is anything wrong with his mental faculties at all.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A Young adult Elven male bartender, wearing black silk pants, a white silk blouse with tight 3/4 length sleeves, and a black leather vest, tightly laced up the sides. He is eyeing some Dwarven patrons who appear to be getting increasingly rowdy as the ale keeps flowing.

Portrayal: He is normally a friendly fellow, unless you are a Dwarf. Should one question his distrust of Dwarves, he will explain that his family has long suffered as a result of the callous disregard the Dwarves have for nature or property ownership.

Hook: He isn't actually an Elf, he's a polymorphed Beholder (or other monster) who is addicted to Dwarven flesh.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A Young Gnome with green hair, wearing brown leather armor over simple homespun clothing. He is sitting on a stool, fiddling with a metallic mechanical arm on his lap, which obviously replaces his missing left forearm and hand.

Portrayal: An alchemist by trade, he was forced to take up the craft of magically powered prosthetics when an alchemical formula went awry and destroyed half his laboratory, along with his left arm below the elbow.

Hook: His mechanical arm is powered by a magical gem which recently ran out of magical energy. He is willing to supply adventurers with rare alchemical potions should they be willing to take him to a remote and dangerous location where he can recharge his small supply of (now all depleted) magical power crystals.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young Halfling woman with a haunted expression, dressed in paint-splattered clothing, sitting before an easel in the marketplace, speed-painting portraits of people.

Portrayal: She is meek, friendly, and extremely talented, capable of quickly painting hyper-realistic portraits of people who sit for her for 10 minutes. She charges 2 silver for a 6" x 8" portrait.

Hook: Whatever she paints comes true, and she has a compulsion to constantly paint. She concentrates on portraits to make a living, but is also trying to stay ahead of a dangerous man who discovered her curse/talent and wishes to exploit it for nefarious ends. Her personal code of ethics prevents her from simply painting him as a dead man.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A human male with a limp, wearing soiled black leathers, carrying dozens of rat skins hanging from his belt, and numerous curved daggers strapped all over his torso and limbs.

Portrayal: He moves with a furtive slouch, doesn't speak much or look people in the eye. His gaze is always darting about, alert for the tell-tale signs of recent rodent activity. He is famous as the most accomplished rat catcher in history.

Hook: He NEVER works with a partner, trains apprentices, or even allows anyone to accompany him when on the job. His secret? He was bitten by a wererat as a child, spent his puberty years as a feral giant rat, almost forgot his humanity, and now uses his supernatural abilities to help him hunt down rats, whom he collectively hates and blames for his lonely lot in life.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A rather tired and world-weary looking Human "lady of the evening."

Portrayal: Always ready to put on a smile for a potential customer, day or night, without rest or apparent concern for her own personal needs or well being. Will literally work herself into an unconscious stupor.

Hook: She was once the virginal daughter of a well-to-do merchant. After she spurned the romantic interests of a wizard, he magically cursed her with an addiction for sexual pleasures. Soon, she shamed her family and was disowned. Prostitution is her only release and means of income, thankfully she has been barren thus far (possibly part of the curse). She would be extremely grateful were her curse to be broken. She has heard a massive amount of pillow talk over the years and knows more secrets than anyone realizes, her curse has so far prevented her from capitalizing on any of it.

≈≈≈

Appearance: An old Human male with a long flowing beard, dressed in white robes, a pointed white hat with a wide brim, leaning on an ornate white staff.

Portrayal: An obviously learned man, he is often mistaken as a wizard, which amuses him greatly and over the years has influenced his style of dress. He doesn't pretend to be a wizard (too risky!), he is a simple bookkeeper, to which he will readily admit. The staff is needed, he got his right leg mangled in a cart accident as a young man.

Hook: He actually has an innate talent for sorcery, which could easily be developed with training, he simply never knew he possessed it.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A large and plump middle-aged Human woman, wearing a white cotton dress with a brown apron and matching head scarf. She is mixing a large batch of bread dough.

Portrayal: Well known as an excellent baker, she supplied fresh bread daily for over ten households and three small cafes. She is always working and always happy and smiling. She has four grown daughters who help her in the kitchen. Her husband is deceased.

Hook: The secret source of the excellent flavor of her bread is an additive to the flour: bone meal. She uses powdered animal bones (cow, pig, fowl), but began her practice of including powdered bones when her husband died of a heart attack, leaving her penniless with four small children and not enough money for even a funeral.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Fat, well dressed Human Male. Arguing with a man standing next to a cart piled high with furs.

Portrayal: A wealthy and successful furs merchant, he is well known for only selling the highest quality furs and for being extremely difficult to sell furs to if you are a trapper.

Hook: He has longed to secure a supply of owlbear furs, but due to the rarity and dangerousness of this beast, he has never been able to do so. He recently learnt of a distant valley which contains numerous owlbears. Now all he needs is a group of adventurers foolhardy enough to make him supremely wealthy.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Male Gnome Tinkerer] A gnome with brown curly hair and big, beady eyes is sitting on the ground. He has all manner of mechanical items hanging around his neck and on his head. He is fixing something in his hands, using several tools he has lying on the ground in front of him. He seems happy when he finally manages to get it fixed.

Portrayal: He is a tinkerer. He fixes things for people, going from area to area seeing if anyone has anything they need fixed. As such, he has contacts in almost every layer of society.

Hook: If the adventuring party needs information, there is a big chance he can provide it, for a fee of course.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adolescent Male Cleric Vampire Hunter] A young man with blond hair and a serious look on his face is sitting on a bench. He is wearing a clerical outfit and is reading a book. He doesn't seem to be disturbed by whatever is going on around him.

Portrayal: He is new to this place, and he is looking to aid the local church. Instead of the regular clerical weapons, he has a whip and some metal spikes.

Hook: He is a vampire hunter, and as of right now, is hot on the trail of one. His life goal is to rid the world of all things vampiric.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Male Noble] While walking on the street, several guardsmen charge passed. A young and not very tall boy is in the middle of this group of men. He is wearing a very expensive outfit and is bossing people around with a very high pitched voice which some may perceive as incredibly annoying.

Portrayal: He is the son of one of the nobles and thinks himself to be far more important than anyone else. He bosses around everyone and expects them to do his bidding.

Hook: By bossing people around, he is stepping on quite a few toes. It would be no surprise if he has already stepped on some toes he shouldn't have. However, as he is the son of a very influential nobleman, nothing bad has happened to him...yet.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adolescent Male Cartographer] A young, blond man wearing a beret and carrying a bag full of scrolls. He has a walking staff and is trying to reorganize a huge stack of scrolls, but the look on his face betrays something isn't going as he wants it to go.

Portrayal: He is a cartographer but he is terribly disorganized. He has maps of many a place, but sometimes finding out what place the map belongs to is an adventure in itself.

Hook: He wasn't always this disorganized. A local magic student with a grudge once cast a spell of befuddlement on him, after which things became much less organized for him.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Elderly Male Historian] An older but well-groomed and well-dressed man with white hair. He has a scholarly air about him.

Portrayal: He has quite a collection of scrolls about magic stored in a local library, many contain actual spells. He is willing to part with some for a steep fee. He asks a befriended wizard to recreate the scroll the adventuring party needs, which is why the price is very high. It takes awhile for the scroll to be finished, and it is not always guaranteed the scroll will have the same potency.

Hook: He has some very rare scrolls which are incredibly potent. There are plenty of people who would love to get their hands on them.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Male Caretaker/Serial Killer] A friendly but otherwise indistinct man. He is the type you would forget about the moment you walk away. His face has no distinctive features, and his clothes are rather plain. Only his voice is different, soft and friendly.

Portrayal: He helps in the local shelter, preparing the food, the beds, and generally trying to keep the shelter organized and clean.

Hook: He is responsible for the murders of several homeless women in the past year. Since they were homeless the local authorities have done very little to find the killer, and after every murder, most people simply forget and go on with their lives soon after.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adolescent Male Peddler] A scrawny man with ragged dark hair is trying to sell wares few people really need. He seems the type nobody wants to be associated with. And he smells. Perhaps amidst the rubbish is something that might be useful.

Portrayal: Having had a long streak of bad luck, this man has been forced to become a peddler, but even there he has little luck. He tries as best as he can to remain friendly but you can tell it's difficult.

Hook: Resentful and bitter about his fate, he has been secretly plotting something. In a part of the sewer under the city, he has been tending a nest of spiders, growing them by feeding them rats and potions. He intends to let them run rampant in the city once they become big and numerous enough. So far they haven't used him as a snack.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Young Male Dwarf, Prize fighter (lvl 3 Warrior), muscular build, wearing simple pants with a rope belt, no shirt or shoes. He is hopping from left to right on the balls of his bare feet, pounding his wrapped hands against his chest before entering the fighting ring.

Portrayal: Grim and determined attitude, certain of winning his next fight. He is raising funds to buy medicine for his sick mother.

Hook: He doesn't want people to know his real reason for fighting because it would conflict with his 'tough guy' image. His Mother isn't actually sick, she is being slowly poisoned by someone who doesn't want her to reveal to her son their 'big secret'.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Elderly Elven Noblewoman (lvl 4 Aristocrat) wearing brocaded finery, sniffing a lace blouse held by a merchant.

Portrayal: Haughty and superior attitude, speaks in a high pitched voice.

Hook: Has recently become poor, thanks to the poor investing skills of her older brother. She is desperate to repair the family fortunes before their reputation is damaged, willing to divulge the location of a rumoured treasure trove from the family's secret, disreputable past as gang leaders many generations ago if she can find a discrete group of brave (and dumb) adventurers willing to retrieve it for her.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Female Halfling Street Urchin (lvl 1 Commoner)] She is covered in dust and dirt, her clothes are rags of an indistinct, dusty color. She is watching a fruit merchant intently, waiting for him to be distracted long enough for her to dart forward and grab a double-handful of food.

Portrayal: Precocious and street-wise beyond her years, VERY distrustful of adults, especially non-Halflings.

Hook: Her mistrust of adults doesn't solely stem from her life on the streets. Locked away in her mind is a forgotten event from when she was little more than a toddler, when human guardsmen charged into the bedroom of her noble-born parents, slew them and would have killed her too, were it not for the family hound which grabbed her in his jaws and leapt from the 2nd-story bedroom window. He is old and lame now, surviving only because of the food she steals for him.

≈≈≈

Appearance: 24-year-old Human Male Singer (Lvl 2 Expert), wearing a costume composed of silk strips shaped like feathers. He is wooing a young and impressionable lass at a tavern with tall tales of romance and derring-do.

Portrayal: He has an over-the-top personality, prone to flowery speech and vague allusions to a highborn lifestyle. He claims he is working his way across the land, from

tavern to tavern, hoping to return to his lost love, a forlorn princess of a distant kingdom, who is pining for him to rescue her from an evil old man who has locked her away in a tower.

Hook: As ridiculous as his appearance and claims are, they are 100% true. No matter how unbelievable he sounds, he never lies and rarely even embellishes the truth. While he personally isn't very heroic, he has been witness to an extraordinary number of events and simply needs an adventuring group to adopt his cause and restore him to his lady love so he can give up his vagabond ways and return to living a life of love and luxury.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Human male in his fifties, bald, hook nose, wearing a white smock splattered in blood. He appears to be waiting impatiently for someone to arrive.

Portrayal: He is a surgeon attached to the local militia.

Hook: He is waiting for a runner with a much-needed herb for a medicinal remedy. His patient is a young nobleman from an influential family who has secretly been carousing at a gambling house owned by a rival noble family and ended up on the wrong end of a drunken knife fight with poisoned blades. The doctor is trying to keep the circumstances of his patient quiet to avoid an outright war between the two noble houses as the gambling house owners genuinely had no involvement. Unfortunately, the runner is late (drunk and robbed), the nobleman is slowly dying, and evidence after the fact will look like an assassination.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A human man with an enormous moustache, wearing an equally enormous striped top hat. He appears to be stuffing wooden toys into a burlap sack.

Portrayal: He is very jovial and only talks in rhymes, claims to be working on a secret mission for some very important people who are in desperate need of more fun in their lives.

Hook: This guy doesn't just look and act crazy, he is a complete loon. Once, he was a toy maker with a wife and kids, but "something" happened and he has gone off his rocker completely. Living in a complete delusional world, it will be difficult to even determine who he really is. He wandered from home a couple of years ago and has put a lot of distance between himself and any who knew him prior to his breakdown.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Dwarven woman, dressed plainly, shopping for fruits, vegetables, eggs, and bread.

Portrayal: The mother of four with a husband who is away for months at a time working. She is lonely and wishes for some excitement to rescue her from her seemingly endless future as housewife and a (mostly) single parent.

Hook: She believes her husband to be a simple gem merchant. In truth, he is a spy for the local government who travels to distant lands, gathering political intelligence, and engaging in highly profitable piracy for good measure during his missions.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A blind Elven woman, dressed in a green leather dress, being led through the crowds by a monkey on a leash.

Portrayal: She is a seer from a local temple. The monkey is her guardian when she is in public, leading her to and from the temple and home. She is quiet and shy, the monkey is aggressively protective.

Hook: The monkey is actually her older brother who was cursed to a monkey form. She foresaw this as a young child as her first prophecy. She recently gave the temple a vision of fiery doom for everyone at an unspecified time. In this vision her brother's true form is restored.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adolescent Male Human Peasant] Young man with blond hair and with one completely white eye. Apart from this feature he has a friendly look about him.

Portrayal: He tends a small patch of land where he has built an apple orchard.

Hook: His white eye sees supernatural things, such as spirits. At night, in his dreams, the young man sees fragments of what his eye saw that day.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Elderly Female Human Witch] An elderly woman with raven black hair and ice blue eyes. She is wearing a dark colored scarf and on her fingers she wears many rings with brightly colored stones. She is sweeping the street.

Portrayal: She is the medicine woman in these parts. The townsfolk support her and gather whatever she needs for her potions, which she makes and distributes for free.

Hook: She is the last of a line of witches. She always approaches people traveling through town to find out if there is a young girl she can pass her legacy and curse on to. Doing so involves a rather painful initiation as well as the death of a loved one.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Female Twin Nobles] Walking by are two young girls. They must be twins, for their faces are similar, but one has snowy white hair and the other one has jet black hair. They are walking together, and they are quiet. They give each other looks every now and then and sometimes giggle.

Portrayal: They are adopted by the local priest. They were found in the region surrounding the village when they were around three years old and nothing is known about their real parents.

Hook: They are able to speak to each other telepathically, something none of the other villagers can do. Only someone with the same ability can "hear" their conversations. Unbeknownst even to themselves, they are from a line of noblemen from ancient times.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Elderly Male Peasant] A grumpy old man with a big, bushy, grey moustache is muttering to himself. He is wearing simple clothes and doesn't seem to notice the adventurers, or anyone else for that matter.

Portrayal: He is a simple farmer who spends his day tending his field and his animals, and his nights at home with his wife.

Hook: Several years ago, he experienced a traumatic event that made him keep very much to himself during the day, scared. The event involves a fellow local, who has threatened to do the horrible things he saw to the old man and his wife, should he ever talk about it.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adolescent Female Peasant] A very attractive young woman in simple garments is humming a captivating melody, while tending her garden. She is growing pumpkins.

Portrayal: She has lived in these parts all her life, and leads a simple life. She is a very friendly person who is always willing to help others.

Hook: She has ambitions of one day opening an orphanage.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Elderly Male Alchemist] A short man, bald on the top of his head, hair growing wildly to all sides on the side. He has a tic. His eyes are twitchy and he makes strange noises. He is apparently talking to himself about something.

Portrayal: He has studied alchemy for a long time, and slowly but surely working with the various toxins and substances have rendered his mind somewhat absent.

Hook: He has discovered an alchemical solution incredibly effective against vampires.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Male Street Kid] A young boy in ragged clothes talks to every passerby on the street. He has a smile on his face and talks with a stutter. Most people seem unhappy to be talking to him and try to leave, after which he goes to the next person.

Portrayal: He is an orphan but has grown up to be very street smart. He manages to survive quite easily, stealing food when necessary and pick the pockets of those he talks to.

Hook: He has stolen from the wrong folk more often than he should have, and there is a price on his head. He knows quite a few secret passageways so he has managed to hide when needed.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Male Librarian] A stern-looking, well-groomed man wearing nice clothes is organizing a stack of books and writing something in an opened book.

Portrayal: He is a librarian, and is incredibly organized. He knows exactly where every book in the library is found, which means he has become very well acquainted with the local wizards and noblemen.

Hook: He is one of very few who has access to a secret part of the library, holding very special books.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adolescent Male Bard] An attractive young man, wearing brightly colored garments is drawing a crowd by playing and singing a haunting melody. Several people listening to his song are teary eyed. However, the words seem to be from a language unknown.

Portrayal: He is a traveling bard who has learned from a legendary bard the art of the magical song. He only keeps what little money he needs to survive and gives the rest to the poor.

Hook: He is from noble descent, his family has disowned him for his choice in career and his ways of handling money.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adolescent Male Guard] A rash looking man in official armor who doesn't appear very friendly. He cusses at some of the people passing by while taking their money. He kicks one of the people back and screams something while the person staggers away.

Portrayal: People needing to pass have to pay him more than normal, and he keeps the extra money for himself. At night, he likes to indulge in substance abuse and enjoys the company of various unsavory people. He also has some ties to local criminals.

Hook: Should the guard captain find out about his activities, it is almost certain he is going to be thrown in jail. He is incredibly arachnaphobic.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Male Guard] A middle aged man in official armor is giving directions to several other men wearing similar armor. Different from the other guardsmen, he wears a colored cape. He must be the guard captain.

Portrayal: He takes his job very seriously. He doesn't take to illegal activities kindly.

Hook: Not all of the men working under him take their work as seriously as he does.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Male Gladiator] In the corner of your eye, you notice a bald, very tall, muscular, dark-skinned man. He wears regular clothes, but his piercings and golden earrings don't look like they are made in this region. He is apparently in some kind of meditation.

Portrayal: He once was a gladiator in a faraway desert kingdom, fighting for his life, until he made his escape with several fellow prisoners.

Hook: Being on the last of his money, he needs to find a new endeavor with which to earn more. Perhaps he can be hired to accompany your adventuring party.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adolescent Female Rogue and Adolescent Male Lizardman/Dragonborn] You notice a fair looking short haired girl wearing brown and green colored leather equipment. She is holding a large, black staff, obviously meant for fighting. She has a street smart air about her. Accompanying her is a very big, yellow and brown colored lizardman (or Dragonborn). He doesn't speak, but he seems to understand the woman he accompanies. She is looking for something in her bag while wildly talking to her companion. He stands silently by.

Portrayal: She is a rogue, traveling from place to place in search of nothing more than adventure and treasure. By sheer coincidence she saved the lizardman's life, who became bound through his culture's honor to serve her and protect her for the rest of his life.

Hook: She can't wait to dive headfirst into a new adventure, and it is quite possible to find her wherever there is adventure to be found. Her drive could easily get her into trouble.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Male Blood Cultist] Recently, bald men with a sinister look about them have been seen prowling the streets. They wear red cloaks, seemingly from some kind of church. They wander the city, usually alone, and never talk to anyone. Their lips are constantly moving, however, which seems to be some kind of prayer.

Portrayal: While they don't seem to do any harm, you can't help but feel uneasy whenever one or more walk by.

Hook: They are part of a cult. On the outside they seem to practice a religion that doesn't seem to do any harm. They even have a small church. However, the feeling of unease most people get when they walk by is with good reason, for they are part of a cult of blood mages, who abduct people to take them to secret places to conduct terrible and bloody experiments on them.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [NG Human Old Man, Scribe] Among his thick, white facial hair, his long and brushed beard immediately stands out, contrasting the crimson and golden shades of his tunic. Above the old desk, his skinny and ancient arms can be seen scribbling in two papers at once.

Portrayal: His one major talent is the skill to write the same text in two different papers at the same time. This has allowed him to serve as the royal scribe for more than fifteen years, a job that hasn't mitigated his bad blood pressure and the nervous shivers he gets when he chats with unknown people.

Hook: Recently he has written many royal decrees with a very strange structure, or so he thinks. He believes that the King is sending a codified message, asking for help, to whoever person who may be able to aid him. It seems that a plot against his royal presence is developing.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CG Middle-aged Human, Fighter] His broad chin highlights his poorly shaved beard amid his ragged, tattered clothes. Anyone would think that he's just a beggar looking for food. He's yelling at some children who appear to be following him, with an expression between fun and laughter.

Portrayal: After several years of service in the personal guard of an influential lord, he couldn't get rid of his distrustfulness and lack of patience. Today he has a non-desired entourage of children and lads who ask him for lessons about how to fight, and that isn't helping with softening his personality.

Hook: He could get the PCs an audience with the local lord or teach them his elite guard techniques. If the PCs get involved with him, they will discover that he had to resign from his post in the guard because a guild of the realm wants to exterminate him, and that put his lord's life in danger.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young male human teacher] Thin birch rod, doublet with school crest, looking down his nose. He's wagging his stick at a group of truant school-aged children.

Portrayal: Exiled scholar, fancies himself as the keep's unofficial historian, gossipy informant.

Hook: Witnessed an act of transgression by local leader or clergy.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Middle-aged man, more-salt-than-pepper hair, callused hands, stained yellow. clothes with blotchy stains. Fussy small glasses with strapped smoked-glass goggles on his head. Wears a heavy leather apron with bulges in the front, pockets with small sealed vials within. Smells strongly of rotten eggs. Carrying a large stick. Walking down the street, looking to and fro.

Portrayal: Local alchemist, very full of self-worth and vocally dislikes anything he sees as wasting his time.

Hook: Commissioned by a noble to develop a new firework formulation for an upcoming celebration. While testing a series of formulae, his apprentice startles him,

knocks over a lamp, and sets fire to the formulations. Alchemist escapes with only minor singing, and is now looking for his idiot apprentice to punish for screwing up the experiment.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LE Male Human Cleric 12] Plain brown robe and sandals, calligraphed prayer book, saintly visage. Searching through the shelves in a ruined library.

Portrayal: Absentminded but brilliant, pauses mid-sentence often.

Hook: Researching a long-forgotten technique of summoning demons, looking for people to recover ritual components.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CN Raven] A steely eyed raven circles above, silently watching as it glides on the wind.

Portrayal: A raven of above average intelligence, keeps an eye on the goings on below.

Hook: When there's a fight and blood is spilt, the raven is quick to swoop down and grab a prize. He favours magical rings, and if he can get a finger in the deal, so much the better.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged, male, human wizard] Dressed in slightly tattered robes, the man is gaunt and carries only a satchel and staff. He's missing the ring finger of his right hand.

Portrayal: Haggard occultist. He's trying to arrange passage out of town; he doesn't mind where or who, as long as someone can take him east.

Hook: This wizard is being pursued by a powerful being who moves at normal human pace, but never sleeps and cannot be stopped or even delayed. It will claim the wizard's soul if he ever catches him due to a cursed ring; sadly, cutting the finger off a couple of years back didn't remove the curse, so he's been running ever since.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged, male, human, spy (rogue)] A tall, slender nobleman with short dark hair greying at the temples. He's missing his left eye, but his right never stops scanning the crowds around him as he leans against a wall.

Portrayal: Amiable spy-master, eager to talk to adventurers about their recent exploits. Confident, but modest.

Hook: While his role as spy-master to the ruling family is something of an open secret in some circles, his long-standing relationship with their eldest daughter is known to only a few of their closest associates.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [30s, Male, Human Ranger] A plain-looking man in leather armor of muted greys and browns, wearing a short rod of dark metal at one hip and an ornate dagger at the other. He patrols the street, walking with a pronounced limp, and examines the party briefly.

Portrayal: Gruff watch-captain. He is cold toward half-orcs and hates full-blooded orcs.

Hook: A former bounty hunter, his rise through the ranks and incorruptibility have made him many enemies in the watch and with the noble families.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Old, male, human, paladin] A smiling monk, in his later years, tending his herb garden with a set of battered tools. Beneath his robes, his body looks well-toned and he shows no signs of infirmity despite his advanced age.

Portrayal: Contented former paladin, politely evasive about his past.

Hook: Fell from grace many decades ago, retired to the monastery, but he has reconciled with his god over the years and regained his powers. He is looking for one last crusade before he dies, accepting his holy powers once more and setting out to finally atone for his sins.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A powerful mage in flowing robes, with a long white beard and piercing green eyes, drinking slowly from a beer mug.

Portrayal: He makes his living by casting small spells for various locals. He's extremely nervous.

Hook: Barely a hedge-wizard, he's terrified by his accidental and evidently permanent disguise as the Great Zuffafel, a proud and jealous wizard known for his competence with fire spells.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A crying dryad, sitting on a massive, freshly cut tree stump.

Portrayal: Dryads don't really work for a living, but she will barter her talents and knowledge with anyone willing to help her. She's very angry with dwarves but willing to talk to elves.

Hook: Her lover was recently killed while defending a tree that's being made into half of a new dwarven city's great gates. She wants vengeance.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Female Human Noble. Well-dressed and obviously once very attractive, she now attempts to cover her advancing years with makeup and elaborate hairstyles. Using a hand mirror, she nervously watches passersby over her shoulder.

Portrayal: A minor noble of a local household, the woman fears for her life and suspects a conspiracy of betrayal and murder. She would eagerly hire a brave group of outsiders to uncover the plot, regardless of the cost.

Hook: The woman suffers from paranoia brought on by the advanced use of lead-based makeups. The PCs will be sent on a goose-chase, following shadows and red herrings, until they recognize the noble's illness and save her life with a neutralize poison; or until she dies "mysteriously."

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CN Male Goblin Aristocrat 7] Fancy clothes, jeweled necklace. Furtive glances, peeking out of the upper window of his two story house.

Portrayal: Timid leader of a fractious colony, has a tough time making choices.

Hook: Has been leading a gang of thieves, but contact with an artifact has given him a conscience, and now he is trying to turn in his own gang.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [N Female Gnome Druid] Flowing green robes, with a small dinosaur following, giggles often. Sitting in middle of path chattering at squirrels.

Portrayal: Fair and level-headed, uses nature metaphors often.

Hook: Has noticed a large number of slaughtered animals, preparing for a stakeout at one of the more common kill-sites.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Teenaged boy, heavy leather apron and heavy leather gloves to match, both stained in miscellaneous colors, running down the street while glancing over his shoulder, clearly terrified.

Portrayal: Local alchemist's apprentice. Smart-assed kid who thinks he knows more than he actually does; smart but careless.

Hook: Still too young and inexperienced for delicate work (in his master's eyes, that is, but not his own!). Catches his master in a room full of sulfur and flashing lights. Now believes his master is secretly a powerful necromancer caught summoning a demon and runs, knocking over a lamp in the process.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Young goblin alchemist, burned and melted clothing. Excited, probably working on a (ready-to-explode) health potion.

Portrayal: Official Alchemist of the Town, doesn't know fear, unfortunately. Dreams about being the Official Alchemist of the King.

Hook: He once invented the remedy against a contagious magical illness. He earns his place from the town, and earns their sympathy too. He's kind and remembers well who bought what.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Old human, old-fashioned noble clothing, eyes filled with wisdom. Telling an old legend to a child.

Portrayal: Mayor of the town, conspirator, stingy, intelligent. He wants the full control of his town.

Hook: PCs, as adventurers, are a good source of money. Constantly tries to hide his political shenanigans (blackmail, corruption, embezzlement, etc.).

≈≈≈

Appearance: Only dragonborn in the town. Scales of several dark green shades, typical mercenary outfit. Brooding in a corner of the tavern.

Portrayal: He performs all kinds of dangerous and not-well-paid tasks the guards ask of him. He wants to get the hell out of here. Honorable, stubborn, good fighter.

Hook: He is unwittingly the pawn of the mayor or some other powerful noble. He accepted a job to kill a brigand who was actually a noble. Now, the mayor threatens to

denounce him. It was the mayor who hired him (through a proxy) for the murder in order to blackmail and keep his service.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Redheaded human waitress at the inn. Kind, beefy, a little naive. First seen literally throwing a bad customer out of the inn.

Portrayal: Veteran waitress, attentive to all good customers. Just wants to make people happy. Hopes maybe she'll inherit the inn from the aging owner one day.

Hook: Knows that Inila is in love with Medrash, but too shy. She bought a love potion from Muxr, an alchemist, to give a boost. But a moment of inattention and now one of the beers landed in front of a PC...

≈≈≈

Appearance: Noble and aged librarian. Quality clothing, however unadorned; monocle. Standing on a ladder, putting away a book.

Portrayal: Wants to become the Mayor of the town. He tries to find incriminating evidence on the activities of the current Mayor. Patient, paranoid.

Hook: He will remember if the PCs help him. Also trying to find out who murdered his only son. All he has is a piece of green cloak.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A worn-down woman in early middle age. A hard life has aged her severely. Chatting amiably with the local priest.

Portrayal: Nearly penniless seamstress, she contributes her meager extra pennies to the local church.

Hook: She is very well regarded by the local priest and in his confidence; she knows he's worried about hauntings but unwilling to discuss the matter, but would accept her word for adventurers.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A cheerful drunk, fat, red-nosed and smiling, with balding blond hair and shabby, once-fine clothing. Engaging anyone available in friendly bar conversation.

Portrayal: He lost 95% of his family fortune gambling and is drinking the last 5% away in hollow desperation to kill himself with drink before his gambling debts catch up with him.

Hook: He knows he's a dead man from either a knife or a drink, but he wants to retrieve his family locket so it can be buried with him. He sold it months ago in a pawn shop in the large nearby city.

≈≈≈

Appearance: An adorable female child, cafe-au-lait skin and light brown curly hair, wearing a peasant's smock.

Portrayal: Her mother is a whore and her father is missing; she plays all day, beloved by almost everyone.

Hook: Her mother (the discarded-and-forcibly-divorced wife of a wealthy nobleman) cries every night. Can they make her stop?

≈≈≈

Appearance: A henpecked, thin man leaving a house at a slow shamle, his overfed wife hurling insults from the door.

Portrayal: The local carpenter, he has the patience of a saint with everyone. He's also extremely passive.

Hook: He loves his wife dearly but over the last two years she's become very upset with him. Maybe it's a curse?

≈≈≈

Appearance: A toothless old man, sitting on a bench, leaning forward on a cane, and enjoying the sunlight.

Portrayal: A retired stonemason, He has thought deeply and worked well, and enjoys his restful twilight years.

Hook: He regrets not being able to carve statues from the six great assembled blocks above the prince's mansion. He'd like to find someone worthy of finishing that task.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Female Human Druid] Tattered clothing, rune-inscribed leather armor, has a bear as an animal companion. Erecting a stone monolith in a meadow outside the settlement, marking the center of her new stone circle.

Portrayal: Is the daughter of one of the PC's victims from a previous adventure; seeks solace from her grief over her lost parent.

Hook: Secretly soliciting adventurers to determine who slew her father, and determine what their weaknesses are.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Male Human Theocrat] Exceptionally fine clothing, large hawk nose, different colored eyes. Demeaning a barmaid for not treating him with the respect due his god-given station.

Portrayal: Is considered a spiritual leader; malicious.

Hook: Has recently discovered that his spouse is having an affair.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A giant Dwarf, with a wet shock of red hair and beard stuck to his face, sputtering and spitting water. Has just had a barrel of water dumped on him from the roof of a nearby building. Two local brothers have been tormenting him for months now, and can be heard laughing in the background.

Portrayal: An outcast, he wanders the countryside and a local village, making a living by scaring the children and elderly into giving him things, and acting coy and innocent around authorities. Very insecure, focused on survival, having given up on acceptance.

Hook: He witnessed a murder, the body being dumped, and treasure being hidden. He's too frightened to do anything about it himself. He knows who committed this murder, but is powerless to do anything about it, because the murderer has leverage over him.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Middleaged blacksmith; grime-covered, exhausted, worried; pounding glowing red metal on his anvil.

Portrayal: Friendly and dependable skilled artisan; modest.

Hook: Owes gambling debts and is working long hours in unsuccessful effort to pay them off.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Unkempt older man; wary eyes, wiry, brusque. Drinking in the tavern.

Portrayal: Down-on-his-luck prospector; secretive.

Hook: Has discovered a cave that could finally make him rich but is also home to terrible creatures he can't deal with by himself.

≈≈≈

Appearance: One-legged beggar man; filthy, sickly, hard eyed, crutch. Shouting and swinging his crutch at some fleeing kids.

Portrayal: Once proud, now losing the will to live; morose.

Hook: Was an adventurer and skilled warrior until he lost the leg.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Heavy-set well dressed woman; angry, self-assured, rugged. Arguing with the guard captain.

Portrayal: No-nonsense proprietor of general store; short tempered.

Hook: An important shipment is overdue

≈≈≈

Appearance: A blond female with a ponytail, has a really toned body. Wears faded brown leather armor. Seems to be watching people in the market.

Portrayal: A common fighter who seems to be patrolling the town as a female guard, checking out those who go in and out of shops.

Hook: Finds objects and people for other people for a price. "When it comes to business, I am loyal to the highest bidder." The PCs have something or they themselves are on her list and she's waiting for the perfect time to retrieve it/snatch them.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A middle-aged man with short messy black hair in well-made leathers, he grooms his falcon absent mindedly as he stares off in the distance from atop a wall.

Portrayal: A noble who hails from the Capital, his mannerisms betray his highborne roots but his slight smile delivers a friendly, if not tightly held to the chest, conversation.

Hook: Exiled when he sunk his rising political career in the Capital to save the shelters for the poor from redevelopment. He wants to appeal to the Stewardship of the Keep to start a shelter for the poor of the Keep but is resigned to stay out of the way of designs of powerful men. To get him to open up you just have to start talking about his falcon.

≈≈≈

Appearance: An elderly man with little-to-no hair and a black eye patch over a stretched face sits finely dressed in an open carriage studying a parchment with the attention of a marksman.

Portrayal: A keen, hawkish old man who's dismissive and curmudgeonly attitude is contrasted by his quick lively eyes.

Hook: Beneath the eye patch is a magic stone that allows him to easily determine the value of gems and minerals, even with unprocessed ore. He is looking to strip-mine the land and the competition.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A giant fat heap of a man with no hair to speak of and hands like an ogre stands in shack dressing down a deer with no regard for the blood and grease staining his clothes.

Portrayal: A butcher by craft, does the majority of the meat for the guard. He is gruff, dirty, loud, quick to anger, and stares with his cruel eyes at women the way a hungry man stares at a hog.

Hook: He came to the Keep to escape charges for murdering a prostitute with his bare hands. A bounty hunter came through recently and he was forced to kill him quickly last night. The body rests under the planks of his shop where he plans to mix in the dog feed and possibly a little filler in the next delivery of meat sausages to the guard.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Human male, mid-thirties, wearing the white clerical robes of his faith. Found writing a letter to his brother (who lives in the southern part of the realm).

Portrayal: Tries to do what is right, even though he's also swayed by politics and religious dogma.

Hook: He believes this part of the realm is far too close to a recently constructed temple of a demon-god, but his gentle reminders to the local ruler go unheard.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Venerable Male Human Crusader] Understated clothing, scar on neck, raspy voice. Telling stories of his past adventures to a group of children gathered around him.

Portrayal: He has influential allies; fought for both sides in a war.

Hook: Being hunted by his avenging cousin to punish a wrongdoing dealt to his cousin's brother.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Adult Female Human Rogue] Vigorous movements, mismatched clothing, sultry voice. Climbing a ladder to a window on the back of an inn.

Portrayal: An up-and-coming member of her guild; uses a dismissive hand wave when her beliefs are challenged.

Hook: Seeking a blue crystal chalice purported to hold the essence of divinity within it.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Adult Male Human Fighter] Whip-marked, glowing dagger, foreign heraldry. Racing through the marketplace while being pursued by the local guard.

Portrayal: Has influential enemies; really dislikes his younger brother.

Hook: Often mistaken for his younger brother, who is a daring thief with a penchant for acquiring expensive jewelry.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged Male Human Priest] Missing an eye, priestly robes, pudgy features. Drinking ale as he delivers an impromptu sermon on the sins of his faith.

Portrayal: An important member of his church; loves to drink almost as much as he loves his faith.

Hook: Secretly killed an innocent man in a dark alley last month, and is wracked with grief and shame over it.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged Male Human Pickpocket] Nasal voice, wrings hands a lot, short. Attempting to pick the pocket of a foreign mercenary.

Portrayal: Considered a talented opportunist; loyal to his mentor.

Hook: Loves someone whom his mentor despises, and is torn on how to handle it.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Male Human Scribe] Clumsy, smells of baked goods, ink stains on his robes. Carrying a basket of warm pastries and baked goods through the streets.

Portrayal: Known for his artistic ability; indiscriminate in terms of who he serves, so long as money is involved.

Hook: Has provided false letters patent for visiting mercenaries, so that they may impose on the local lord's hospitality.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged Female Halfling Minstrel] Magical ring, soft lilt to her voice, vivacious. Singing an erotic ballad of two noble lovers from an ancient kingdom.

Portrayal: Considered an expert on ancient history; seeks power over men through her flirtatious ways.

Hook: Recently discovered that a local merchant has committed a terrible crime. The merchant has put out a contract to kill her in order to assure her silence.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young half-elf woman with hazel eyes and tousled auric hair, elaborately embroidered clothing. She is smashing her lute.

Portrayal: The girl is known as the coquettish bard with little common sense, but has developed an aura misery and a bad temper as of late.

Hook: In hopes of attracting a patron, the girl has been using a petrified frog heart that is said to attract the attention of the opposite gender, but instead, it has been slowly draining her life and will to live.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A kobold with vermillion-colored scales, a head crest that shines like mother-of-pearl, and a tattered leather shawl who wears a pot on his head. He is crouching behind a barrel trying to catch an unsuspecting bird.

Portrayal: People see him as a minor nuisance who creeps about stealing trinkets.

Hook: The kobold was exiled from his tribe for being an atrocious hunter and is trying redeem himself by bringing the tribe something of great value.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A tall human male, wearing dusty riding clothes. He wears a broadsword scabbarded at his waist with an ornate handle. He is rubbing down his horse outside the stable.

Portrayal: He is a tracker and huntsman, working for the local duke. He is very stern when "on the job" although tends to drink too much and start singing of an evening.

Hook: He is tracking down a murderer that looks a lot like one of the PCs.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A chestnut-haired halfling of medium build. He wears muted colored leathers and wools (blues, browns, blacks). He sits on a bench in the market, doing his best to look nonchalant.

Portrayal: He is a thief, scoundrel, opportunist, and manipulator. He works alone, but has no problems directing others. He is personable, jovial, and has a wicked-sharp sense of humor. He is always aware of his surroundings, though he never really appears to be watching.

Hook: He often works as a job broker, giving "quests" where others do the heavy lifting. He then takes credit for the job well done, or blames the hired help for a failure. He is involved in many different plots at once, and sometimes gets caught with his hand in the cookie jar.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A gnome swarm-druid (4e D&D). He wears homespun wool clothing, patched and weathered, in a riot of mismatched colors. He seems very nervous, eyes constantly darting about, hands fidgeting, scurrying here and there. He acts very much like an insect.

Portrayal: He is an information merchant mostly, though he also protects a nearby village. He speaks very quickly, refers to himself in third-person, with many "Hmms" and "Yessssss" thrown in. As a swarm-druid, his mind is broken into thousands of individual pieces, so he appears rather insane to those not familiar with him.

Hook: He uses his ability to scatter his body and consciousness to watch everything and everyone around. He then passes on that information to those who need it. While his history is unknown, he is terrified of cats for some reason, and refuses to discuss politics.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CG Young Female Noble Bard 7] Wanders drunkenly along the street without any retinue.

Portrayal: Very rich tourist come to see a local marvel. Lost her retinue and luggage in a boating accident two days ago.

Hook: Will hire capable helpers until she can find some properly trained servants. She counts on her assistants to cook, run errands, provide entertainment, and help her out when she does something stupid while drunk. Which is often.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LG Elderly Male Cleric] Long bristly beard and worn clothes. He sits begging by the well, scrutinizing passersby from beneath bushy eyebrows with a judging stare.

Portrayal: Does not need the money he is begging for, but uses the beggar guise to evaluate the disposition of newcomers. Has a very black-and-white view on life and takes an instant liking to generous people, but those who do not give him a coin are added to his hate-list.

Hook: As most locals know, the old man has the local lord's ear in many matters. He will make life easy or difficult for the PCs depending on his first impression.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [N Male Shopkeeper Rogue] Tall, sinewy, charming fellow. Has a loyal and serious looking dog, which could be mistaken for a wolf. Convincing a customer to buy a knick-knack.

Portrayal: Runs the general store. Most of the stuff he sells does not seem new, but is still of decent quality. Buys and sells at a fair price.

Hook: Member of an illegal trading network where the members steal stuff in their local area and ship it out for sale to members in other areas. His guard dog is in fact a werewolf partner in crime.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young and pretty woman. She has long, red hair and wears a lovely dress. She has a small tattoo on her forehead. Looking at weapons in the general store or blacksmith's shop.

Portrayal: Known to be the new duke's lover. She is very manipulative and is known to swing the duke's opinion towards her. She is looking for a new sword to wear as her defensive weapon.

Hook: She is a psychic and is controlling the duke. She will try by all means to get rich and powerful so she may free her true love (by diplomacy or force), who is imprisoned in the rival country.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Strong man with shaved head. Has a series of tattoos on his right arm of places he has been. He is working frantically to open the shackles on his feet.

Portrayal: Escaped prisoner from a labor camp. Will do anything to return to his true love. Stole key and is trying to unlock his shackles with it.

Hook: He knows of an invasion force that is planning an impending attack on the city. Intends to get to his love and flee the city. Would be willing to use this information to barter his freedom.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A floating ball of yellow light. Its size is roughly the size of an average human's skull. It speaks with the voice of a young girl and is desperately trying to find someone who will listen to it.

Portrayal: Easy to excite. It tries to talk to people because it has nothing better to do.

Hook: The ball of light appeared about a month ago. It has been annoying the keep's inhabitants with its constant attempts to talk with them. Attempts to divine its origin have all failed, as have all the attempts to banish it. A skilled orator might be able to learn something about its past.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A raven-haired sorceress holding a staff taller than she is. She is wearing a dark blue dress and a lot of jewelry: on every finger there's a ring, each one with a different gem, she's wearing silver earrings, a necklace made of several large gems, and a tiara with a large gemstone in the center. Her hair is straight and very long, and despite being held up in a ponytail it reaches almost to her waist. A man is bowing and apologizing to her while she glares at him.

Portrayal: A well-known and powerful sorceress who has been living in the keep for a couple of years. She was quite a nice person and talking to her was always a pleasure, until about a month ago, when there was a sudden change in her personality. Now she is

rude, arrogant, and constantly looks down on people. Yet occasionally, she shows a little of her old personality.

Hook: There are many rumors about her sudden change in personality. The two most popular are that she has been possessed by something, or that she has been replaced by someone who only looks like her.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A bearded man returning to the keep and carrying several dead rabbits. He has a bow on his back. A nasty scar can be seen on his right hand.

Portrayal: The man is one of the best and most experienced hunters in the keep. He is quiet and tries to avoid trouble.

Hook: He is the third among the keep's hunters to get such a scar. The first one was a man who refused to drink alcohol, yet he got drunk and was killed in a brawl with several drunkards. The second one is a woman who almost never stayed at her home; now she rarely leaves her house. The bearded hunter has not shown any changes in personality yet, but it has been only a day since he got the scar.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young raven-haired human girl selling wildflowers, currently preparing a bouquet for her customer: a local maid.

Portrayal: Quiet and reserved, known for always selling fresh flowers and for being able to find and deliver a number of rare flowers.

Hook: Characters with enough knowledge about the area around the keep (or at least about flowers) may notice that a number of the rare flowers the girl has for sale do not grow anywhere near the keep.

≈≈≈

Appearance: An elderly half-elf in a tattered grey gown. He sits outside of his woodland hovel surrounded by empty shelves, muttering to himself and occasionally glaring at a steaming cauldron which bubbles over his cookfire.

Portrayal: CG Half-Elf Wizard. Once a royal wizard, now retired and burdened by a reputation for madness.

Hook: He is the last of a subgroup of elves who disappeared half a millennium ago. Since then, he has used one persona after another to manipulate events with one purpose in mind: bringing his people back.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A father and daughter, dressed in Roman-style clothing. He keeps tight hold of the little girl in the bustling city. The girl herself is casting her gaze around, eyes wide with curiosity, circumspection, or both.

Portrayal: They are travellers from a nearby region, apparently come to the big city for a festival and the opportunities it will provide.

Hook: The little girl is a powerful necromancer in disguise, herself a henchman to an archdemon. He has come to the royal capital to find a way to break the spell which keeps his master bound.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A very venerable human male in pauper's garb, having some trouble fixing the wheel of his cart, and swearing graphically at it. There is a tattoo on his left arm that is almost impossible to place.

Portrayal: The man will happily reveal that he is on his way home from market, having picked up some 'good, fertile manure' from the 'nice foreign gentleman' at the market.

Hook: He used to run a detainment camp for imprisoning, torturing and sometimes executing goblins. Since the new goblin-human alliance, he's much sought-after, and a handsome reward awaits the person who can turn him in.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young man in rather grand priest's robes. His eyes are afire with zeal as he preaches the greatness of his god in the town square. His god is popular and well-worshipped in this part of the world, but some of the things he's saying seem a bit strange, and his accent is distinctly foreign. While declaiming about one of the great virtues of his god, he points right at a member of the player party, his eyes like red-hot coals in the afternoon sun.

Portrayal: He calls himself the Hierophant of [God Name Here]. Priests of this god seem to give him a wide berth.

Hook: The sect to which he belongs is connected to several wealthy and politically inclined people, and is on the verge of being declared a dangerous and unlawful cult. These other people will stop at nothing to prevent this from happening. He may not know of these goings-on, but he knows people who do.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A teenage boy in a worn monk's habit, tonsured and weary-looking. He is sitting upon a log, apparently trying to figure out some maps. He spots the PCs and calls for assistance. Any tests for alignment reveal him to be Neutral and Evil.

Portrayal: A monk belonging to a somewhat secluded but not unheard-of order.

Hook: He is a 54-year-old man, who is doing penance for his many crimes. His god has judged that he shall live as a boy, in poverty, until a certain trial is completed, but that he may not reveal his true age to anyone. He is cursed to appear as Evil until he has repaid his debt.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Female human child, red hair in bunches, with a wobbly tooth, wearing a simple shift dress and a too-large iron pot over her head as a helmet, chasing chickens and fencing with them using a long stick.

Portrayal: 10-year old girl, out to prove herself as a warrior and as brave as "stinky" boys, headstrong and hates to back down, "espeshally to boys!"

Hook: Her sword is actually a wand, which she "borrowed" from a local wizard and can be activated if waved in the right pattern.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Sweating, overweight human male youth, dirty clothing and bad teeth. Searching amongst some sacking and calling for something with pursed lips.

Portrayal: A social dropout and street vagrant, paranoid and solitary, currently anxious and distressed.

Hook: Has lost his pet rat and only real friend in town. Knows the sewers intimately along with the entryways and exits and could lead an interested party almost anywhere undetected.

≈≈≈

Appearance: An aged samurai in shining blue and silver robes crying upon an unsheathed, bloodstained katana.

Portrayal: Sad and weary, with an almost extinguished voice.

Hook: His son had to commit seppuku due to some slander uttered by a rival courtier, who now gloats about this in front of the court. The aged samurai cannot restore the good name of his son alone.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Troll, NE, Monster] A humming troll with a gigantic club and a cart of apples hauling an inanimate elf in green clothes toward the forest.

Portrayal: Grumbling but not aggressive, curious about anything relative to cooking.

Hook: The troll wants to eat its favorite dish: roasted elf with apple sauce. It will change its mind if another type of meat is offered.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Half-Orc, Paladin, LG] In shining armor wearing the colors of the god of justice. He is giving the last rites to an elf with a sliced throat.

Portrayal: Mystic, inhabited by a strong sense of justice. He tolerates with difficulty the prejudices of other people.

Hook: His elf friend was killed by a person wearing black, unadorned clothes, who left behind a withered red rose. This flower is the mark of a devious chaotic god of vengeance. A chapel of this god is located in the nearby marshland.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Nothing; you may detect a faint magical dweomer which moves about. Occasionally a woman in the vicinity will emit an unexpected shriek and bat the air.

Portrayal: A young, male half-orc of no particular class has happened upon a ring of invisibility and is using it to indulge his predilection for ogling nubile young women of various races in the bath houses.

Hook: The perpetrator needs to be identified and stopped if possible, there is also the potential of collecting a ring of invisibility.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Middle-aged male human. Wears workmen's clothes, rough leather boots, and a wide belt and floppy hat. Sun-browned skin and rough hands. He is harried and slightly injured, mostly bruises and light cuts. He is inquiring for help among mercenary types in a local tavern.

Portrayal: A farmer with a homestead on the outskirts of the town. Matter of fact in his requests for help, and dismissive when none is forthcoming.

Hook: Kobolds have invaded his homestead and are trashing the property, stealing valuables and abusing the livestock. He's brought his family and helpers to town for safety, but needs help recovering what is left of his property.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A boy, human, servant class or slave. He is visibly frightened, with an imploring, but (literally) haunted gaze. Refilling the cups of those visiting the castle.

Portrayal: Son of a scullery maid at the castle, he is tasked with rat killing in the cellar. Normally effective in his pursuit, having had a good mentor, he's been off his game lately.

Hook: He released a ghost in the cellars when disturbing a not-obviously marked crypt. The spirit has bonded with him (against his will) and is filling his head with half-truths about the future fates of everyone he knows.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Young woman, half-elven, sorcerer. Self-possessed, competent looking, well-dressed in long, expensive robes. Mounted on a horse, she is attempting to depart the keep, but the guards are detaining her while trying to seem like they are not detaining her.

Portrayal: She is an oracle, who gathers information and intuitions from other planes. She is distant and cold, but not haughty. She is intent and focused on her professional concerns, serious in disposition.

Hook: She has recently escaped two attempted murders, aided by her craft. She learned knowledge of the duke's sordid past, and let slip a detail too many during a recent contact with him, and now the duke fears what else she may know and to whom she might reveal this knowledge.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Male human, middle-aged tradesman. Haggard, tunic is stained with the blood of others. Seems to be running from someone or trying to lose himself in the market crowd. Seems also to have eyesight problems, squinting into the faces of people as he hurries along.

Portrayal: Barber/dentist. Usually cheerful and jovial, has made an error in judgment and is avoiding those seeking to take it out of his hide.

Hook: Recently was contracted to pull the molar of a lesser noble's daughter, and managed to pull two of the wrong molars instead of the infected one.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Slender gnome with dust in his beard and on his clothes. He is politely haggling over the price of a miniature soldier with a human who has stopped at the gnome's roadside yard sale.

Portrayal: Friendly, but always aware of the value of his merchandise. Claims that this is his semi-annual sale, though he sets it up whenever someone passes by the road.

Hook: Has a stone statue of a baby that is remarkably lifelike. He claims that it can be brought to life if immersed in a magic river. He would even give it to the party if they seemed trustworthy.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A dour, elderly halfling sitting alone and flipping a coin.

Portrayal: He is a retired adventurer pining for his younger years. He is quite jolly when he has a purpose but has grown bored in retirement.

Hook: The coin he is casually flipping is worth more than most tradesmen make in a year. He is looking for a group of young adventures to take him on one last quest and is willing to pay...handsomely.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Young street urchin wearing torn and dirty rags begs for coins on the street corner.

Portrayal: Youngest child of a local noble, ran away to escape his shame after losing his father's prized falcon.

Hook: Barely visible under the rags a finely embroidered tunic (bearing his family's crest) can be seen with scrutiny. The boy will fight any efforts to return him unless he can be convinced that his father is no longer angry with him.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A distraught, well-dressed man is pacing in the street, his bodyguard stands at attention nearby. A falcon is perched on his arm and he appears to be having a conversation with it.

Portrayal: He is the lord of several nearby manors and holds a quarry that is important to the town. He is a stern but fair man and loves his family.

Hook: His youngest son is missing and he is willing to pay a handsome reward for his safe return. He has no idea what has happened to him but desperately wants him back.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CG Old Human Scribe] Elderly, unkempt white hair and beard, ink-stained fingers and blue-grey, linen clothing. Walking with a bundle of scrolls under his arms.

Portrayal: Fidgety, chews finger nails; loves to write about events and history.

Hook: Found the secret location of an ancient throne in translated scrolls, needs help to get there.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CN Female Human Cook] Large middle-aged woman, blood stained apron, matted hair. Busily buying market-fresh meat from the butcher, and ordering around a pair of kids who are carrying other foodstuffs for her.

Portrayal: Loud and obnoxious, always waving her arms around, must be in control all the time, even when drunk, which is often.

Hook: Works for one of the guild leaders, waiting to poison the keep's upper nobles when the order is given.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CG Male Minotaur Shepherd] Large, grey-haired minotaur with painted horns. Walks holding a quarterstaff, attached to it are eagle feathers and a small goblin jaw bone. Demanding a pair of ogres that they return a stolen sheep, while tapping a hoof rapidly in frustration.

Portrayal: Stern, peaceful and contemplative demeanour. Has a great love for his sheep and is prepared to break all the rules to get them back.

Hook: Believes the nearby hill ogres stole one of his sheep. They did, but can't return it since they ate it already.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LE Female Elf Kennel Keeper] Dark haired and wiry, with a large burn mark along her neck and left shoulder. She carries a number of visible blades, daggers, rapier and hand axes, and an old battered leather satchel. Kneeling between two mastiffs, petting them, while watching a someone or something through the market throng.

Portrayal: Smells like wet dog, avid dog lover, always in the company of two mastiffs.

Hook: Runs the keep's kennels, often hired by guild leaders as muscle to keep members in line or to intimidate others. Rumoured to feed prisoners and street riff-raff to her dogs.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LN Male Dwarf Chief Stonemason] Short and fat and covered in stone powder all the time. Seen yelling at masons and labourers as they work on expanding the outer walls or building a new building.

Portrayal: Jolly and merry whenever working, dislikes sloppy work and will make it known. Loves to see quality work, but it is often his own work he favors. Somewhat narcissistic.

Hook: Has been the target of several kidnapping attempts. It is rumoured he is the only one who knows the weaknesses of the keep's walls.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Woman who appears to be in her thirties, stout with ruddy cheeks. Beating a linen tunic against a rock by the stream.

Portrayal: She is a washer woman. Easily distracted from her work, since she finds it rather tedious.

Hook: If the conversation is interesting or she is flirted with, she will gladly share a number of rumors and juicy gossip about the locals.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Older woman, dressed plainly, sweeping the cobblestones on her stoop. She stops sweeping and puts one hand on her hip, the other clutching her broom as she eyes you warily.

Portrayal: She is a local commoner who produces soaps and simple salves. Quiet, keeps to herself.

Hook: She is a witch, and hates the neighborhood children. A few of them have gone missing through the years. She may have had something to do with it.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Three men on horseback, each dressed in fine tunics, swords on their hips. One is older, white bearded. The other two are younger, one tall and dark haired the other short, stout with a shaved head.

Portrayal: The older one is a knight, the other two are his squires. The knight is jovial and talkative with fighting men. The squires are wary. They are riding to fight in a tourney.

Hook: The squire with the shaved head intends to kill the knight and frame the other squire before their journey's end.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [N Adult Male Human Guard] Threadbare uniform, bags under eyes, struggling to remain awake at guard post.

Portrayal: Tired lower-middle class single man; kind hearted but short temper due to sleepiness.

Hook: Works nights as a bouncer in one of the more raucous bars, where the woman he loves waits tables. She is the daughter of the owner, who intends to marry her to his beer supplier in order to consolidate in the next generation. The brewer is known to be abusive, and the guard is trying to earn enough money to offer an attractive dowry to the bar owner. He stands guard in the inner keep, and could become a paid informant for the party if approached discreetly.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A male human priest dressed in the robes of his order: primarily white, with some red, yellow, and green. His face and head are not covered. He has short black hair and a small scar on the left side of his face. He looks tired and is currently talking to another priest. The other person belongs to the same order, but his robes show he is of much lower rank.

Portrayal: A high-ranking priest belonging to a renowned and influential order of healers. He is capable of curing most poisons and diseases, as well as healing most wounds, no matter how bad. He is a calm and reasonable person, so long as no one makes the mistake of making him very, very angry.

Hook: He travelled to the keep because he received a letter from the commander of the keep's garrison, in which the commander was asking for the priest's help with an outbreak of a rare disease. However, when he arrived he discovered the commander did not send any such letter and knows nothing about an outbreak. Not only that, but the letter is signed by the previous commander – who has been dead for years! Was it all a

prank? A mistake? An attempt to get him out of someone else's way? Or something a lot more sinister? Or perhaps the letter was written by the priest himself as an excuse to visit the keep.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young noblewoman wearing a form-fitting red dress and a white face mask. A noble is talking to her as they walk slowly.

Portrayal: The noble has been trying to flirt with her for the past half hour, but is doing such a poor job that the woman is bored half to death. Unfortunately the noble is too influential to ignore, so she's forced to listen to him. Her mask hides her bored expression. Because she is young, rich, and good-looking, it is pretty common for men to try to flirt with her. She's gotten so sick and tired of it all that she's considering going to live somewhere else.

Hook: The noblewoman wears the mask whenever she's talking to other people, regardless of where she is or who those people are. Her face was horribly disfigured during a certain incident a few years ago and she does not want people to see what she has become. However, all of her servants claim that their mistress' face is still unblemished and beautiful. They also claim the incident that supposedly caused the disfigurement never happened. Also, the main reason she has not moved away yet is because all of her servants have families in the keep. However, her patience is gradually reaching its limit.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A disheveled man with cracked and blackened hands wearing a crudely made burlap robe is shouting in the crowded marketplace about the evils of magic.

Portrayal: Unyielding and unreasonable. Magic is evil and will cause the death of the world. He waggles his deformed fingers at whomever he is currently barking at.

Hook: As children, he and his sister attended a magical arts school until his hands were permanently disfigured by his sister's incompetence with a freezing spell.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Cloaked, long-bearded, elderly gent slowly walking along a furrow of a plowed field. Every so often he stops and stares for long periods of time at the empty ground.

Portrayal: Wise beyond even his advanced years. He speaks slowly and carefully chooses his words. Once or twice during conversation he breaks down in tears without apology.

Hook: He fought in a battle on this ground long ago. It was a battle to decide the fates of gods, kings, and realms that broke open the gates of both heaven and hell. But the elderly gent is apparently the only person who has even heard of the battle, let alone participated in it.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Young adult male halfling thief. Bushy hair, patched clothing, scruffy. Fretting, looking about upon the ground and eyeing strangers suspiciously.

Portrayal: Apprentice thief. Ready smile, quick wit, nimble as one would expect, overconfident.

Hook: Has lost a stolen item, a love potion made by a particular apothecary, which he was assigned to acquire by the thief's guild, and after the guild master stressed the high importance and priority of this mission.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Middle-aged male human merchant. Skinny, lots of mileage, quality clothing, but showing wear. Operating a cart which sells good luck charms.

Portrayal: Cart-owner. Outgoing, obsequious but persistent, doesn't acknowledge when he has been turned down or rebuked.

Hook: Desperate to raise a stake needed to pay off a local protection racket who are threatening violence and property destruction if not paid.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Old male halfling farmer. Rotund, well to do, walks with a cane, has a monocle, appraising the crowd.

Portrayal: Owns and operates a large farm employing scores of halflings and others. Usually outgoing, but no-nonsense, currently distracted to the point of fumbling.

Hook: Extremely concerned about the fate of his two sons who have disappeared on some damned fool adventure. Hasn't heard from them in days, needs to hire rescuers.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Young female human child. Wild-eyed, dirty, stealing food off of a fruit cart.

Portrayal: Abandoned child. Fearful and furtive, avoiding threats to one of her class in the keep.

3 Line NPCs

Hook: Father, her only parent, was recently impressed into service in the Duke's navy, and she has no means of support or access to other family.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Young male elf woodsman. Clean, reserved, inscrutable, severe. Leather armor and equipment worn but well maintained. Watching the party with an appraising eye.

Portrayal: Bounty Hunter. Tracks down particular evil denizens of the wood who encroach upon the elven population and dispatches them.

Hook: Hunting a particularly skilled bugbear chieftain with a violent, retributive reputation. He cannot overcome the bugbear and its clan alone. He is seeking some support to assist in the hunt.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Seasoned male half-elf spell caster. Reserved, dressed in refined robes and silks, occupying a spare table in the tavern and observing the crowd.

Portrayal: An experienced sorcerer. An adventurer with a philosophical bent, curious and inquisitive, likes the thrill of delving, but has burning questions about the meaning of life.

Hook: Has heard tales of forgotten ruins some distance away, belonged to a mage who authored or collected a number of philosophical treatises and hasn't been heard from in some time. He wishes to discover the fate of the manuscripts, if not the owner.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Swarthy male dwarf merchant. Boisterous, chummy, dressed for travel and moderately armed. Clean for a dwarf. Interviewing prospective caravan guards.

Portrayal: Caravan operator. Partnered with a human who was killed on the road, took over business to support the rest of the company. Seasoned fighter and shrewd businessman. Expert at sizing up the help.

Hook: Caravan was frequently assaulted last trip from the far reaches, and much of the security is too injured or too scared to make a return trip which, despite or because of the risks was very profitable. Offering sizeable hire bonuses, which, despite the amount, may not be equal to the risks.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Grizzled, middle-aged male, human merchant. Well-dressed, but somewhat unkempt, rude and snappish. Collecting money from other people and making notes in a ledger.

Portrayal: Town bookie. Takes bets on any sort of competition, sanctioned or otherwise, and has a troop of enforcers at his disposal to facilitate collections.

Hook: Has a short list of welshers who need to pay up, and to be made to understand that one does not welsh lightly. A particularly large debt is owed by the Duke's son.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Male human, middle-aged, bald on top with ring of hair around his crown. First seen arguing with a shopkeeper about rising prices.

Portrayal: Senior librarian / book artist. Highly respected by the crown.

Hook: Has a photographic memory. Saw a written confession that implicates an important person. It was subsequently stolen/destroyed, but he can duplicate what was written.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Young, short warrior, strong arms, leather breastplate and shorts; no other clothing even in winter; long, red-brown hair. Seen entering town from the woodlands.

Portrayal: Vegetarian, secretly shape-shifts into a bear under duress.

Hook: If party attacks a bear or wears bearskin, he will either rage and shapeshift to a bear and attack PCs OR become upset and abandon the party to wander alone.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Human male, middle age, bearded, wears the fine, expensive clothing of a noble. Visiting with another noble that the PCs have business with.

Portrayal: Tough but fair, wants what's best for the realm, not that concerned about trivial matters like "the poor."

Hook: Had his wife burned as a witch a few years ago, even though she was well-liked. He persuaded a local priest to do the honors.

≈≈≈

3 Line NPCs

Appearance: [LE Elderly Male Elf Priest] Gaunt, grey haired. Holds mass every morning at his church. Standing outside, welcoming visitors; beckons the PCs to enter and be at peace.

Portrayal: Wise, calm, and quiet.

Hook: Demon worshipping cannibal.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [CN Elderly Female Hunter] Wears scale mail armor, ambiguous gender when wearing her full helmet and suit. Hawk for pet. Sending the hawk to catch a rat, which is scampering in an alleyway.

Portrayal: Daughter of barbarian chieftain.

Hook: Trying to gain honor so that her tribe will be accepted in the village.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Male Orc Commoner] Scarred face, well-muscled, tattered clothing. Bearing large bundles to market.

Portrayal: Has influential enemies; vengeful against them.

Hook: Grieves for the death of his family, which he was forced to witness while powerless to prevent it.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Female Half-Elf Sea Magus] Penetrating stare, full pouches, sultry voice. Inscribing runes upon a ship's hull.

Portrayal: An important member of her magical order; is a hopeless romantic but pretends to be uncaring.

Hook: In love with a rival sea magus's husband. Wants to inspire jealousy in her rival so that she can court the husband.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [NE Orc Young-adult Male] He lies pinned under a log fallen from the recent storm. Remains of gray war paint still cover half of his face. Broken left tusk. Dreadlocks pulled behind its head. His face contorts and re-contorts with inner turmoil, reflected also in his eyes that swirl in a changing white-gray-black-gray-white pattern.

Portrayal: Wields the crescent blade of the alpha-male. This orc was leading a scouting party to infiltrate an opposing orcish tribe before they invaded his tribe's village.

Hook: He seeks to reform his tribe's chaotic ways, and create a civilized tribe and establish trade with the human village, potentially even joining their keep.

≈≈≈

Appearance: An actor wearing flamboyant, colorful costumes and an exotic mask that hides his features acts out a story with a group of poorly trained actors on a small, traveling stage. His echoey voice and glowing red lights for eyes give every scene a sinister overtone.

Portrayal: He leads deeply melodramatic performances focusing heavily on the moral of the story. None of the actors are particularly good, but the sinister overtones of well-known, traditionally wholesome stories with decent morals greatly appeal to the younger crowd, who converge on the traveling performers in great numbers whenever they're in town.

Hook: The actor is actually a lich who repented his evil ways to a good deity and agreed to pay penance for his deeds by teaching wholesome morals and helping the people of the kingdom he used to terrorize. He is now the leader of an underground railroad that smuggles rescued prisoners out of the kingdom as part of the acting troupe.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Waving his arms spasmodically, spittle frothing from his lips, a grey-bearded man in a tattered brown robe shouts random babble at any and all passersby, but the one phrase he continually returns to is, "Seek the Center! The truth is in the Center!"

Portrayal: He is a defrocked priest of a major religion, driven to madness by the loss of his god. A well-known fixture in the city center, he has accumulated a small group unasked-for followers. Convinced he knows some great lost truth, they care for and protect him. PCs won't be able to learn anything from him, but the followers have pieced together his babblings into a coherent worldview.

Hook: On a solitary pilgrimage, he fell into a sinkhole that opened into a cave. While looking for a way out, he discovered that the world is actually hollow, and the center is inhabited by a technologically advanced race of creatures that feed off the magical energy of the surface dwellers. These creatures consumed his Essence of Magic, which enabled his connection to his God, driving him mad. By mistake, he was able to return to the surface.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Very old, former treasure hunter, male human. Rich, red housecoat, sitting in a comfortable armchair, half of his body in shadows. Drinking tea and smoking, clearly expecting the PCs.

Portrayal: Has a burn scar covering half of his face and missing a leg, both hidden by shadows. Extremely self-confident, acute observer, able to tell a lot of things about people, even if they lie. Not easily fast-talked or bluffed. Became wealthy by selling treasures found in his youth. A dragon ended his career. At this age, he has nothing to lose.

Hook: He is the only person who knows the entrance to a lost underground city, from which he retrieved a lot of treasures. The only thing he wants for this information is someone to retrieve the egg of the dragon who burned his face, ate his leg, and ended his career.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adult Male Human Blacksmith] Tall and muscular, long shaggy beard, bald, thick glasses, outworn outfit. He's smithing a tatty-looking sword without any apparent interest.

Portrayal: Very friendly, loud and strident voice, likes jokes. Eager to offer his services to anyone who enters his shop. Doesn't care about the look of the shop or its contents.

Hook: His weapons are the best in the entire realm but no one knows it because since they're really bad-looking. He is unable to sell anything, but he's too proud to drop his prices.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [40-year old Soldier, Commander Male Human] Tall and muscular, bald, strong jaw, ice eyes. Black plate armor with red cloak. Using two training broadswords to defeat one of his soldiers in a sparring match without apparent effort.

Portrayal: Commander of the keep's soldiers. Imperious, strong, and fierce character. Respected by all of his men. Hot-head if annoyed or his origins are mentioned. Will follow a PC whose intentions are noble.

Hook: Son of a dead warlord who assaulted and destroyed many cities. Before his death, a prophet told his father that his son would follow his same path; this thought haunts him because he hated his father and what he did over the years.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young human woman with bright blond hair, brown eyes, wearing brown robes with flames painted on them. She is carrying a bucket of water.

Portrayal: Invoker mage, friendly, outgoing, bit of a show off. On her way to practice fire magic.

Hook: She accidentally started a small fire in town. Since then, she was told to practice outside of town. Consequently, she will be kidnapped by local humanoids.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Middle-aged dwarf with a short brown beard, missing one ear. During the day he is working at his forge; at night he is drinking at the local tavern.

Portrayal: Weaponsmith, paternalistic towards adventurers.

Hook: A former adventurer himself; went on one adventure and had an awful experience (lost an ear and friends), returned to the keep and became a smith. Will try hard to dissuade adventurers from leaving, will even occasionally sell bad weapons to teach a lesson to a foolhardy person.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Adult human male with black hair and green eyes, wearing scale armor, carrying a sword and mace on his way to village court meeting.

Portrayal: Guard captain, gruff, all business, compulsive gambler.

Hook: The captain is a hard gambler and has acquired a substantial debt. To repay it, he sold a map of how to get into the keep's vaults to the local thieves guild. They plan to periodically raid the vault.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A confident kid wearing black robes over street clothes. He has a wand sticking out of a belt holster. Skulking about the back alleys at night, at precisely the same place and time as the PCs.

Portrayal: He is an apprentice in the local mage academy, where he's learning the ins and outs of wizardry. He often finds himself on precarious adventures with his friends.

Hook: He is headstrong and adventurous, which has landed him in trouble more than once. If he spots something suspicious, he won't hesitate to investigate.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young woman with hair so black it carries a blue sheen, which contrasts with her fair skin. She wears a sleeveless kimono-style blue tunic embroidered with a white dragon and sturdy pants and riding boots.

Portrayal: A dragon sorceress. She can call upon her dragon blood to rip her enemies to shreds with her claws and maw. While she isn't evil, she won't hesitate to tear down any foe in her path.

Hook: She once had a daughter, illegitimately fathered by a nobleman. When the girl was still young, her home mysteriously caught fire, and her daughter perished. She is sure that the nobleman caused the fire, and she seeks revenge.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A half-elf in a buttoned-up studded leather coat. He has shaggy black hair, a smirk on his face, and a katana on his back. He is being challenged to a duel by a local ruffian.

Portrayal: He is a ninja from the dusty plains. He's an accomplished thief, and he enjoys showing up his allies and enemies.

Hook: Has a collection of potent ninja tricks (feather fall, vanishing trick, shadow clone). He can leap safely from nearly any height, disappear in a flash, and summon an illusory double of himself to fool enemies.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A paladin in shining armor enters the tavern or shop. As he takes off his helmet, PCs see that he is a grey-skinned half-orc. His canines aren't excessively pronounced, and he has a strong jawline. He strides to the bar, or shopkeeper, looking for service.

Portrayal: He is a compassionate paladin dedicated to righteousness. He seeks to prove himself to those who would discredit him based on his race.

Hook: He was raised in a monastery, to which he credits his good nature. He is extremely well spoken and actually quite attractive, if one were to look at him.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A burly man in a breastplate and sturdy pants. On each arm he wears a shield, the edges of which are razor sharp. Flexing outside of the public fighting grounds, looking for a potential combatant.

Portrayal: He is an expert gladiator. He fights for fame, fortune, and honor.

Hook: Deceptively fast in battle. He uses his shields for attack and defense, adeptly parrying blows while simultaneously striking out with his bladed edges.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [LG Middle-aged Male Dwarf Aristocrat/Warrior] Battle scarred with steely grey eyes, singing crass cadence songs to his band of heavily armed men as they march down the road.

Portrayal: Quiet, but when he speaks it is with candor and confidence.

Hook: The prince of a faraway kingdom traveling in disguise. His father sent him to find his missing brother who disappeared near the PC's destination some time ago.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Garb of a city watch sergeant, walks with a slight limp, arguing with another watch sergeant who's holding a young person in shackles while the guards of both squads watch each other nervously.

Portrayal: Pleading, frustrated, on the verge of feeling hopeless.

Hook: Tired of participating in the city's corruption, this sergeant is almost ready to draw steel on his fellow watchmen who have arrested his child on trumped up charges to make him cooperate.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Mid 20's human, short-cropped blond hair with receding hairline. Unattractive with no chin. Wearing a watchmen's uniform, chainmail, billy club and longsword in impeccable condition. Stops the PCs for a minor infraction of the law.

Portrayal: High nasal voice. Always by the book, true to the bylaws and code of conduct of the city. Only sees the law, does not see the person the law is affecting.

Hook: Always dreamed of being a watchman, considers the law his life. He will die for the law, and has stood his ground in the past when his fellow watchmen have fled. Lives with mother, an overbearing woman who is always harping on his lower rank.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Middle-aged human. Bald with gut overhanging belt. Wears studded leather jacket instead of chainmail. Carries billy club and longsword. Billy club has seen much use. Harasses the PCs when they are moving through the town at night.

Portrayal: Always swaggering, thoroughly corrupt, never seen without his two cohorts. He is a violent man, but lets his cohorts do the beating. He gets in after they are done. You will pay him, one way or the other, either while you are standing or he will take it when you are down.

Hook: He has been responsible for the death of at least five prostitutes, but no one has accused him or lived long enough to testify.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A warrior in scratched but shiny plate mail marked with twin stags. Close-cropped grey hair and a flowing mustache. Leader of the caravan guard and conducts himself as if he were a knight of the realm.

Portrayal: Noble but uncompromising caravan leader. He is used to being in command and expects to be obeyed when he gives an order. The success of the caravan is his primary goal.

Hook: The area that the caravan travels in is extremely dangerous, but he does not know the nature of the threat. The caravan has a secret mission which he thinks only he can fulfill. While not evil, he is willing to sacrifice the PCs to save this mission, if necessary.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Filthy, long-haired human female (CN) in grimy clothes. Talking to herself in a public park or near a roadside, sometimes shouting at passersby.

Portrayal: She is possessed by a demon. Once a spirited midwife who reviled the unjust plight of the lower classes, this peasant recluse now “enjoys” the freedom and equality granted by her “invisible guardian” and Prince—the demon (CE).

Hook: The demon inside may stun a PC cleric or paladin by revealing a deeply painful secret that only the player and GM know. (The demon has been planning to encounter this PC for a long time.)

≈≈≈

Appearance: A snow-white alley cat with deep blue eyes follows the party, purrs, and rubs affectionately against a PC’s leg, happily taking food if offered.

Portrayal: Slips away if danger approaches, but returns faithfully to shadow a given PC.

Hook: The cat is the familiar of an albino warlock (CE) with deep blue eyes, who uses it to spy on the party since he once owned a rare magic item that the party recently acquired. He wants it back.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Stocky human male (LE) with a stout club, trashing a shop and loudly threatening the terrified owner (NE) in a crowded and seedy part of the city.

Portrayal: Arrogant, brutal, and cool, this enforcer expects no interference as he punishes the store owner for stealing from the thieves' guild.

Hook: If the PCs help him, the corrupt store owner offers them either a "hot tip" on an easy take or a valuable trinket (recently stolen and too hot to unload).

≈≈≈

Appearance: Stocky, bald human male (CG) in plain black robes, whipping up a crowd that is hurling luxury items onto a bonfire.

Portrayal: Though not sanctioned by the local clerics, this fearless and devout preacher absolutely commands the mob, urging everyone to persuade others (the PCs) to give up their luxuries.

Hook: The good preacher is in real need of bodyguards, for local nobles and many clerics wish him dead and are actively seeking mercenaries to eliminate him.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Tall, bearded human male (LE) in rich jewel-bedecked raiment, flanked by bodyguards (LN) and servants, smugly supervising the whipping of a commoner (NG) in a crowded plaza.

Portrayal: Arrogant, paranoid, and sadistic, this newly crowned noble will do anything necessary to establish his authority with commoners and nobles alike.

Hook: When the guard commander (LE) randomly selects a PC from the crowd to hold up the "criminal" so that he can endure the rest of his beating, does the PC comply or risk the wrath of this ruler?

≈≈≈

Appearance: Muscular human male (CE) on a deserted city street, dragging a body-sized bundle to an open sewer grate at night.

Portrayal: Abused and orphaned as a child, this quiet paranoid psychopath will kill without hesitation if threatened or scrutinized.

Hook: The current victim, a young nobleman (LN) who is still alive, is to be fed to sewer rats at the behest of the killer's sole employer, a powerful city magistrate (LE).

≈≈≈

Appearance: A man in simple clothing with a cart selling fresh baked bread and rolls along side the road. The amazing smell of the baked goods draws you towards his cart.

Portrayal: He is the local baker, known for his jovial and good natured attitude, and more than happy to offer a sample of his fine baked goods. Has an unusual tattoo on his head is partially concealed by his hair.

Hook: He does not know much about the tattoo, nor can he recall how he obtained it, explaining that it was probably the result of some night of drinking during his youth (all true, as far as he knows/can remember). A successful magical/arcane lore/knowledge check will recognize that the tattoo is a powerful magical symbol, and it will also detect as being magically active (powerful). Options: The tattoo could be some sort of magical restraining device, suppressing the actual knowledge and powers of the baker, or perhaps it was placed on him to protect and hide him from those hunting or wishing to kill him. Who is the baker, really?

≈≈≈

Appearance: A one-armed, dwarven smith has a simple-looking clamping device strapped to the stump of his left arm. He is working at his forge and wears a soot-covered leather apron with his reddish brown beard tucked behind it. His clean-shaven head is streaked with sweat and soot. He deftly uses his constructed arm to hold the metal that he is working (instead of the standard tongs). His precise, rhythmic movements, combined with the melodious sound of his hammering, is mesmerizing as you watch him work.

Portrayal: He will gladly talk about his trade and any of the crafted items hanging about his smithy (he crafts very fine armor, weapons, and a number of fine metal items, including some clockwork items). However if the conversation drifts towards his lost left arm, he gets testy, and persistent questions result in the offending party being thrown out of his shop.

Hook: Those watching him for any length of time notice that he swaps out a number of different attachments intended for smith work. He can craft mechanical replacement limbs, small clockwork devices (some of which can be seen hanging amongst the weapons and armor in his shop), and exceptional thieves' tools.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Dirty, scraggle-haired half-orc. Won't look anyone in the eye. Cringes at sudden movement but has lightning reflexes. Assistant to builders, digging a hole for a new well.

Portrayal: Escaped from a nearby orc encampment after years of slavery and mistreatment due to his half-breed heritage. He appreciates kind treatment.

Hook: Taken to the pub by the builders, he is mesmerized by a knife-throwing demonstration. Shocks everyone when he grabs one out of the air. He clearly has unrecognized potential.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Lanky, smiling teenager with chainmail and an oversized 2-handed sword. Outgoing but dumb. Currently bragging to locals at the tavern.

Portrayal: After failing out of both school and his father's milling trade, he has had enormous success as an adventurer by striking first and asking questions later.

Hook: Bragging to the locals at the pub about how he "cleared out" a bandit hideout, he doesn't notice that several around him sport a tattoo of a broken sword on the back of their necks, the sign of the bandit gang.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Wide-eyed child of about 7, stares without looking away. Sits at ruins of waterfront and sketches for hours in a crude book.

Portrayal: A particularly bright child, bored with school, he'd rather hang out with the craftsmen and bluntly offer suggestions for improvements from his sketchbook.

Hook: In the morning while out for a walk or errand, a PC finds him curled up, asleep, with a wolf keeping him warm.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Outgoing, self-sufficient girl of about 10, learning that eavesdropping can be very profitable. Excellent climber, she's eating her lunch up high on a wall without handholds.

Portrayal: An orphan who has perfected the art of "acquiring" what she needs. Recently befriended the town healer, which has given her stability, if not a moral compass.

Hook: Earlier today she witnessed the upright shopkeeper and city councilwoman knife a mysterious newcomer to death. The body remains in his hotel room, but will likely be discovered soon.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Half-elf gardener. A tall, thin, pale woman who always wears a hat. Tending the healer's herb garden with care.

Portrayal: Prefers taking long walks in the woods to being in town. Avoids crowds. Loves birds.

Hook: Recently found a woodcutter unconscious and bleeding from what seemed to be an accidental strike to his leg. Seeing the gouges he made on a large tree, she hesitates to help him. He died, and later, the community mourned his loss. Now she questions her judgement in all things.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Middle-aged gnome alchemist with green-black hair, greenish tinge to his skin and green hands. Wears leathers with green moss growing on it. Has a bandolier of vials and belt covered in them, and wears a large backpack.

Portrayal: Inquisitive, always gathering things and placing them in vials or bottles, not always obvious what he is gathering. Could be as inconsequential as lint, bugs, hair, nail pairings. Writes labels on the bottles. Always has something of interest in his bag. "I've got some of that! Just a second!"

Hook: Always lost somewhere dangerous, but never really concerned. PCs can run into him anywhere gross or dank. He is always on the hunt for something gross or dangerous to add to his collection. "Otyugh Bile! Need some of that!"

≈≈≈

Appearance: Elderly, rotund human rogue with a large belly riding over his belt. Dresses in voluminous clothing, usually with a purple sash. Has a red face, with many broken blood vessels in his nose, which has prodigious hair. Loves hats with large feathers and carries a jeweled rapier. Approaches PCs to join his revelry, especially if they display wealth.

Portrayal: He is a heavy drinker and partyer. Loves the finer things in life, but always tries to get someone else to pay for them. If forced to pay, will admit he is broke. Will pawn his rapier if forced to. Loves the ladies and rarely sees any physical flaws they may have.

Hook: Maintains, in confidence, that the "lord" is not a lord at all. He is a pretender to the throne, and this guy can prove it.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Middle-aged half-orc fighter. Very human looking, but has the features (greenish tinge to his skin and very small tusks). Dresses in browns and much-mended clothing. Wears chain shirt and carries a halberd and an axe on his belt. Has scars across arms, legs, and face. Currently fading into the background while watching over his master at a social function.

Portrayal: Quiet and polite. Never drinks and is never far from his master. Tends to stay in the shadows near his master.

Hook: He is his master's protector and watches over him during his revels and backs him up when things go badly. He was saved by his master while being tortured by other youths, and has devoted his life to protecting the nobleman. Remarkably intelligent but tends to hide for the sake of his master, for whom he pretends to be dumber than he is. Needs to be convinced of his true worth.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Middle-aged human, salt and pepper hair, parted in middle, cut short. Attractive, permanent five o'clock shadow. Dresses in chain mail, carries billy club and longsword and wears a woman's necklace.

Portrayal: Gruff, matter of fact. Scratches his scruff while thinking. Never in a hurry, takes his time administering the law, never jumps to the first conclusion. Pragmatist.

Hook: Formerly guildless or homeless himself, has a soft spot for the downtrodden. Spends one day a week helping the poor at a soup kitchen. Always tries to redeem someone if possible, but knows quickly when someone isn't worth the effort. Made a mistake once on a case and has never forgiven himself, wears the woman's necklace as a reminder.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Kobold Cleric of Pelor] A twitchy little lizard man with peeling red skin. He wears tattered Pelorian vestments, covered in various trinkets and a pair of dark goggles. Currently running an errand for the local temple, delivering a package to a shopkeeper.

Portrayal: Reluctant follower of Pelor. Loves his new ability to blast undead, but struggles with being good. He is shunned by many clerics and lives in secluded quarters filled with various objects that he swears he doesn't remember obtaining (stolen).

Casting light-based spells still hurts his eyes, and gives him wicked sunburn, hence the goggles.

Hook: Lone survivor of zombified kobold tribe. Joined the Church of Pelor because the sun worshippers were the best at fighting undead.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Dervish Chain, Insane Human Warrior, Mid 30's] The man is a menace, a terror of sand and blood. His hair is black, tied into dirty dreads and his eyes are deep brown. He appears to be about 30 years of age and most of him is covered by a brown hooded dishdasha. The robe is a little too large for him, it covers up cursed chains that run up both his arms to the duel grapplers connected at his wrists. Stands at the local fighting grounds, offering an open challenge to fight any one or two people to the death.

Portrayal: He is a killer. He does not care for glory or fame, only blood and the will to travel.

Hook: This man has an enchanted weapon (the chains) that allows him to mentally guide his grappler attacks as if they were his arms. Using them has driven him quite mad and he wishes to find someone who can kill him. The weapon is also cursed and refuses to let him die from hunger or age.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Old street urchin with mismatched clothing that is oddly sized and dirty. Lording over a group of young children, talking to them and pointing at a nearby merchant stall.

Portrayal: Telling stories, asking the children questions about local merchants.

Hook: Actually a royal spy investigating merchants who are not paying the King's taxes on goods.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A wayfaring man, well-used traveling clothes, a walking stick of foreign, dark wood and a broad hat. Bartering with the shop's proprietor about the value and validity of the oddly shaped coins on the counter.

Portrayal: He is a pilgrim of a small religious sect looking for a lost holy site rumored to be in the area. He will gladly hire a group of PCs to help him find the site.

Hook: He comes from several countries away and can relay lots of information about the lands he has passed through. If he can find the holy site and perform a small ritual,

he will be blessed by his god, who will increase the pilgrim's power. Whether he is a priest of good or evil is up to the GM.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Young guardsman wearing a clean, crisp uniform, all gear is well-oiled and spotlessly maintained. Strutting, chest puffed out and smiling wide at a few of the washing girls drawing water at the well.

Portrayal: Respected by his peers, a brave and good guardsman.

Hook: He disdains the company of women, but acts out a macho persona to hide the fact that he is with one of the lord's sons every night.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Washing women wearing modest, clean clothing, repaired but with skill. She tries to use her hair to cover a burn scar on her face. Cleaning linen and bed sheets from the inn, which have an inordinate amount of blood stained on them.

Portrayal: Keeps to herself and is either painfully shy or hiding something. Doesn't like being flirted with.

Hook: She is hiding her child, a bastard son of a noble. The child, like his father, has an unnatural love of fire and causing pain in others. The blood in the sheets is from a dog that the child ripped apart with his hands.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young human boy, disheveled and sniffing back tears. He is approaching a rough looking group of people.

Portrayal: His older sister (his only living family) was recently kidnapped and he's looking for help to get her back. All he has to offer for payment is his father's dagger, which is said to be magical.

Hook: His sister was kidnapped to be sold as a slave or for use in a dark ritual (GM's desire). The boy is actually quite brave and will grow into a strong adventurer, but right now he is just scared, alone, and worried about his sister.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A young human noblewoman woman, accompanied by a maid and bodyguards. She is looking down sadly as the maid sneers at her.

Portrayal: The young woman is being delivered to a carriage that will take her to the next country for an arranged marriage.

Hook: She has a secret. She is actually a commoner forced to take the identity of the real noblewoman and be married to a man the real noblewoman hated. She is afraid of what will happen to her if the groom ever figures out the switch.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Tall Tiefling with a huge claw scar on his right cheek. Has long and black beard and hair and an eerie look to his sharp eyes. He wears a black leather overcoat and carries a katana. Throwing daggers hidden in his clothing. In the tavern, watching a merchant from across the room.

Portrayal: He's an assassin-for-hire who acts on his own judgement. The merchant is his target, having been hired by an evil rival. He is definitely not sociable, preferring to always keep his distance.

Hook: He considers himself the judge of life and death. Before killing a target, he asks: "What's your story?" If he believes the target does not deserve death, he does not deliver it. Instead, he makes a remarkable change in the person's appearance (cutting hair, beard, or leaving a scar), and tells them to start a new life under a new name in a faraway place. If they do not, he comes back and finishes the job, because defying the judge is a good reason for death.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Short, 14-year old male with short brown hair and green eyes. His youthful appearance is quite remarkable and he has an innocent air. He is a happy person, almost always has a wide smile in face. Usually wears simple farmer clothes when at home, and hide armor under a dark green cloak when out in the woods or for any "professional" meetings.

Portrayal: The only son of his small village's protector, a ranger. Shows a lot of skill and talent, but is still in training to become a ranger. Despite being excellent, he's always unsure of himself and hates to be mocked, especially about his height. Loves to make fun of tall people banging their heads against branches or having trouble sneaking in the woods.

Hook: If he does something to prove his ability once and for all, such as getting involved with PCs on an adventure, his father praises him, and gifts him his own bow and a gold amulet. The next morning, his father is found dead in the middle of the house with a strange symbol marked on his back. The boy seeks out anyone who might have information about the death of his father, and turns to the PCs for help. He blames

himself, and has to take on the responsibilities of being the village's ranger despite his age.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A dark and very hairy man with long canines and yellow eyes. He wears a crudely made deerskin jacket and trousers, sewn with tendons. Carries a deer over his shoulder and has a bow strapped to his back. He approaches the PCs when they are camped in the wilderness.

Portrayal: Werewolf scout. Overly friendly, but has poor language skills and interjects grunts and whines into his speech. He offers to trade his deer for a dagger or sword, but will accept anything really. Female characters get entirely too much attention as he literally sniffs them and salivates.

Hook: the full moon is tonight and he will change. His pack has driven away all humanoids from the area, so he is here to scout out the party's defenses before they come.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Female Elf, mismatched clothes, frazzled hair. Searching her pockets and the ground for something.

Portrayal: Aloof, barely present. Distracted by the loss of her ring.

Hook: This elf has lost her ring of competence, and her reputation as a master rogue has suffered because of it.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Male Human, heavy build, disfigured face, basket of flowers. Standing in front of a recent grave in the criminal's cemetery.

Portrayal: Executioner, timid, simple.

Hook: Had to execute a dear friend who committed a heinous crime. Torn between swearing off killing people or getting revenge on those who forced him to slay his friend.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Male Human, attractive noble. Looking at expensive art at a gift shop.

Portrayal: Cocky and arrogant, self-entitled, terrible coward, smitten.

3 Line NPCs

Hook: New (wealthy) neighbors are rumored to be parents to the fairest maiden in the land, he and is determined to win her hand in a dowry contest her father is hosting.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Male Human, unattractive commoner with decent build. Glaring at a man who is purchasing an expensive gift for a woman.

Portrayal: Timid, clumsy, terrible coward, smitten.

Hook: New (wealthy) neighbors are rumored to be parents to the fairest maiden in the land, and is determined to win her hand in a dowry contest her father is hosting. He is poor, but has an ancient treasure map. He needs a group of treasure hunters to help him retrieve the treasure.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Male Goblin, dirty, ugly nose. Purchasing spell components.

Portrayal: Polite, well-mannered, flowery speech. Intelligent.

Hook: The ex of a wizard who became upset with him when he mentioned her nose was her least attractive feature (she'd asked for it). Wants to make it up to her by bringing her an exotic gift, preferably a magic item.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Female Human, well-dressed for high sex-appeal. Flirting with travellers at the tavern.

Portrayal: Dainty lass, somewhat naive, flirty. Hungry eyes.

Hook: A cursed woman who must devour flesh to retain her beauty. She preys upon travellers passing through town. Claims she's just a lonely widow looking for company.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Male Lizardman, chieftain, green and brown scales, missing an arm. He and his two followers are step out of the brush as the PCs are coming down the trail or road.

Portrayal: Short-tempered, leads and is protective of a small band of loyal lizardmen.

Hook: Overthrown from his chieftain position in the tribe and lost arm in process. Seeks to reclaim his authority and honor by proving that the usurper is scheming with

an evil witch in the swamp. Needs the PCs help in distracting the witch while he retrieves proof from her hut.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Male Human, scrawny, 5 o'clock shadow, richly clothed. Friendly toward nice-looking PCs, buys rounds for the group very generously and invites them to a party at his home later that night.

Portrayal: Partier, charismatic, generous.

Hook: Self-made man caters to clientele with rich, exotic and taboo tastes. The individuals he so generously buys drinks for are his product. He will invite them to his home, promising an raucous party, drug their drinks and imprison them so that his clients can indulge any taboo or sadistic pleasure.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Male Orc, menacing, villainous face, satchel on back. Walking through the village marketplace.

Portrayal: Gentle, soft-spoken paladin of <insert good/sun deity>. Always sowing seeds out of his satchel.

Hook: Planting sunflower seeds wherever he goes as a sign of his deity's kindness and providence.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Male Elf, simple robes. Seeks audience with a wizened-looking PC wizard.

Portrayal: Bit of a social recluse, short fuse, very interested in curses.

Hook: This wizard is seeking a means to end a magical curse over his lover, though few have ever even heard of the curse.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young CN Halfling Tinkerer] Purple bathrobe, gold trinkets, short brown hair. Playing with a small box.

Portrayal: Verbal fillers, speedy mouth, of no help, offers to sell "magic" toys, changes subject.

3 Line NPCs

Hook: Believes that he cannot use magic, and pretends his goods are magical (which they are). However the magic fails after a day or two and others in the village are planning to run him out of town, and will without PC intervention.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Middle-aged Male Human] Medium height, silver hair with dark streaks wearing a cloak that once may have been dark blue. Simple oaken staff. Sprawled out on a bench, idly watching people in the crowd while sipping from a flask.

Portrayal: Headhunter (recruiter) for adventurers. Brokers deals and gets a percentage. Still looking for that big score.

Hook: Recently heard from a reliable source of newly discovered dungeon, and will sell this info to the PCs for a modest fee. He sold this same info to two other groups of adventurers yesterday, so the PCs will encounter other groups in the dungeon.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Young Adult Female Halfling] Blonde hair, standard height, extremely cute, bright smile. Wearing a bright blue dress with daisies.

Portrayal: Currently negotiating with a known local pimp.

Hook: She is a novice sorceress necromancer looking for blood for spells.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adolescent Male Half-Elf] Withered arm and leg, dressed poorly (but not rags) with a begging bowl in front of him. Negotiating with the town Watch.

Portrayal: Under the guise of asking for charity, will try to engage PCs in conversation about their latest or upcoming exploits. Says he craves the adventuring life, but alas, is not able.

Hook: Rogue who is watching the street for marks (victims) for his guild. Also looking for any salable information. Withered arm and leg are mostly fake with a very minor cantrip level illusion.

≈≈≈

Appearance: [Adolescent Male and Female] Both medium height, dark hair, wearing good quality but older clothing of the merchant class. The male has red mottling on his face. While walking down the street slowly, the male suddenly collapses. The female looks distraught and attempts to pick him up but he is too heavy for her to do anything other than drag.

Portrayal: The boy has collapsed from stress and hunger. The mottling is a birthmark but looks very similar to a highly contagious local plague.

Hook: The father of the children has just been jailed for debt and his wagon confiscated.

≈≈≈

Appearance: A tall, seemingly middle-aged male human, wearing but a simple leather tunic. He appears to be just another man, but on second glance his eyes meet with yours, and you can see that they are hard and full of deep sadness or regret. He is currently stopping up traffic on the main city road while repairing the wheel on his wagon, which seems to be very old and worn.

Portrayal: Likable and talkative, but there seems to always be something else on his mind. Right forearm is badly scarred, he hides it under a leather gauntlet that suspiciously feels like a very hard metal.

Hook: He guarded caravans on their trips across the desert long ago, until something went dreadfully wrong. He is very skilled with the bow and sword, although you would not realize it at first glance.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Slight, human male, rumpled clothes, sleepy-eyed and tufted hair. Standing outside of his home while an average-looking man yells at him.

Portrayal: Cynical. Get them before they get to you.

Hook: The man is fingering the knife in his belt and keeping the visitor engaged as a street rat cuts the visitor's purse.

≈≈≈

Appearance: Female human priest wearing brown and grey robes and the holy symbol for the god of roads/travel. She appears to be an unassuming, kindly old woman with a knowing glint in her eyes and smile. She would be unremarkable apart from her skin, which is entirely made of stone. She is currently offering a blessing to two large, hooded figures at the North end of the village.

Portrayal: Wise and matronly human priest of good breeding who makes it her business to see all those entering/leaving the village. She is warm, considerate and welcoming, if a little tight lipped. It is said that her birth was blessed by the god of roads/travel, resulting in her stoney skin.

Hook: Is really an intelligent earth elemental and a member of a thieves' guild in the capital city. She guards the guild outpost, harbouring thieves on the run or goods to be fenced. She is currently waiting for a large shipment of weapons and armour to be collected.

Want to Chat?

Thanks very much for downloading this ebook. I hope you find it useful and inspirational for your games!

Don't forget to register it for free updates and the cool little bonus I'm working on for you:

<http://roleplayingtips.com/register-3LineNPCs>

And if you ever want to chat, I'm available at:



<http://www.facebook.com/ILoveGameMastering>



<http://twitter.com/JohnnFour>



<https://plus.google.com/u/o/communities/115293460193268073217>
(Game Master Tips Community)