

50 BAR ENCOUNTERS

an Animalball Games product

What you hold in your hands right now is 50 great ideas. We're not into giving you pages and pages of stats (although we've got some stats in here). We're not looking to design you a whole world or shape your campaign (although there are a few great plot hooks in here). What we're about is fun. All we want to do is inspire you. So we give you *50 Bar Encounters*.

A group of adventurers walking into a bar is one of the most common events in a D&D game, so here's a way to dress up a few of those moments. Some of these may come and go without incident, your players barely noticing anything amiss. Others may lead them on wild goose-chases or personal quests that last for months. But most of them are just a way to liven things up and add a little challenge to an otherwise mundane event.

And while *50 Bar Encounters* might look a lot like an old style random encounter table, it's not really. These are intended as inspiration to a DM, and many (if not most) of them, require at least a little bit of thought before just dropping them into a game. So browse these at your leisure. Use the ones you like and scoff at us behind our backs for the ones you don't.

Reading the Entries: We've tried very hard to keep the statistics to a minimum. This is more about the concepts than the numbers. Unless otherwise noted, any character mentioned who has a class uses the stats for their class/level listed in the Characters chapter of the DMG. If non-human, then use those same stats with standard modifiers applied for their race and scaling of weapons according to size.

Monsters, spells and magic items listed without reference are those from the d20 System Reference Document. We will note the source if they come from somewhere else. All monsters use their default stats from the books unless otherwise noted.

Scaling and Adapting Encounters: We can't say it often enough: these are only for your inspiration and nothing more. Adapt or change these encounters in any way you see fit to suit your own game. If you want the racist trapper to be an elf, go right ahead. If you think the drunken orc should be armed with a magic sword, then do it. If you need to double the number of foes or raise or lower levels to make the challenge appropriate to your group, we welcome that. We just want you to have fun. We don't list any challenge ratings on any of these, because we don't use them ourselves. So make them your own and assign ratings as you see fit.

We hope you enjoy these as much as we have.

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1. The Angry Kobold: While the players are in the bar, among the other patrons they will notice a group of three drunken and brazen kobolds who are repeatedly slapping each other, insulting one another's heritage, and then proclaiming their love for their brothers while they try to kick them in the groin— in other words, three really rowdy drunks. But the kobolds will limit their antics to each other, and if asked to hold down the commotion, they will oblige.

After several minutes, the front door will bang open and the largest kobold anyone has ever seen will charge through the door. Krek is approximately seven feet tall and literally bursting with muscles. He is unarmed and will immediately stride over the table of kobolds, who are now quiet and dumbfounded, and will immediately pick one up and throw him across the bar while shouting, "How do you like it?" Turning to the next kobold, who is still paralyzed with fear, Krek will also pick him up and throw him across the bar onto the players' table, shouting "Not laughing now, are you?" If he hasn't been accosted yet, he will pick up the third and throw him across the bar yelling, "You... don't... mess... with... KREK!" Each of the kobolds will pretend to have been knocked unconscious from the throw, although none of them were. If no one has stopped him, Krek will then storm out of the bar and run down the street and through a series of alleys to his home. If someone does try to stop him, he will defensively push them away and then try to make an escape. He will not harm anyone other than to throw around the three other kobolds.

Krek is a lifelong friend of the other three kobolds, but the drunken antics got too rowdy and when all three of his friends slapped his face simultaneously (prior to the party entering the bar) he snapped and stormed out of the bar. He took his grandfather's magical sword (a +2 frost sword which Krek never learned to properly wield or appreciate) and traded it to a sorcerer acquaintance in return for an Enlarge and Bull's Strength spell. Still drunk, Krek simply wanted to pummel his friends, not realizing he dramatically overpaid for the spell effects. For simplicity's sake, use Hobgoblin stats for Krek's stats while enlarged. Both spells will fade ten minutes after he enters the bar.

2. Be Careful What You Wish For: When the players walk into the tavern they see an incredible commotion occurring. Everyone in the tavern, including the bartender and waitress, are gathered around a table near the center of the establishment. Sitting at the table is Joshua, a farmer from the area, and his two drinking buddies, Sachel and Miche. Most remarkable, however, is that in the center of the table is an open bottle of rum. While the rum isn't that remarkable, the giant fiery Efreet hovering over the bottle is truly astounding. While certainly awe-inspiring, the Efreet is clearly bored and looking patiently at Joshua. Joshua, in turn, is deep in thought and is obviously having an internal debate about something very important. Sachel and Miche are furiously talking under their breath to Joshua, but the party can't make out what they're saying over the shouts of the other two dozen people crowded around the spectacle. The crowd is shouting things such as, "King Joshua! Now doesn't that have

a ring?” and “A thousand, thousand gold! Enough gold to buy all the jewels in the king’s ransom!” and “Immortality, you fool! You know it should be immortality!”

An hour before the players entered the tavern, Joshua bought an entire bottle of rum to celebrate the memory of his father, who died from the Black Breath illness last week. He, Sachel and Miche were planning to have an impromptu wake. But when they opened the bottle, the giant Efreet appeared, announced that his name was Nicholai and that he would grant Joshua three wishes. Believing the entire thing to be some kind of elaborate illusion and prank, Joshua flippantly said, “How ‘bout you pay my bar tab?” Instantly six gold and seven copper appeared on the bar. The bartender even let Joshua handle and bite the gold pieces to prove they weren’t more of some elaborate illusion. Convinced that he still had two wishes (and no bar tab), Joshua has been deliberating his options for the last hour.

If the players ask anyone in the crowd, they will discover that Joshua is currently leaning toward wishing that his father was still alive, but is worried he’ll come back as a zombie or will only come back to life to die in a day from the same disease that took him the first time. The Efreet has assured him that he’s not interested in tricking him or teaching him some “life lesson,” and it really just wants to get the wishes out of the way so he can leave. The Efreet has already rejected Joshua’s second wish of “ten more wishes.” If the party asks more questions, they can discover that Sachel is encouraging Joshua to pick one of two wishes: (1) Joshua’s cellar full of gold pieces; or (2) the ability to read minds. Miche has taken a more practical approach and wants Joshua to wish “to know what his third wish should be.” Miche’s idea is that if Joshua doesn’t know what to wish, he should burn the second one to find out what the best wish should be.

This discussion will go on for another four hours, with Joshua swaying back and forth between his father, the gold or immortality. At the end of four hours (if the players are still around, even though they can’t get any service), Joshua will finally decide that Miche is right. Joshua says, “I wish to know what my third wish should be.” The Efreet will immediately answer in a very rapid voice, “You should quickly wish to move out of the way.” Joshua looks confused at this and says, “What does that mean, move out of...” At this instant, one of the main support timbers of the taverns falls down, finally succumbing to shoddy construction. The timber falls squarely on Joshua’s head, killing him instantly (and knocking Sachel unconscious next to him with a glancing blow). The Efreet then disappears back to the elemental plane of fire.

3. The Bickering Blade: A lone traveler, still wearing his traveling cloak and coated with road dust, sits at a table alone. He has been drinking for some time already. He has two blades in scabbards strapped across his back in an X. One is a high quality shortsword, and the other is a scimitar with an ornately carved hilt that ends with a stylized brass weasel head pommel. The weasel head pokes up over his left shoulder, and as he drinks, the traveler constantly turns to speak in loud

exasperated tones to the weapon. The patrons near him are trying to maintain decorum, but it is very hard not to steal an occasional glance at him. Anyone venturing close enough will realize that this is a two-way conversation. The carved weasel head is animated, and the scimitar is bickering back to the man, albeit neither so loudly nor so drunkenly. Clearly the two are in a disagreement over whose fault their last disastrous battle was. It seems that several ogres were involved, as well as a maiden in need of rescue who was trampled to death by said ogres. Needless to say, no reward was forthcoming.

The man is actually a half-elf named Jeth. He is not averse to company, but it should be clear to anyone joining him that he treats Wormbane, the scimitar, as an equal partner. The two will snipe at each other constantly, regardless of the topic.

Stats: Jeth is a 6th level ranger. He is Neutral Good. He carries a +1 shortsword and Wormbane as his primary weapons.

Wormbane is an enchanted +4 intelligent dancing scimitar. Int 9, Wis 6, Chr 7. It is Chaotic Neutral and claims to be the work of Chahaska, the dark slaad lord. Despite its seeming power (+4 and dancing), Wormbane is a difficult weapon. It is extremely cowardly, yet it likes to talk itself into situations that Jeth then has to get the two of them out of. It will hurl insults at any perceived slight or challenge. But then if combat seems imminent, it will use its dancing ability to attempt to fling itself from its owner's grasp and scurry into hiding while screaming in fear. Holding onto Wormbane in this situation requires a Str check at DC 16. The owner gets a +8 circumstance bonus if prepared for Wormbane's tantrums. Wormbane's tantrum also causes a -4 penalty to attack rolls. If it has failed to escape after 2 rounds, Wormbane gives up and acts as a normal +4 scimitar. Under no circumstances will Wormbane use its dancing ability to actually fight independently. Due to their long association and familiarity, Wormbane's tantrums are less common with Jeth, especially if the odds seem to be in their favor.

4. The Boldest Heist: While the players are in the bar, a group of three drunk, rowdy rogues who have been in the bar too long (and consumed too much ale) are being kicked out of the establishment for harassing people and being generally drunk. Jahn, Marshal and Dael are three local halfling ne'er-do-wells who often get drunk and cause trouble. All three are first level rogues. Today, however, they imbibed far more to celebrate a new acquisition they thought was going to make them rich. Earlier that week, Dael's uncle died and Dael immediately rushed to his burrow to sift through his belongings before the other relatives did. The only thing of value he found was a bag filled with a dozen little black balls. Sorting through his uncle's papers, Dael was able to determine that the beads were twelve Beads of Force. Dael discovered the explosive and paralyzing effects when he experimentally broke one and nearly killed himself in the process. He also nearly killed Jahn and Marshall throwing another one near them to show them his new toy. Thus, only ten remain.

Not realizing he could sell them for 20-30 thousand gold, Dael hatched a scheme with his friends to use the spheres to rob the local tavern. On this night, they were scoping out the tavern and ended up drinking too much. Having been kicked out of the tavern, the three of them divide the remaining 10 Beads of Force in the street (Dael get's four, the others get three each) and in a drunken frenzy they decide that there's no better time than the present to carry out their plan. The three return to the tavern running at full speed and attempt to spread out and throw their beads to injure/trap all the people in the tavern. If they succeed, they jump the bar and begin hauling off as much gold and booze as they can get their hands on. If they can find blankets or tarps, they will try to load them up with whatever isn't nailed down and drag it out the front door.

5. But She Means Well: The players will notice a large blue-gray dog wandering amongst the tables and stools in the tavern. When it finally spots the players, it will wander over and approach the player character who seems most troubled or worried. It will sit close and lean in with large soulful eyes, clearly hoping for a scratch on the ear or something similar. At the first sign of response (positive or negative) from the character, the dog will say in Common, "Here now, sport, why the long face?" If the DM can manage to play the animal's role with a jaunty cockney accent, so much the better. If the player's response was negative, the dog will transform into a puppy with even larger soulful searching eyes. If it was positive, the large dog will transform into a small blue-gray housecat and leap into the character's lap.

The animal is actually a 6HD grimalkin (from the MM2 with St 9, Dx 14, Cn 11, In 7, Ws 16, Ch 15, HP 27, Al NG) named Tabby. The bar's owner is a 7th level Bard name Gord, and Tabby belongs to him. They retired from wandering years ago, and now run the tavern, because they love being with people, telling stories, and just helping where they can. Tabby usually spends all day talking with and entertaining the regular patrons, but when newcomers arrive, she uses her Empathy to pick out the most troubled person among them, and then sets about trying to help them talk it out—whether they want to or not. Tabby will change form every round or two simply for humor or shock value. She means well and is a great listener, but usually doesn't know when to leave well enough along.

There is no real danger to this encounter other than the annoyance factor (if a character gets annoyed). Tabby's natural form is that of an oversized housecat, almost three feet long from nose to rump.

6. Carpe Diem: The tavern the party enters is called "Mason's Pub" named after its owner, and an important town benefactor, Mason Warstorm. In one corner, in a reserved booth, sits the pub's namesake and several young men. They are telling ribald jokes and laughing loudly as they drink pitchers of beer. Also with them in the booth is a strange looking young woman who appears to be asleep. A sign hanging around the woman's neck reads: "Please do not disturb this month's winner." Nobody seems

disturbed by her presence. Without warning, the girl begins flailing her arms and screaming at the top of her lungs. Immediately everyone in the tavern will turn toward the woman and begin cheering and clapping. Mason will appear to tackle the girl, although in reality he is only trying to restrain her from hurting herself. Everyone in the tavern will continue cheering and begin demanding that "Rose tell how she met her end." If the players don't intervene, the woman will stop hyperventilating and gasp to the waiting crowd: "It was... Steepan's Cliff." This is met by uproarious cheering by the crowd. If the players approach Mason, he will explain what is going on:

Mason is an 18th-level human sorcerer who rose in the ranks of magic very rapidly and made his fortune by single-handedly saving this town from a dragon which had menaced it for more than two centuries (and subsequently taking its monumental treasure horde as his reward). The battle almost took his life, but slaying the dragon made Mason an instant legend in the town. Relatively young for someone so powerful, Mason decided to quit adventuring at the age of 33 and be the benefactor of the town that adopted him as their perennial hero. After Mason's near-death experience, he decided to live a life of leisure—wasting the days away in his bar doing what he enjoys the most: boasting with his friends and charming the ladies.

In a strange act of benevolence, Mason decided to share his dangerous past lifestyle with the townspeople. He's set up a lottery for all willing participants of the resident population. Four months in advance, each month's winner is randomly drawn and, using his magic, Mason then gives them a month to live out all their dangerous, adventurous dreams. When they are selected, Mason then takes a sampling of their flesh (he takes it painlessly and heals them immediately afterward) and performs the Clone spell to make a clone of the winner—this process takes four months and Mason takes care of all the costs involved. When the clone is ready, the winner then gets one month to do whatever they want and not fear death, because when they die, their soul will be immediately transferred to their clone, which sits importantly in Mason's reserved booth. Mason also casts Gentle Repose on the corpse to preserve it as long as necessary before the clone is used. Most winners die in the first couple of days trying stunts like swinging across the Heartgate Gorge on a rope set up for that purpose. Others use the month to live a completely different life—having affairs, wrestling wild animals and then throwing themselves off a high place—like Steepan's Cliff. Mason has an assistant that scribes on the winner at all times (this is one of the conditions of winning) to make sure that if they do anything illegal they will be held accountable for it. All legal activity is kept strictly confidential, however.

If the players are charming enough, Mason will offer them the opportunity to put their name in the drawing. If they agree, Mason will contact one of the players (selected at random) 1-6 months later and tell them they won. If they choose, they can participate. If they do, when they die and revive in the clone they will lose a level, as per the spell (Mason doesn't mention this in advance, although the townsfolk have figured it out and decided that the loss of 2 constitution is a small price to pay for the experience.)

7. Children of Honor: A group of humans is at a table in the tavern. They are led by an older, white-haired man with a long mustache who is clearly in charge. With him are six youths, ages 13 to 18, three boys and three girls. All wear simple white clothing, mostly robes, trimmed in green. The older man has the look of a warrior. It is clear that there is armor beneath his robe, and he looks armed. The young people are notable in that they are all exceptionally healthy and attractive, and they all seem very happy and animated, talking and laughing as they enjoy a meal.

The children are new servants of the local order of the sun god Ansilla, being accompanied by the old paladin Jander to the central temple of a nearby city. Jander may be old, but he has lost none of his skill. At 72 (and 8th level), his faith has kept him strong and young at heart. Jander takes his charge to safeguard the children against all dangers very seriously. This includes keeping them safe from temptation and foul influences. He will address any instances of crude language or behavior by politely asking the offenders to stop. If it continues, he will not hesitate to take stronger measures.

Jander is a good foil to a rowdy group of third to fifth level characters, because his obvious age and goody-goody attitude may invite a challenge, but he will quickly demonstrate that looks can be deceiving.

8. A Civilized Game: At some point after the players have entered the tavern, an elderly but very flamboyant gnome will enter. He will confidently stride to an empty table and lay down a series of chess boards. With each he will also lay down a felt back with all the chess pieces in it. The tavern-keeper is apparently familiar with this gnome, Ballinay, and looks on at his actions with amusement. After setting out all the pieces, Ballinay will enjoin everyone to circle round him, and then will begin to regale the audience with a song about the most civilized sport to be created by the gods: chess. The song is brief, only about five minutes, but is very compelling and actually explains the basic rules of the game. After listening, even those without prior knowledge of the game will have enough knowledge to play. Ballinay then invites everyone to play and will hand pick one of the players (determined randomly) to play against him.

Ballinay is a 16th-level bard (with 16 Chr and 22 Int) who has retired from adventuring after making his fortune. He now travels to different taverns in the local area and holds chess tournaments, looking for good intellectual stimulation. Ballinay's problem is that he's too intelligent and can't find good competition. The song that he uses at the beginning of the tournament is actually two spells: (1) the bard ability Fascinate which the bard uses to attract everyone's attention to his cause; and (2) the sixth level bard spell, *Mass Fox's Cunning*, which gives the 16 people closest to Ballinay (including the party) a +4 intelligence enhancement. The Fox's Cunning spell will elapse after 16 minutes, so Ballinay is sure to sing an inspirational song (and recast the spell) every 15 minutes. After an hour he will announce that the tournament

is over, pack up his possessions, and thank everyone for their time. If anyone beat him (opposed intelligence checks) he will stick around and buy them as much ale as they need. Otherwise he will congratulate everyone on how well they did and leave.

9. The Coffee House: The players have entered Daydreamers, what they think is a normal bar. When they enter they will likely notice that the customers in the half-filled bar are all acting just a little bit peculiar: some are staring vapidly at nothing; others are huddled together in conspiratorial, heated discussions; others are just staring intensely at the fire in the large fireplace. If the players try to order anything, they will be handed a menu for different liquors— all of which they never heard of. Daydreamers is a coffee house which sells shots of very potent alcohol which has been enchanted with a minor potion. Each of the shots has the equivalent alcohol content of three large mugs of ale. The bartender will tell the players that if they really want to "open their minds" they should mix two of the shots together at once, and then wait at least half an hour before trying another. The menu offers the following shots (listed by name only):

The Standard: This shot contains a variant of a Charm spell which generally puts the player in a good mood, and they will have a friendly attitude towards everyone they encounter.

The Soulreaver: This shot contains a Light cantrip. Once the player drinks a shot, they will begin to glow from the inside of their torso.

Fairy Dancer: This shot contains a variation of a Dancing Lights cantrip. The effected player sees dancing lights and various shapes and auras at everything they look at.

Dead Reckoning: This shot contains a variation of the Ghost Sounds cantrip. The spell taps into the players subconscious to determine what they want to hear, and then begins playing whispers of those thoughts so that only the player can hear them.

Brain Drain: This shot contains a variation of the Enlarge spell. It only affects the player's head, which swells to twice its regular size (including all headgear and adornments) while the rest of her body remains the same. The player's neck will be able to hold their head up for the duration of the shot's effects, but it is awkward and disorienting.

Center of the World: This shot contains a minor illusion spell under which everyone that the player looks at appears to look identical to the player.

All shots cost 5 gold each and the spell effects last for one hour. Drinking one shot will likely make a player slightly inebriated within twenty minutes. If a player drinks two shots simultaneously (the equivalent of six large ales at once) they will be fully inebriated within twenty minutes. The bartender will not sell more than four drinks to

any one person in one visit out of fear they will get alcohol poisoning. The owners of Daydreamers try to maintain a safe environment for their patrons to expand their consciences, so at the first sign of hostilities or a "bad trip", a large 3^d-level half-orc warrior will expel the offending patrons.

10. Crazy Elf: There is another party of adventurers in the tavern, and they look to be quite formidable. They clearly are here celebrating a job well done.

One of the party, a skinny elven male that everyone on the team calls Honey is drunker than most and quite belligerent. Honey is an 8th level Wizard with high intelligence and wisdom stats, but when he gets drunk (and he's a lightweight), he immediately starts looking for a fight. Every word, every gesture, every movement is a potential insult to his abilities and heritage, and he will describe in graphic and obscenity-laden detail the horrors he will wreak upon those who offend him. He is amazingly observant, and will always try to deduce the most hurtful and enraging things to say to those around him in an effort to provoke a fight.

Unfortunately for Honey, when he is drunk, he completely forgets his ability to use magic and instead will grab any available weapon, whether he is proficient with it or not, and start swinging. Under no circumstances will he cast a spell while drunk. But he knows no fear and is convinced he can kick anyone's ass. Luckily for him though, his team knows how he gets and will do what they can to defuse and head off any conflict. They will fight if need be to defend him, but they will try to avoid hurting anyone if they can.

The team is: Honey, Elf male, 8th level Wizard. Nora, Human female, 9th level Barbarian and the team's leader. Corbin, Human male, 8th level Fighter. Thovan, Dwarf male, 6th level Cleric. Dougal, Human male, 7th level Rogue.

11. Dance, Dance: When the players walk into the bar, they are initially struck by two things. First, it is nearly pitch black. Second, it is filled to capacity with dancing and writhing humans, halflings and an inordinate number of elves. Try to make it so the players are entering at night and that they must go to the bar for a certain purpose: information, a contact or an item.

The bar the players have walked into is packed with all sorts of people for the Festival of Dusk. The players can hardly hear each other speak because a quartet of drummers are breaking through a hellish, torturous fast-paced beat. Making their way through the crowd to the bar is no easy feat in itself because it is nearly impossible to make their way through the wall of humanity. As the drums get louder and more fervent, the others seem almost in a trance as they dance more and more frenetically.

After the players are somewhere near the middle of the bar, the drums suddenly go silent, the lights go out completely and everyone stands still simultaneously. Breaking the silence a thunderous voice booms "GLITTER!" Just then the drums kick back in, everyone starts dancing and an explosion of glitterdust expands across the room, including the area where the players are. The players are amazed at the sight of nearly one hundred glowing dancers in the pitch black, each sliding and noodling to the groove of the overpowering drums.

The glitter dust spell was cast by a 10th level wizard hired for this event. If the players miss their saving throw, they are covered in the glitter like the willing participants who are now nearly all glowing with the fairy dust. What the players don't know is that this year, the sponsors of the Festival decided to play a prank on the party goers and paid a handsome sum to the wizard to cast a permanency spell on the glitter dust. It wasn't cheap, but they wanted this year's Festival of Dusk to be one for the history books. It will be. If a player failed their save and is permanently effected by the glitterdust, to rid themselves of the effect will take a Dispel Magic spell from a spellcaster of at least 10th level. Hopefully, they won't think much of the glitterdust while at the bar because it's affecting everyone and won't even realize it's effects are permanent until they go to sleep for the night and wake up the next morning to find themselves still covered in glowing fairy dust.

12. Down the Rabbit Hole: This can be one of any number of taverns, typically in major cities, but not always. The establishment always has a rabbit-themed name: The Rabbit's Den, The Elven Hare, The Bloody Bunny, etc. It is always in a hard to find location, usually in a seamier part of town. It is typically not clearly marked, so the players will often find it seemingly by accident, stumbling over it while looking for something else.

The tavern is clean and roomy inside. For such an out of the way place, it seems to do good business, and most of the tables are occupied. Looking closely, players will notice that the clientele seems to be extremely diverse—many varied races and exotic costumes.

The bartender is a halfling, Golan, who speaks very formally and politely all the time. The serving staff are all gnomes who are very cheerful and friendly and sing as they work. Food is available. And if anyone should request a more private place to talk, staff will lead them to one of several private rooms at the back. People seeking lodging will be shown up a narrow flight of stairs where rooms are available. Through the kitchen is a flight of stairs to the basement which seems to be a nearly endless maze of storerooms and passages and locked doors. Only staff are allowed in the kitchen and basement. There are no windows anywhere, and only two doors: the main entrance and a back door through the kitchens.

The players will probably come in and out of the bar without incident, and while it's rich in atmosphere and possibilities, they won't notice much out of the ordinary... until weeks later and hundreds of miles away, when they enter another out-of-the-way tavern in a dark corner of the city... and it's the same place. The name out front is different, but inside, everything is the same, right down to the staff. At first, the players will think it's just a similar place, but it's not: it's the same place. If confronted, the staff will act as if they remember serving the players before, but will not comment on the change in location.

The Warren (as the staff call it) is actually located in the city of Ulloch, but its location is irrelevant. Its doors are portals that open in many places. Anyone who leaves will always wind up exiting to the same place where they entered. Its doors in various cities don't always work, but it is reliable enough that some far-flung groups use it as a regular meeting place to pass around information. Rumor has it that for a price, Golan can arrange for people to exit somewhere other than where they came in... but that's just a whispered rumor.

There are six staff members. Golan is the bartender and the apparent proprietor of the place. Golan is a halfling and a 12th level Expert focusing in knowledge, negotiation, and service skills. The three serving staff are Badger and Ellywick, a middle-aged gnomish couple, and Molly, their adolescent daughter. Badger and Ellywick are both 7th level bards, and their daughter is learning the trade as well (1st level). The kitchen staff consists of Sharkbane the cook, an elderly goblin. He is a 9th level rogue. His assistant is Dusty, a 17 year old human boy and 2nd level rogue. The staff are all incredibly loyal to one another.

13. Dropping In: When the party arrives in the tavern, make sure they settle in to a table (maybe the bar is full). After they have had sufficient time to get comfortable, they hear a quick popping sound and a giant blue gnome appears next to their table with his giant axe poised above his head. Before anyone has a chance to react, the gnome's axe comes down and smashes into the table, nearly chopping it in half. The gnome immediately hauls his axe out of the table and backs up defensively and confused. This is Swen Swenson, a gnomish hero infused with frost giant blood. The combination of his lineage gives his skin a pale blue hue, and he's over six feet tall. (Use stats for a 7th level human fighter, except: 18 Strength [boosted to 22 with a Belt of Giant Strength], 18 Constitution, 65 hp, weapon specialization [greataxe], +1 Frozen Greataxe [+15 melee, 1d12+12 damage/+1d10 frost damage]).

Immediately before appearing in the tavern, Swen was hot on the trail of a Braxis, a ghoulish sorcerer from the far off town of Ulloch. Swen and the rest of his party (who are not with him) were hired by a nobleman in Ulloch to hunt down Braxis for undermining an important treaty negotiation the nobleman was involved in. The party had nearly killed Braxis as he ran away into a safe house. Just as Swen was charging

to deliver the killing blow, he stepped in a Teleportation Circle trap the ghoul had hastily set up.

Now in the tavern, Swen thinks he has fallen into an elaborate illusion trap, and is convinced that one of the members of the party is actually Braxis in disguise. He will defensively step back and try to spot the flaws in the illusion (obviously without success). If the party cannot talk him out of it (or don't try), Swen will begin attacking each one, trying to finally kill Braxis and destroy the illusion.

14. Dwarven Karaoke: Mallow and Marner are twin brother dwarves who are currently trying to stake their claim as heroes by adventuring across the lands. As they were passing through this city, they stopped for a few drinks and (as they always do in a new town) decided to treat the locals to their singing talents. Marner plays a hand drum (like a bongo) while Mallow sings in a deep baritone. Mallow sings in dwarven and only sings incredibly racist songs which stereotype other races as inferior to their pure dwarven lineage. Mallow and Marner will not initiate a confrontation, preferring their passive-aggressive style of singing in a language that is usually not understood. But if questioned about their racist views, they will defend themselves by insulting the heritage of the questioner. On the subject of race, they are quick to temper, and these "discussions" often lead to fights. Both dwarves are 2nd level fighters.

15. The Enchanted Dog: Sitting next to the fireplace of the local establishment is a large, stuffed dog. When alive, it was a barrel-chested boxer. Now dead and preserved, it sits at attention with its head up and alert. As a joke, the tavern owner has hung a sign around the dog's neck that says "Beware of Dog." When they enter, depending on how crowded the establishment is, the party may notice that none of the locals are near the dog. If anyone comes within five feet of the dog, it starts speaking in Common to them, pleading for them to get the dog a few scraps of food: "I'm starving here, sir. I haven't eaten since they stuffed me and hung this sign around my neck. Please, just a scrap of meat!" The dog can only move its head and neck, the rest of its body is immobilized. It won't talk to the players about anything unless it gets food. And even if it gets food, it still won't talk about anything until it gets more food. And so on.

If the players order something for the dog, the tavern owner will oblige, chuckle and warn the party to mind the sign on its neck. If the party tries to feed the dog, it will ravenously try to snatch the food from their hand, just as likely to bite them as it is the food (doing 1-3 hit points damage). If it gets food, it will chew it and then spit it out in disgust, "You call this food? Get me something good!" This is the same reaction it will give no matter what food it is offered. The dog has no name and is a simple enchantment a wizard cast on a preserved dog many years ago.

16. Game Night: The tavern is nearly empty except for a group of young teenagers who are hunched over a table in the far corner of the establishment. As the players order their drinks, the bartender will roll his eyes at the teens in the corner and say, "Don't mind them, it's just game night." Other than them, there is no activity in the tavern.

If the players observe the teens, they will see that the one that seems in charge of the game they are playing is called "Worldmaster" by the other four. The Worldmaster has a bunch of scrolls in front of him that he keeps referring to as he explains what is happening in the game to the other four, who he refers to as the "players." As the players watch, the Worldmaster will look at one of the players and say, "Okay, Nicho, it's your golem's turn. Given the distance and the damage to your projectile cannon, you're working with a..." he quickly checks a scroll, "...a minus three bone penalty. Throw the bones." At this point Nicho begins rubbing something in his hands back and forth and whispering to it, "Come on, baby. Nicho is down to his last cannon. Nicho needs this, baby." And then Nicho throws down a handful of chicken bones on the table. The Worldmaster looks at the bones, checks some scrolls and says "A grievous hit!" This seems to make Nicho very happy.

If the players listen long enough, they will discern that the four "players" each have a halfling "character" which sits inside and controls its own giant iron golem. These giant golems have all sorts of wondrous impossible weapons and cannons attached to their bodies and, apparently, have to fight other giant golems. The Worldmaster interprets the thrown bones and explains what is happening in the "game."

If there are no females in the party, the five skinny teenagers will eventually ask if the players want to play and will explain all the rules and try to get the players to create their own "characters." No matter what their intelligence, however, the players will not understand how to play. If there is a female in the party, the teens will look nervously at them, and refuse to talk to the party.

17. Goblin Street Urchins: A group of six (relatively) teen-aged goblin street urchins have pooled their meager resources and decided to splurge on as many pitchers of ale as their copper pieces can purchase. They are very raucous and drunk, and deeply engaged in a game of Punch My Hand: one goblin holds his hand flat on the table and the other poises his fist a foot above it; the top goblin then tries to punch the other's hand, sometimes hitting and oftentimes missing when the other one pulls his hand away—at which point the first goblin hurts himself by punching a dense oaken table. If the second goblin flinches before the first one tries to punch him, then the first gets to slap him straight across the face. The drunken teens will eventually try to persuade the party into playing the game. If they refuse, the goblins will chide and insult the player's bravado in an effort to coerce them into playing. The goblins

have no armor and are armed only with daggers, plus they are greatly inebriated (-3 to all attack rolls, stat checks and saving throws).

18. Gravediggaz: The players settle into the bar, and within a few minutes, one of the players becomes mysteriously and seriously ill. Fortunately, a nearby patron recognizes the illness as the work of an undead demon spirit and knows of a local physician who can help.

The truth is that the bartender (Nell), the "concerned" patron (Yoseph), and the physician (Cullen) are all in the employ of a very powerful necromancer, named Crawl, who pays handsomely for specific types of bodies, especially if they can be brought in fresh or still alive.

If anyone in the party orders food or drink, the bartender chooses the party member with the highest combined Strength and Charisma scores and poisons their order. The poison is of a psychic nature which Crawl processes from the venom of undead serpents. One minute after ingestion, the character will feel a constant chill accompanied by severe nausea and must make a Fort save (DC 18) to keep from vomiting. One minute later, they must make a Will save (DC 23) or take 2d6 Dex damage. After one more minute there is a final Will save (DC 23) or they take another 2d6 secondary Dex damage. This gives the victim just enough time to explain that they aren't feeling well before being completely paralyzed (usually).

Yoseph, the concerned patron, is a 4th level Rogue who is dressed as a scholar and is sitting alone, pretending to pore over a thick tome by candlelight. He will say that he recognizes this affliction as the work of an undead demon spirit called a Grimshade. He knows a physician nearby who helped a friend of his once with the same problem.

If the players actually take their friend to this physician, he will confirm that this is the work of a Grimshade. He tells them that normal *Cure* spells have no effect, and for the antidote, he needs two obscure ingredients that he does not have here. One is a cockatrice feather, and the other is the tongue of an undead hound. By coincidence, Cullen says he knows of a mad wizard who keeps bizarre and magical beasts. The wizard probably has both items, but he is moody and may not part with them willingly. But the players must acquire these things (and pay a hefty healing fee) if they want to remove this curse from their friend.

The hope is that the players will leave on this wild goose chase to an abandoned livestock market, and then the conspirators can take the immobile body to their master's stronghold. When the players return for their friend, Yoseph and Cullen are nowhere to be found, and Nell at the bar will deny ever having seen anything (although, she does know exactly what has happened).

Detect Magic cast on the afflicted player will reveal mild necromantic magic. *Detect Poison* will reveal the presence of the poison. *Detect Magic* or *Detect Poison* in the bar will reveal the presence of a whole jar of the vile poison behind the bar. In spite of Cullen's warnings, *Cure Poison* and *Remove Curse* are both sufficient to negate the poison's effects. Otherwise, the player recovers normally from the Dex damage after 24 hours.

19. The Hole: There is a huge ragged looking hole in the center of the floor of the bar. It is oblong, about seven feet long and four wide. While the hole looks like it was formed by something bursting violently up through the floor, the edges are worn and smooth. The hole has clearly been here a while. Staff and regulars in the bar routinely throw garbage in the hole. Next to the hole is a large barrel full of water with no lid.

If anyone asks about the hole, people just shrug and indicate that it's just always been there. Looking down the hole reveals slick rough sides that seem to go down forever. Even with the best light, one can only see about 20 feet down. If something substantial is thrown in, it can be heard occasionally bouncing and clacking off the walls as it falls. The sound will continue for almost two minutes with echoes until it finally just becomes too faint to hear.

Once a week or so, a hissing and bubbling noise rises from the hole along with warm, sweet smelling air. When this happens, whoever is closest will dump the barrel of water in the hole, and the noises will stop. If asked, they will say, "The water keeps them quiet." But no one will say what 'they' are.

20. The Long Arm of Vanya: Sitting at a large table in the corner are three human women. They all wear scale mail with matching colors and insignia. They have small shields nearby and longswords. Their small metal helms are stacked on an empty chair.

At some point, as she does with all out-of-towners, Vanya, the obvious leader of the three, will try to extort money from the players. It starts with, "I'm sorry. Is there a problem over there?" She will swagger towards the players, asking if they are looking for trouble. Because they're obviously looking for trouble. Apparently they don't know that this town has rules. Etc. When asked what the problem is, Vanya will point to a silver emblem on her shoulder indicating that she is local law enforcement, and then will start enumerating "violations" the players are guilty of. Depending on their appearance and equipment, Vanya will list things like: "Weapons of war not checked" for any visible weapon larger than a dagger, "Importing vermin carrying beasts," for any familiar or companion animal, "unlicensed spellcasters posing a public hazard," etc. She will demand that a fine of 50 gold be paid directly to her, or else the players

can expect to spend a night in jail and answer to the local prelate for their crimes in the morning.

If the players don't pay, Vanya will actually try to arrest the players and impound their animals and equipment. If they do pay, and if there is a moderately attractive male in the party, Vanya will then suggest that she has spotted numerous other violations, but possibly she could overlook them for a friend. If the man she chooses agrees to be her "friend" for the evening, then everything is done with, and the players are free to go in the morning with Vanya's good will. Otherwise, we're back to arresting and impounding.

Vanya is a 6th level fighter and a vice-captain in the town guard. The two women with her are 4th level fighters and also in the town guard. A blast of her horn will bring another 10-20 guards (all 2nd and 3rd level warriors) in 1d20 rounds.

21. Medusa's Mark: The players have entered a busy tavern. Sitting in one corner, drawing little attention to themselves, are two men sharing beer and stories of their adventures—both are obviously adventurers. If the party listens, they will be able to discern that the two men (Loran and Sean—both human) have just met and are passing time with each other's tales and getting drunk. After some time a human will enter the bar carrying a wooden box about the size of a hat box. The man (Cecil) will look around the bar, surveying the scene, and will eventually choose a seat at the table with the other two humans. The players will probably not even notice that any of this has gone on. If, however, they do, then they will overhear Cecil whispering to the other two who he apparently doesn't know. If the players can hear him, they will discover that he is trying to sell them something very dangerous.

The party will first take notice when Loran starts yelling, "Good heavens, man! What's been done?" Cecil will immediately slam the box shut and try to quiet Loran. The party will immediately notice that Sean is completely immobile and has turned to stone. Over the ruckus, Cecil will say to Loran, "Outside, sir! Let's finish this outside!" At which point both will rush out the door of the bar.

Have the party make willpower saving throws versus a DC14. Anyone succeeding will realize that Sean has not actually been turned to stone, but in fact has had an illusion (Disguise Self) cast on him. Indeed, he cast it on himself. Once Loran and Cecil leave, the spell drops, Sean returns to his normal self, and he will quietly slip out a side entrance. If the party tries to stop him, he will act confused and disoriented, like he didn't know who cast the spell on him. At the first opportunity, he will escape and run out into the busy alley out the side door of the establishment.

Out front, Cecil is trying to sell the contents of the box to Loran, who has eagerly agreed to pay 1,500 gold for it— and is ready to retrieve the money from a strongbox company across the street where he has temporarily stored his valuables. If the party

confronts the two, Loran will tell them to "Bugger off, the Medusa's head is spoken for." And Cecil will politely ask the party to mind their own business. If the situation escalates, Cecil will try to run with the box, but Loran will try to grab it from him claiming, "I've spoken for that— it's mine!"

If they ever get the chance to see inside the wooden box, the party will see it contains what appears to be a medusa's head, but on closer inspection is revealed to be a freshly decapitated goblins head with several dead common snakes crudely stitched to it. Cecil and Sean are partners in a scam in which they try to sell fake medusa heads to traveling adventurers. Cecil is a third level rogue and Sean is a third level sorcerer (who obviously has a Disguise Self spell). Sean goes in and finds the most gullible mark with disposable gold and warms him up. Cecil then comes in and tries to sell the fake medusa's head to Sean, who is eager to see the contents. Sean casts the spell on himself, masking his incantations and gestures behind the hoopla and fuss created by himself and Cecil when he opens the box. If the party captures either Sean or Cecil, they will eventually confess and offer the fake head to the players so they can pull the scam. Loran is a hapless victim (and sixth level fighter) who will refuse to believe it was a scam because he failed his save and was convinced Sean was turned to stone. Only if he sees Sean again (and not as a statue) will he believe it was a scam.

22. Mob Rule: The tavern the players enter is fairly crowded and very loud. With little effort, the players will recognize that there is a search effort which is being coordinated from the tavern. At the main table, the discussion is being led by Laurence Twicetail, the local human sheriff (5th level paladin) who is busy ordering different teams to different sections of the town/city/forest—whichever is appropriate—to look for a missing child. At his side, consulting him is Geriko, a female half-elf (7th level cleric). If the players inquire, they will discover that a local seven year old girl (Samantha) has gone missing, and the sheriff suspects that a camp of troglodytes have taken her. It seems the town has been having skirmishes with the troglodytes ever since they set up camp in the nearby foothills two months ago. The natural prejudice of the townsfolk has started all sorts of rumors about what the "savage" troglodytes are up to, ranging in everything from planning a mass murder of everyone in town to a summoning of their devil masters to bring the fires of hell to the townsfolk. In reality, the troglodytes were displaced after their original clan had a power struggle, and this part of the clan lost and was exiled. Now they have set up a new camp in some caves in the foothills outside of town and simply want to be left alone to get their bearings.

If the players offer to help, their assistance will be readily accepted. Before the players leave a group of four men enter, followed by a wailing woman— Samantha's mother. The men are carrying what's left of the corpse of the girl. Her limbs are missing and most of her torso has been torn asunder as well. She's hardly anything more than a head attached to a ribcage. The wounds look about a day old. The men set her body

directly on the table and one looks at Geriko and demands, "Do it! Now!" Laurence simply looks at her expectantly. After a moment, Geriko casts a spell on the corpse. The entire tavern is silent as Geriko bends in and asks, "Who did this?" The corpse, barely audible says, "The dragonfolk." With this response the crowd in the tavern erupts and begins shouting for vengeance. Geriko is clearly trying to ask another question, but nothing can be heard over the roar of the crowd. She and Laurence start shouting for everyone to quiet down, but by the time they do, the spell has elapsed.

The entire tavern is ready to march on the troglodyte encampment and kill every one of them. They already have their swords and bows ready and there are at least forty men ready to march with the promise of forty more. Geriko stands in the doorway barring their exit and shouts for them to stop. She gives an impassioned speech about how they shouldn't rush to judgment and that the spell could be flawed—perhaps she was killed accidentally, perhaps she only thought it was the troglodytes but it was actually someone framing them, perhaps she was attacked by a wild creature while lost in the woods and she assumed in the moment of death it was the "dragonfolk". Geriko will insist that the spell didn't prove anything. The angry mob is unconvinced and begin to march out past her, apparently with the blessing of Laurence, who has done nothing to stop them, and is escorting them on their way. By the time they get out of town, they are one hundred strong and will march to the troglodyte camp within two hours and slaughter everyone there. Geriko will plead with the players to make haste to the troglodyte camp and ensure themselves that they weren't involved. At least warn them that a mob is coming and they are to leave before vigilante justice kills them all.

If the players go with the mob, or make it there on their own in advance, they will discover approximately a dozen male troglodytes sitting around the campfire eating the cooked remains of Samantha. She had gotten lost and stumbled into their camp. Having run out of provisions many days before and on the brink of starvation, the troglodytes were convinced she was a gift from heaven- a meal delivered to them by the gods themselves. By the time anyone gets there, half are asleep and the other half are picking through Samantha's remains for any morsel's still uneaten.

23. More Precious than Gold: Once the players have settled in, a small group enters the bar led by a stout human. He is fifty-ish, with a very full beard and walks with a limp. He is followed by three others of varying ages. They are all in rough work clothes and smell of grease and sawdust. They take a table very near to the players and huddle together secretly. They are very interested in something they have placed on their table. The players will not be able to make out what it is at first, but it emits faint flickerings of light.

The big man is Groth, a local lumberman, along with 3 of his apprentices. One of them, Spillik, discovered an enchanted box today, and Groth has commandeered it. When opened, the box displays a very crude series of pornographic illusions that

hover above the open box. The men will order beer and drink copiously, becoming more raucous with time. Others will try to join in the viewing, which Groth will only allow if they pay him or else if they buy a round of drinks for the table or some such.

Assuming a fight hasn't broken out already, there will be a brief distraction as a chair on the far side of the room falls over with a loud bang. Immediately after, the group will look back to their table to discover the magic box is gone. Immediately, one of the apprentices will suggest that one of the players (picked at random) stole it, and they will all become quite belligerent over the matter.

The truth is that it was stolen by a couple of teenage boys who are just heading out the door as the commotion begins. The boys are 1st level commoners with 2hp each. Groth is a 3rd level Expert, and his apprentices are all 1st level. In their drunken state, they will be little match for most parties, however the proprietor will be quick to send for the authorities when things get out of hand.

24. Occupied: While visiting the local tavern, one of the players has accidentally ingested some spoiled food or drink. The DM should randomly determine which player suffers the unfortunate consequences of ingesting the bad mead or spoiled shellfish and describe to them the "urgent" need to visit the outhouse or appropriate facilities of the establishment. While in there, the door is broken open by Varilun, the town bard. Varilun has gotten sick from the same substance that made the player sick, but only after having drunk 7 pints of ale. Blindingly drunk, Varilun doesn't realize the toilet is in use before he barges in and begins vomiting in the general direction of the hole. If the player gets angry, Varilun is so drunk he doesn't even realize what he's done and will respond by challenging the player to a fight. Varilun is a fifth level bard. Use the standard statistics for a fifth-level bard provided in the DMG.

25. Out of Nowhere: The party has found The Lodge. What's unique about The Lodge is not its appearance—it's a standard, rustic tavern with a full bar, simple meat pies available and two rooms to sleep in upstairs. The bartender is a quiet orc who listens patiently to everyone's troubles, but gives out almost no information. The Lodge is patronized by about a half-dozen adventurers from the far reaches of lands. Each has a different tale about how they arrived here from their strange homeland in the tundra/desert/jungle/underdark. All the patrons are extremely engaging and welcoming to the party. They will readily engage in conversation with the players, always to regale them with tales of their wild adventures. Under no conditions will any of the adventurers fight with the players.

What's truly unusual about The Lodge is where it is. Make sure that the players discover The Lodge in the middle of the forest or on a remote island. If they are

approaching a town, have them discover it in the middle of nowhere on the outskirts of town.

If the players order drinks or food, the bartender will provide it to them and tell them he'll keep a bill for them when they leave, and then on their departure he'll tell them not to worry about it, the food/drink is "on the house." If the players attempt to get a room for the night, the bartender will apologize and tell them that the rooms are already occupied. If the players become destructive, they will realize that the structure of The Lodge is absolutely indestructible, and will not burn even though it appears to be constructed out of ordinary oak timbers. If the players attempt to get into the sleeping rooms, they will not be able to— the doors are locked and cannot be opened or broken by any means.

The Lodge is a variant of Jandrax's Portable Home. In its unactivated form, The Lodge is a snowglobe the size of a human fist with a tiny perfect replica of The Lodge inside it on a snowy, forest backdrop. When activated with the command phrase (which for the Lodge is "Drumdaddy Snowsleep"), the two-story lodge appears in any clear fifty by fifty area with 25 feet of overhead clearance. If it does not have unobstructed space, the Lodge will fail to activate. The Lodge cannot be physically destroyed, burnt or disintegrated. The inhabitants of The Lodge are not illusions and do not appear as such under a detect magic/illusions spell. When the Lodge is activated, for all intents and purposes they appear to be real living people who will interact, talk, flirt and play darts with whoever enters. If they are attacked, they will simply plead for their lives and act confused. If attacked enough, they will appear to die. Even if this happens, the other patrons will laugh it off and still engage the party in conversation. If any item from the Lodge is taken out of the Lodge, other than what was brought in, it fades into the ether when it is taken more than two hundred feet from the Lodge. This includes the extravagant treasures and weapons carried by the patrons.

The Lodge provides enough meat pies to feed 12 normal-sized people per day, and can supply an unlimited supply of drinks, but only as fast as the bartender can serve them. The sleeping rooms (which comprise the entire second floor) are only available to the person who activated the Lodge and her guests. Once locked, nothing can get into the sleeping rooms.

If someone knows the command phrase they can deactivate The Lodge, even with people in it. When deactivated, the Lodge will simply disappear and revert to snowglobe form, leaving any occupants and their possessions in the same physical location, which means if it is deactivated with someone on the second floor they will fall ten feet to the ground.

The Lodge has been activated by Stephen Soldarity, a 15th level paladin who is asleep in one of the upstairs rooms with his adventuring partner, Wendell, a 16th level wizard. Wendell and Stephen are the two only living people who know the

command phrase. With prayer and sleep and spell preparation, they will not emerge from their rooms until mid-morning the next day.

26. Out of Towners: If the players choose to take no action at all, the following events unfold:

Four mud slaadi (from the Fiend Folio) enter the bar. They seem weary and well-traveled, but relieved to be here. They approach the bartender and ask for drinks. When the bartender asks to see cash first, the spokes-slaad seems offended, but throws several coins on the counter. Whatever he has presented is not acceptable, and the bartender politely declines to serve them.

The lead slaad then croaks out, "Fine, if we're not good enough for your establishment, then we'll just leave." And on their way to the door, they will begin knocking over tables and chairs and generally breaking anything breakable.

The bartender will then tell his serving boy to run and get the constable, but one of the slaadi will grab the boy on his way out and hold him like a hostage and make all sorts of threats to hurt the child. This leads the slaadi to settle in and grab a table, yelling at the bartender to hurry up with the service. One of the slaadi will always have a hold of the boy, with the implied threat of harm if they don't get what they want.

Eventually, after ten minutes of this, the local guard will arrive—8 2nd level warriors. They'll be no match for the bully slaadi.

The players may, of course, choose to intervene at any point. The slaadi really aren't out to hurt anyone. They just want to relax and have a few drinks. Their monstrous appearance and the effect it has on those in this little town doesn't even occur to them. Once trouble starts, they're still not looking to kill anyone, but they won't hesitate if the need arises. At heart, they are bullies and cowards and will seek to flee by any means possible at the first sign of significant opposition.

27. The Perfect Crime: When the party arrives at the bar, they will notice a group of well-armed humans sitting in the center table drinking a rare mead. The bar is about half full (aside from the group, maybe thirty or so patrons). Shortly after they arrive, one of the well-armed humans begins turning a slight hue of blue and wheezes dramatically. In short order, he is dead. The dead man is Chauncy Flaherty, the vice-sheriff of the town. He had gotten off of his shift and was drinking with three of his deputies when he was poisoned and died. Two of the three deputies (all second level fighters) will immediately secure the entrance and the exit and allow no one to enter or leave. The third will go to fetch the sheriff, Charles Flaherty, Chauncy's older brother. Charles is a fifth-level paladin. Charles and the deputy will return with two

additional deputies and will begin to interrogate everyone in the bar. Shortly thereafter a local mage will appear and begin casting Detect Poison, and will eventually discover that Chauncy's mug had been dusted with Dark Reaver Powder, killing him almost immediately.

Unless they leave without permission, Charles will not suspect any members of the party—he figures a group of semi-powerful adventurers passing through the area probably didn't have any idea who Chauncy was, much less have the inclination to poison him surreptitiously (as opposed to killing him in open conflict). Instead, Charles will begin to suspect the bartender, who is currently romantically involved with Chauncy's former mistress. If the party cooperates with Charles, they will be politely interrogated and permitted to leave after approximately two hours. If the party leaves without permission, however, Charles will suspect they were the poisoners and make every effort to hunt them down and bring them to justice. The party can also offer to help Charles in the investigation, which he will eagerly accept.

The truth is that Chauncy was not targeted specifically as the victim. Spresta, an old witch who lives in an underground hut in the nearby woods, was recently harassed by some local boys from a nearby mage's college who decided to flood her abode with a repeated flurry of Create Water spells. She was unable to catch the culprits, but in her demented witch psyche, she decided to take her revenge on the town—sneaking into the bar under an invisibility guise (granted by a ring of invisibility she wears) and randomly sprinkling the poison in a single glass. The next night she will do the same at a local bakery, spreading the poison on a single loaf of bread. The next night she will sneak into a church and poison the holy water chalice the parishioners use to cleanse themselves (thus affecting 2d6 parishioners). Spresta is a 9th level adept.

28. Perfectly Harmless: From a nearby table in the tavern, the players can hear an odd buzzing noise. Seated at the table are a female half-elf and a male halfling. A moment's inspection reveals that the buzzing is actually snoring, and it is coming from the juvenile rust monster sleeping under their table.

The woman is a 6th level sorcerer named Delora, and her companion, Grayburn, is a Druid/Rogue 4/3. They are both Chaotic Neutral. If asked, Delora will explain that the rust monster is named Rusty and has been her companion for a long time. He is tame and trained and very very safe. This is a lie. Rusty won't harm Delora or Grayburn or any of their possessions, and he does respond to basic voice commands from either of them. However, he needs to consume quite a bit of metal on a regular basis, and when he wakes up will try to creep unnoticed to nearby tables and consume weapons and other items left on or near the floor. His owners know that he does this, and they don't care, as long they can keep him from being caught.

If someone confronts them about Rusty destroying their stuff, Delora will apologize profusely and offer to replace the item(s), explaining that she has money or a better

item up in her room. The pair will have Rusty follow them, and they will then find a way to sneak out of the bar and skip town.

Rusty: All stats as per MM except: Small Aberration, HD 2d8+2 (11hp), AC 15 (+3 Dx, +2 natural), Attack - antennae touch +1 melee (rust), Str 6, rust ability may only destroy up to 2 cubic feet of metal at a time with a save DC of 12

29. Poser: Tarkamah Roan is an adventurer... of sorts. Born into nobility and wealth, Roan seeks out adventures to pass the time—great hunts, seeking lost treasures, etc. He is an 8th level Aristocrat and quite capable in his own right, but he also employs professionals in all fields to assist him, and typically travels in luxury. By tradition, after he completes an adventure, he travels to a local watering hole where he can buy drinks for everyone, and his praises can be sung. And tonight is that night.

His experts discovered the location of the lost Staff of Groth, a minor artifact of some power and history. His guides led him to the catacombs. His warriors slew the orc tribe they found there. His workmen cleared the rubble from the collapsed ruins. Until finally, Tarkamah Roan found the elusive staff. Now Tarkamah and over a dozen members of his party come to the bar to celebrate. He is quite generous and eager to show off his trophy and have his bard tell the tale.

The problem is that the staff is a fake, and quite an obvious one. At least one of the players should be able to discern this. A decent appraise check or magical knowledge check or bardic lore check will show that the gold is not real, the gems are not real, and the staff doesn't even match the details of the staff of legend. Detect Magic reveals that it is not magical. The counterfeit is so obvious that several of Roan's entourage must know that it is not real. In fact they do know that, and no one is telling him. Sometimes, in order to make Tarkamah's adventures a success, his loyal followers must fudge some of the details.

The players may choose to mind their own business and simply enjoy the free drinks all night, however, if anyone points out to Roan that the staff is a fake, Roan will be incredulous. He will not believe it and will look to his staff to back him up on this (which they will). If the players push it, Roan will be extremely insulted and demand a formal apology or else face the sting of his blade. If he is offered irrefutable proof (such as a Detect Magic spell), then he will turn on his staff and rage against them for being such idiots. In any case, the free drinks and food will certainly stop at that point.

30. Proud Mary: Goodwife Mary Butcher is an immense human being. She is nearly six feet tall and at least 20 stone (400 pounds) if she's an ounce. She is a barfly and a gossip and one of the richest sources of local information in four counties. As always,

she is seated at a far table when the adventurers enter the tavern. Her back is to the wall, so that she faces the door. She holds a massive tankard of wine in one meaty hand.

Mary has two primary skills: Knowledge (Local Gossip) - 8 ranks, and Performance (Storytelling) - 8 ranks. If it happened within 25 miles of this bar, then Mary probably knows at least a little something about it, and she's more than willing to share. Her only fee for her services is time and company. Her husband is well-off, so while gifts of free drink are welcome, they are not needed. Mary will only release information in bits and pieces, and always with teasers that there is more to come. But to get to what people want, they also have to sit through her tales of other local gossip, along with Mary's constant stories of how hard her life is: her husband doesn't provide her with fine enough goods, her nine children are all ungrateful and unruly and spoiled, her servants can't keep a proper house, she never has time for anything (despite being a kept woman who spends all day every day in this tavern).

She is a wonderful storyteller, and her tales (even the ones of personal woe) are fascinating, but she will work to keep an audience around as long as possible. If someone tries to rush her or cut off a story or have her tell things out of order, then she becomes pouty and difficult and will not go on until the offender has shown proper remorse and everyone practically begs her to go on. Even then, she will drag out her stories even longer in order to establish that she is in control of the process.

If physically confronted, Mary is unarmed and will typically cower in fear while wailing for help. She fights as a 0-level commoner with 3hp. (S9, D10, C8, I13, W8, C16).

31. Rolled: The establishment the players have chosen is a large and mostly busy one and turns out to be a popular trolling ground for prostitutes. At any given time there will be 1 to 4 ladies of the evening mixing with the patrons and looking for business. At least one of the women, however, is not what she seems:

Billy Treewalker is a master of disguise and a pickpocket extraordinaire. Billy is a half-elf of slight build and a 6th level Rogue. He wears a Hat of Disguise and carries a +4 Dagger under his dress. He also has a ready supply of sleeping powders and poisons should they come in handy.

With the magic hat, Billy's appearance varies dramatically from night to night, as does the name he gives. He will get as close as possible to potential "clients," making lots of physical contact. If the prospect does not seem interested, Billy will make a pickpocket attempt before moving on. If the prospect seems interested, Billy will try to lure them away to somewhere private and then incapacitate them with a drugged drink or a blade between the ribs as seems appropriate. After any theft attempt,

successful or not, Billy will take the first opportunity to change his appearance again with the Hat of Disguise.

32. Slumming: Every male in the party will notice her the moment they enter the tavern. She is stunningly beautiful; a tall, statuesque human, with long red hair. She is wearing the very formal and exquisitely tailored clothes of a diplomat or a noble, but they are cut in a masculine style, with a luxurious knee-length man's cloak over her shoulders—not that she could ever be mistaken for a man. She is also quite drunk and seemingly very angry or frustrated. She will talk to anyone who approaches, but her rants make little sense. She will go on about armies and orders and deadlines and how nobody listens and nobody will give her a chance and it's not her fault and... and so on. She will particularly curse two people named Sarghen and Thole. If asked, she gives her name as Mathilda.

Whether the players interact with her or not, it is hard not to pay attention to her, and the more she drinks, the more people will notice that she is not quite right. She is ferociously strong—enough to crack the oaken bar top when she slams her palm into it. Her blue blue eyes will more and more appear to be a blazing orange as she gets angry. When she turns, it often seems that actual smoke spins from her body. And when she pushes her hair back, she reveals a set of tiny horns.

Eventually, Mathilda will claim to feel sick, and will get up as if to leave and then pass out cold on the floor. At this point, all illusion of her as a human disappears, as her true form is revealed and her massive black-feathered wings spill out from under her cloak. Mathilda is a devil, specifically an Eriynes with 10 hit dice, and she's completely at the mercy of the players.

Among her possessions is about 5,000 gp worth of jewelry and finery and a coin purse containing 500 gp in various currencies. Her longsword is a +3 firebrand. Her belt is a Belt of Giant Strength +8. Her boots are equivalent to Boots of Elvenkind AND Boots of Striding and Leaping. She has a Onyx Steed Figurine of Wondrous Power in one pocket, and a matched pair of +4 Returning Unholy throwing daggers. Of her many rings, two are magical: a Ring of Protection +3, and on the littlest finger of her left hand, a Ring of Revelry.

The Ring of Revelry is a common magic item among outsiders that negates immunity to poison, thus allowing fiends and celestials (among others) to drink and become drunk. If anyone removes this ring, Mathilda will immediately be awake and sober and aware... and extremely angry, attempting to destroy anyone around her, especially those trying to take her possessions. If the ring is left on though, she will sleep for the next six hours and then awake groggy and disoriented and very hung over. In that state, it will take her a good ten minutes to remember to remove the Ring.

Otherwise, once she is passed out, nothing under heaven or hell will awaken her for that six hours.

At the 4 hour mark though, a pair of Barbazu devils (7HD) will come looking for her. Even if she has been moved, they will come to wherever she is. Mathilda came here originally to dispatch a corrupted high level mage and return with his soul to Hell. However when she arrived, the mage had somehow found salvation and a way out of his contract. All that was in the mage's tower was a gloating Gaurdinel named Thole. She banished him back to the happy hunting grounds, but her mission was still a failure—and a big one. Thus she donned her ring and headed for the nearest bar. And now the Barbazu have come looking for her. Assuming she is still unconscious, they will not attempt to wake her, but will instead simply take her away, eliminating anything that gets in their way. If those two fail, then no one else will come for her until after she is already awake.

33. A Steal at any Price: After the players have been in the bar for 15 minutes or so, they are approached by Calla Talford, a handsome halfling woman. Calla is very tall for a halfling and is dressed in a masculine traveling outfit, so the players may initially mistake her for a male human child. She is very businesslike yet secretive, and acts as if the players are expecting her. Calla will lay a scroll case on the table or bar, but she will keep her hand on it protectively, and say, "Maltin got all of your information, even though the scrying nearly killed her. But we had a deal, and we are honorable, so the price remains the same."

The truth is that Calla is a con artist. She is a 5th level rogue and targets adventurers who look like they have extra gold to throw around. If they question her further, she will "reveal" that the case contains a map to the final resting place of Pon Doltho, a legendary lost sword of great power. She will warn them however against seeking the sword, because the path is incredibly dangerous, and the sword itself is "riddled with temptation." She will also assess the adventurers' willingness and ability to pay and will state the "previously agreed upon price" as something she thinks they will pay—anywhere from 150 to over 1000gp. If the players say they don't know what she's talking about, she will apologize while revealing tantalizing clues to what might be in the case (I.e.—wealthy adventurers have been seeking Pon Doltho for years and tracked it to this area where her partner, the seer Maltin, was able to divine its true location. She mistook the players for these customers based on Maltin's description, etc). She won't offer a sale in that case, but will wait for the players to make an offer. She'll play up her reluctance to cheat her fictitious real clients in order to drive up the price.

If the players don't take the bait, Calla will leave and that will be the end. If they buy her map, though, Calla will remain and drink and talk with them for as long as they desire. She will look over the map with them if they want and if they start planning their trip, Calla will offer to find them any needed goods and services they might

mention... provided they give her a little seed money for down payments. Once Calla and the players part ways, she will disappear with their cash and never contact them again.

The map is of the local countryside and will lead the party to the abandoned and rundown one-room wooden temple of a local hunting god located in the middle of kobold-infested woods. Any research or a bardic knowledge check will confirm the legends of the sword Pon Doltho which helped establish Dehantrix as queen of the ancient Dehan Empire but has since been lost to time.

Calla is a 5th level halfling rogue, however her Charisma is 18, and her primary skills are Bluff, Assess, Forgery. DMs will need to think through Calla's encounter beforehand, because she is extremely good at the con game, and will not make any obvious missteps or blunders that will tip players off.

34. Sucker's Bet: The players enter a normal, nondescript bar that is about half full. Wherever the players ultimately settle down, after a few short minutes a large half-orc will approach their table. The half-orc, Thrael, will lay a shot of whiskey on the table in front of a randomly determined player. He will then cover the shot glass with a large wooden cup that he turns upside down and places over it. Thrael is clearly a little drunk, and he announces to the player, "Five silver pieces says that I can drink that shot of whiskey without touching the wooden cup! What say you, friend?" Without waiting for a response, Thrael will duck under the edge of the table and start making "Glug, glug" noises. Then he stands up, gets a very concerned look on his face. He looks at the cup, then at the table, then absently at the floor. He starts mumbling to himself, "Now how'd that go? Put the cup down, drink from under the... wait... was I to early on the table..."

Suddenly, Thrael's confused expression turns into one of joy and recognition as he apparently remembers what to do next. Quickly he picks up the wooden cup with one hand, and picks up the shot glass with the other and immediately quaffs the shot. Slamming the wooden cup down on the table, he looks triumphantly at the player and shouts, "Ha! Where's my five silver?" If the player refuses, Thrael will become belligerent and demand payment. He will resort to fisticuffs if necessary (he's unarmed).

If at any point someone points out to Thrael that he actually touched the wooden cup himself and lost the bet, Thrael will look confused and start mumbling to himself again, "No wait... I drank from the table... then I waited for him to... oh donkeys..." Realizing he screwed up the bet, Thrael then punches the player in the face and tries to run out the door of the bar.

If, before Thrael picks up the cup himself, a player lifts the wooden cup to check the shot glass, Thrael quickly drinks the shot and demands his five silver. In fact, this

common bar bet was just pulled on Thrael by half-drunk elf ten minutes before and Thrael approached the players with the same scheme to try to recoup his losses. Given his general level of stupidity coupled with his intoxication, he forgot how to pull off the bet half way through. Thrael is a first level fighter, unarmed and wearing leather armor.

35. Three Silver a Poke: The players enter a bar called, "The Dirty Troll". Living up to its name, the establishment is run down and quite dirty. A slight putrid smell of rotten vegetation pervades the place. Even though there are tables, the barkeep/owner is too cheap to hire a waitress and stopped serving anything other than ale several years ago. A half dozen regulars sit at the bar slowly drinking ale and talking local gossip with each other. At the back of the bar in a reinforced steel cage is a debilitated, malnourished troll. Even though it is in a steel cage, the troll's hands and feet are shackled and chained to the floor. Its waste litters the floor of the cage. A large window behind the cage has been opened in an effort to dissipate some of the odor. A large spear leans up against the wall next to the cage with a sign hung on it that reads "3 Silver a Poke. Use the house spear only—no outside weapons! If troll takes the house spear, you are responsible for retrieving it—don't lose the spear!" If the players try to poke or harass the troll, the barkeep will strictly enforce the 3 silver cost *per* poke. Multiple pokes invoke multiple prices. Given its regeneration, the pokes will heal, but given the poor health of the troll, it may take up to ten minutes to heal a simple stab wound (compared to the normal regeneration of entire limbs in three to six minutes in healthy trolls).

Many years ago the troll was enslaved and forced to work in a traveling circus. While performing in this town, the circus was mostly consumed in a raging fire. The circus disbanded, and sold the troll to this barkeep for 100 gold. It has lived chained up in the cage for the past two years, eating rotten scraps that the tavern keeper gets for mere coppers when the farmers' market closes. It is horribly malnourished and nearly blind from it. His imprisonment has rendered him addle-brained. It has neither the willpower nor the strength to try and take the spear from anyone who tries to poke it. It speaks only giant and can be heard to mutter under its breath, "End me" over and over. If the players somehow free it or fight it, it will neither run nor fight—it has lost the energy to do either.

36. Toll Bar: Three children stand outside the door of the bar. They consist of a human boy and girl, and then another boy who looks to be half-goblin (or maybe hobgoblin). All are roughly 10 or 11 years old. They are dressed shabbily and look like beggars. As the players try to enter the bar, the human boy will hold out one grubby hand and say, "The door charge is two coppers apiece."

Patrons who actually give them something (even if it's less than the stated price) will be thanked profusely and allowed to enter. If the players refuse, the children will block the door and repeat the demand, possibly taunting the players at the same time. They will not fight though and will retreat at any threat at all. If the players refuse to pay and have left mounts or other things outside, the children will attempt to steal or sabotage whatever they can.

Whether they were nice or not, the children will be waiting for the players when they emerge from the bar, only now there will be 15-20 of them; mostly human with a few half-goblins or half-orcs, an even mix of genders, and ranging in age from 7 to 13.

For generous players, the mob of children will be at the door, clustering around them and asking for more money. Once again, any token gesture will appease them. Failing to appease them will lead to mobbing and pickpocketing, and possibly aggression—the children will attack with sticks and knives, but only if the players seem intimidated at all. Any major threat or serious damage to one of the children will cause them to disperse again, leaving the wounded behind.

For players who failed to "donate" earlier, the children will be waiting on the roof when the players emerge from the bar. They will throw rocks and sticks and garbage down on the players while calling them names. This rain of debris lasts for 3 rounds and deals 1d6 points of damage per round to any of the players within 15 feet of the building (Reflex save for half damage). After 3 rounds (or any retaliation), the children will scramble down the back of the building into the alley and try to disappear into the town.

37. Tougher Than She Looks: When the players enter this otherwise normal pub, have them make spot checks (DC15). Anyone succeeding on their spot check will notice what looks like a young girl at a table in one corner arm wrestling a skinny looking man. The girl is wearing a simple peasant dress and her hair is tied back in two thick white pony tails. The two appear to be locked into a heated contest of strength. There are a handful of other patrons eagerly watching the match and (apparently) wagering on the winner. As the players sit down, the half dozen people watching will all shout and cheer as the young girl defeats the skinny man. At this point the skinny man gets up defeatedly and orders two large steins of beer for himself and the girl. Conversation at the girl's table will be loud and raucous.

If the party goes over for a closer look, they will see that the girl is neither human nor a girl. In reality she is a young, but adult, female gnome. She has gone to great lengths, however, to make herself appear more human— clipping her ears, thinning her hair to more resemble human hair, elaborately applied makeup to play down her gnomish features. The girl is Shanandra the Mighty (16th level fighter. Str 20, Dx 15, Cn 17, In 12, Ws 9, Chr 14, HP 140). Shanandra was raised in the circus. She was billed as the "Pint Sized Girl With the Strength of a Bear." She would wrestle and

compete with the audience in feats of strength, always winning. When the circus eventually burned and closed, she decided to travel on her own. Making her way from town to town and pub to pub. She drinks herself to sleep every night on the drinks she wins from arm wrestling barflies. What little money she needs, she wins by betting on herself.

If the party approaches her, she will challenge the strongest looking member to an arm wrestling contest—no stakes, just for pride. If it's pointed out that she's not actually a little girl, Shanandra will shrug and ask, "So you think you can't win?" If the player accepts, she will give half of an effort, making sure to show that she's at least a little stronger than average, but will let the player win. She will then act hurt and disappointed and go through a series of stretching exercises with her arm while challenging the player to another match— this time for dinner. If the player accepts, she will go all out to win. If the player doesn't accept, she will mumble an insult and otherwise drop the subject. If the player actually defeats Shanandra, she will live up to her obligation and pay for the player's dinner.

While Shanandra normally has breast plate armor and a great sword, she has forgone her equipment for the "little girl" outfit she adorns. If attacked, she will simply try to escape to her room, and grapple with an opponent only as a last resort.

38. Tricky Gargoyle: Sitting on the bar is small stone gargoyle statue. It is about two and a half feet tall, terribly ugly, and extremely heavy. Its face is carved into a wide impish grin and it holds a delicate looking stone flower in one hand. The bottom and back sides of it look ragged, as if the gargoyle was chipped away from its original location and brought here.

If the players don't seem interested in the statue, eventually one of the regular patrons will challenge them: "Bet you five silver you can't get the flower out of its hand." Anyone touching the gargoyle is instantly teleported 10 feet backwards (Will save at DC20 negates). Unfortunately, their equipment and clothing does not come with them and all falls in a heap while they land naked ten feet away. If a person touches it with a gloved or gauntleted hand, then only the glove or gauntlet is teleported.

When it happens, the whole place gets a huge laugh out of it. If a player touches it and makes their save (which happens occasionally), the whole bar lets out a collective "Awww!" but the flower cannot be moved in any case.

39. Twice the Mark: Once the players enter the tavern, they are immediately targeted by Jak and Dai'n, two doppelgangers who scam travelers from outside of town. The doppelganger have been working this particular tavern for several weeks and like it because the rotating manager/bartenders tend to leave for supplies in the

basement quite often, allowing the doppelgangers to shift in the shadowy corners into their personas to pull their graft. When the bartender leaves, Dai'n will take his form and appear, telling one of the players that his/her steed is improperly secured and needs to escort him out to fix the problem, hinting that he'd also like to offer the player some work/information/whatever the players are seeking at the bar. But Dai'n will only be escorted by the player alone. Once outside, Dai'n will lead the player a short way from the door and hem and haw about vague information and assistance, confessing that there is nothing wrong with the steed.

Once out, Jak (who has been outside the whole time) will take the form of the player and go back in. He will approach one of the other players, pull him close in and whisper that the bartender will be able to help them, but he needs two hundred gold. If Jak gets the money, he will take it outside and disappear, with Dai'n quickly getting rid of the other player and doing the same. If the player's figure out what is going on, or if anything goes wrong, both Jak and Dai'n will try to run away, changing shape in the crowded streets to disappear. Use the statistics for Doppelgangers in the Monster Manual.

40. The Unanswerable Question: Throngrin and Vlanshir are two female dwarf fighters (3rd level) who work security for a local nobleman. They are in the bar after a long shift patrolling their boss's hunting grounds for poachers. Both are halfway through their first serving of rum and are not impaired. After the players have been in the bar for a while, the pair will approach one of the players (preferably male) and Throngrin will ask, "My friend Vlanshir here and I have a bet going. She says you will find her more attractive because of her full, lush beard, but I say you will find me more attractive due to my stout, powerful frame. Help settle this bet if you will. Which of us is more attractive?" The truth is that both are extremely unattractive, even for dwarves. No matter which the party picks, the other will be insulted and demand a fight with the player as a matter of honor. If the player starts to win, the other dwarf will enter the fight to defend her friend. If the player refuses to pick either, they will both be insulted and assume the player (rightly) thinks neither is attractive. The women will refuse to accept an answer along the lines that both are "equally ravishing" and will insist on an answer—fighting with the player if he/she continues to refuse.

41. The Wayward Piper: Within minutes of entering the bar, the players will hear discordant flute-like music from the other side of the room. It is coarse and out of tune and not like music at all, but it is also somehow sweetly charming, like a child playing at making music; painful but evoking sympathy. No one else in the bar seems to take notice.

Soon Karby will come to where the players are to play his music for them. Karby is a very old human man. He looks like a drunken beggar and smells like one too. He has with him a magical set of Pipes of Charming which allow a skilled piper to create a Charm Person effect. Karby, however, is not a skilled piper, yet somehow, his clumsy attempts create an automatic sense of deep pity and empathy in those who hear it. Listeners who fail a Will save (DC 16) will be caught up in it and will immediately feel sorry for and protective of Karby, so that when he stops playing and holds out his hat, people instinctively want to throw him a coin and/or buy him a drink.

Wherever he travels, he never gets kicked out. Even though most places would never put up with begging, the owners just don't seem to have the heart to throw him out. Anyone who makes their save and chooses to be mean to Karby (because he will hang out a long time), will evoke the ire of the other patrons who will all be upset at whoever is picking on "poor old Karby." If not handled correctly, a bar could quickly become a mob.

42. We Should Go: The tavern is called The Noble Hound, and unless all the players just happen to be Aasimar or good Outsiders, all activity inside will stop as soon as they enter, and all eyes will be on them. The players should immediately note the abundance of paladin types in the bar, and that nearly everybody is clean and noble and of proud bearing. Lots of silver hair, radiant skin, and haughty looks.

The players have stumbled into an Aasimar bar, and if they don't immediately leave, the proprietor (a tall, stately and surprisingly well-muscled older woman named Sabrina) will call to them from across the room, "I'm sorry, but we don't serve your kind in here. You'll have to leave."

If the players cause trouble or refuse to go, they will be forcibly escorted from the bar. Sabrina is a retired Paladin of 6th level, and at her command, another 4 fighters and paladins will be at her side (all 4th and 5th level). Should things get out of hand, every patron in the bar will feel obligated to assist Sabrina.

It does not matter if the party is good-aligned. The rules say only Aasimar are allowed, and with all of them being Lawful Good, they're all about enforcing the rules. They don't *want* to hurt anyone, but things happen.

43. Weekend at Baldur's: A very boisterous group of toughs enters the bar. There are seven of them altogether: 1 human, 3 orcs, 2 half-orcs, and a giant orc, well over seven feet tall, who appears to have some ogre-blood in him as well. They are all male, and in their traveling leathers, they look for all the world like a band of brigands—which is, in fact, exactly what they are.

The very large one, Baldur by name, is very quiet and does not look at all well. He seems to be wounded and a sickly pale. This however does not stop the laughing and shouting and general rowdiness of the others. They all drink copiously and are having a great time. They will taunt and challenge other patrons in the bar, but largely in fun.

It will soon become clear to anyone paying attention, that Baldur is in fact dead. He was the band's leader and fell in combat today. So now his men are dragging his body from place to place as a sort of celebratory wake. His merry men will move his body around, and generally act as if he is still alive, even going so far as to have Baldur challenge others in the bar to tests of skill and strength (darts, arm wrestling, dueling, what-have-you), with the brigands doing their best to have their leader compete and win.

Anyone who allows themselves to be "beaten" by Baldur's corpse will immediately become the rogues' best friend, and they will be insulted if their new "friends" don't accompany them for the night's antics. Anyone who points out Baldur's not-living state or dares to best Baldur in a game will find themselves facing down six angry merry men looking to defend their fallen hero's honor.

If the wake makes it that far, the night ends with Baldur's body on a bonfire at the edge of town while his men continue drinking and telling great stories of Baldur's heroism until they are no longer capable of coherent speech.

The brigands are all warriors or fighters of levels 3 through 6.

44. When It Rains, It Pours: Wherever the characters are sitting, one of them (chosen randomly) will notice something dripping on them. It's just a couple drops at first, and the rafters are high up and dimly lit, so they will be unable to determine at first what's causing it. It wasn't raining out when they entered the tavern. Anyone making a successful listen check (DC 15) will hear a sort of whispering/shuffling noise above. At DC 20, they will be able to discern whispered voices and giggling. Close inspection of the dripping liquid will show it to be a rather stale and sour ale. The dripping will slowly increase, until suddenly a grig named Jiminy falls hard onto the table, followed by a gushing downpour of ale on top of him (about a barrel worth). The creature will be temporarily groggy and stunned, his wings droopy and his hair matted down.

In the rafters above, a group of 8 grigs had found 4 old stored and forgotten casks of ale and the dripping started when they tried to get one open. Eventually they broke a hole that dumped Jiminy on his butt and doused him with the ale. His friends will now taunt the players and demand that no one harm him. If the players are compliant, they will simply taunt and leave. If they feel threatened or provoked however, they will attack en masse with whatever is at hand, including throwing down the empty cask,

full casks, dead rats, etc. The grigs don't really care to hurt anyone, but they will do what they need to do to make a quick and safe rescue of Jiminy.

45. Where Everybody Knows Your Name: The players have entered a bar called "The Rotten Fish." While they are inside, the doors will quietly open and horribly skinny, purplish gray bald man will enter. No matter what time of year it is, he will be heavily dressed in several layers and only his face is exposed. Upon entering, the seven regulars sitting at the bar will notice him and immediately shout in unison, "Gerry!" and welcome him to sit with them at the end of the bar farthest from the entrance. A stench pervades the man, and anyone within ten feet of him must make a DC15 fortitude save or be wracked with nausea (-2 circumstance check to all skill checks, attacks or saves for 1d6+4 minutes). Gerry will happily join his friends and, after sitting, will eventually huddle over something in the corner conspiratorially. Upon closer inspection, Gerry is eating a human arm.

Gerry is a Ghast. Two years ago, Gerry was drunk at a bonfire outside a remote cemetery with his friends (the same friends that are in the bar with him now—one of whom is the bar owner) when he was attacked and mauled by a ghoul. His friends destroyed the beast, but it was too late for Gerry, who turned shortly thereafter. Feeling responsible, Gerry's friends helped him through the worst of times and made arrangements with the local prison and law enforcement for the corpses of any dead criminals, which they keep in the magicked icebox in the basement of the bar. They kept constant companionship with Gerry for that first year, to help him get through the wild "evil" undead longings, and after a while Gerry found his way back to his old life—working with a local wizard to clean bones off of skeletal displays that the wizard sells to collectors (often to hunters who have taken down the exotic game); drinking with his friends; and trying not to get into too much trouble. Gerry hasn't caused any trouble or killed anyone, so as a favor to the bar's owner, the local law enforcement looks the other way with regards to his unholy abomination.

If the party attacks, turns or destroys Gerry, his friends will attack them in a frenzy (they are each first level commoners). This will also reward them with a visit from the local law enforcement, who will harass them and try to run them out of town. If the party tries to talk to Gerry, they will find him to be quite likable and a very engaging storyteller—he's seen a lot of things in the cemetery and loves telling gross stories to disgust his friends.

46. Who Killed My Boy?: When Grumdi talks, people listen. Grumdi is an ogre. He is 10 feet tall and lean for an ogre. He is clearly quite old with leathery brown wrinkled skin and gray hair. He dresses ornately, as befits a chieftain of his stature, and when he bursts through the doors, he is flanked by his two largest ogre goons. He speaks in clear common when he bellows, "Give me the murderers who took my

boy!" If there are any dwarves or elves of any sort, Grumdi will approach them menacingly and demand answers.

The pair that Grumdi believes killed his youngest son are "a butt-ugly shaved little dwarf" and "a silver-skinned elf." Players making a successful Spot check (DC 15) might remember a dusky-skinned man—possibly elf—laughing and carousing with the serving girls at the back of the room earlier, but he seems to be gone now. If anyone questions Grumdi (not a wise idea), the body of his adolescent son is slung on the back of Grumdi's ox which is tied up beside the tavern (one of two oxen he has with him). Anyone examining the body will find that it has been brutalized, and Grumdi maintains that they tortured his boy before killing him.

Anyone threatening, hindering or lying to Grumdi becomes his eternal enemy, and he will seek to hurt or destroy them, even if he has to track them down. Anyone assisting Grumdi will become his friend. If that assistance actually leads to his targets, then Grumdi will be indebted and owe the helping party a favor.

The two ogre goons are completely loyal to Grumdi in all circumstances. Grumdi is exceptionally smart for an ogre and will not simply attack people blindly. His goal is revenge, and he knows enough to parley or escape and return another day.

His targets are Baerstolwef, a 4th level female dwarven ranger who is indeed scarred, shaved bald, and butt-ugly. She is the brains of the operation. Her partner is Robhammered, a swashbuckling silver-skinned 4th level elven fighter from a faraway land. He is none-too-bright, but can be quite charming. The two were on the trail of a beast that had terrorized a nearby village, when they encountered Grumdi's boy. Thinking him to be the culprit, they subdued him and tortured him for information. Later realizing their mistake, they killed him to keep him from causing further trouble. Grumdi has since roamed the countryside, terrorizing locals to get information and finally track the killers to this bar. Baer & Rob did stay there the previous evening, and Rob was still carousing, but seeing Grumdi enter, Rob went to find Baer and the two have already gathered their things and headed out of town.

Grumdi is an exceptional ogre with stats of St28/Dx10/Cn20/In14/Ws16/Ch14. He has 4 levels of Barbarian and 4 of Sorcerer. He wears +3 hide armor made from a green dragon's pelt and wields a +2 ogre-sized spiked greatclub (base 2d8 damage). His goons are standard ogres with +4 Str, +4 Con, and 2 levels of Fighter.

47. Yakkity Yak, Don't Talk Back: When the party settles into the bar, they notice two rowdy yakfolk (Monster Manual III) males drinking and talking boisterously at one of the center tables. If the party has never been exposed to a giant, horned yakfolk before, read them the description provided in the MMIII and make sure to impress on your players how intimidating these creatures are. After several minutes, the yakfolk (Karl and Pyoter) will pick out the smallest of the party and wait until no

one in the party is looking, and then throw wadded paper strips that they've torn out of a book at the player. Karl recently acquired the book (although he won't say where), entitled Upon the Education of Wyrmlings. The original purpose or value of the tome is irrelevant, because Karl and Pyoter have been tearing out pages and making spitwads at every watering hole between here and the Grotted Mountains. They will target the chosen player in this fashion incessantly, and if anyone looks in their direction, they appear to be deeply involved in some contrived conversation concerning the graffiti carved into their table top. If one of the party confronts them, the yakfolk will act confused, deny everything and claim that they don't know what they are talking about. Then when the player turns around, they'll peg them in the back of the head with a paper wad. The yakfolk will refuse to fight, stating that it would violate the laws of this town and would be disrespectful to the tavern keeper, but they will absolutely refuse to stop throwing paper wads at the player. If the players attack them, they will pull their weapons and fight back. If the players decide to leave, the yakfolk will laugh loudly as they depart and repeatedly cough the word "coward" very loudly.

48. Your Racist Friend: Brozhev is a mountain dwarf fresh off the mountain. He is actually a trapper and trader and is celebrating a big payoff after four months in the hills. He is only mildly intoxicated, and he smells strongly of ale and furs and sweat. His clothes look as if he wore them for his entire trip. He is a large dwarf—just over five feet tall and obese. Are you getting the picture yet? He's a very unpleasant dwarf.

Brozhev also has a strong dislike for "tall people." This is essentially anyone taller than he is, but he especially dislikes humans and elves whom he finds to be "stuck up." Since the bar is mostly full of humans, Brozhev is feeling a little lonely. So he will latch onto the first non-human, non-elf member of the party he sees. He would prefer a dwarf, but gnomes and halflings are just fine, too.

Brozhev then proceeds to become his new acquaintance's best friend. He will explain at length his tracking and trapping and gutting and cleaning procedures. He will brag about how well he did this trip and buy drinks for his new friend. He has little concept of personal space and will often lean in close to explain something "in private," but he doesn't bother to lower his voice at all when he does it.

Eventually, he will begin complaining about the "tall people." He'll go on about how much he hates those condescending humans and snooty elves. He'll use vulgar derogatory terms for them, and he'll constantly look to his new friend for agreement on these matters. He will assume that silence equates to agreement and will state so loudly. Sooner or later, if he is not stopped, this will lead to a group of laborers on the other side of the bar (8 of them, all 1st to 4th level commoners) to come looking to beat the snot out of the racist dwarf and his friend.

If Brozhev's new friend instead indicates that the friendship is unwelcome or that Brozhev's racist views are not shared, then Brozhev becomes indignant and assumes that the player is "just like THEM." He will become very angry ("What? Are you saying you're better than me?"), and depending on how much he's had to drink and how the players handle it, he could decide to take a swing at someone.

Brozhev is a 3rd level Ranger. His clothing counts as leather armor, and his only weapon is a small axe. He has a 20 Con (36 hp), and 14 Str.

49. The Zealot: Jared Twopence is an evangelical cleric who worships a long forgotten goddess of the sun, Kristine. Jared has been questing across the lands for well over three years trying to build his own church based on his goddess, but has not been successful, largely because people refuse to believe that a long forgotten goddess would have such a mundane, modern name. Nonetheless, Jared uses his spellcasting abilities and faith to prove to people the existence of his goddess, but most people don't have the attention span or inclination to listen. Over the years, Jared has gotten increasingly frustrated. Seeing the players in the bar, he will immediately try to talk to them and begin extolling the virtues of Kristine. If they rebuke him, he will become confrontational and abusive of the players. Don't they understand that Kristine is their only road to salvation? Jared is not above getting involved in a fight over these beliefs. Jared's is a 5th level cleric.

50. Zee: Zee is half goblin and half bugbear. He looks like a very hairy goblin, but tall and lean and strong. He is only 13 years old, but has about reached his full adult size at just over 6 feet. He was a slave in the iron mines of Bellath, but recently he killed his overseer, escaped, and then stole some decent clothes, some weaponry and some money. All of that was yesterday, and now Zee is 20 miles from the mines and enjoying his first drink as a free goblinoid. Until the bounty hunter comes into the bar and tries to take him into custody.

The altercation can take place at any time while the players are in the bar. Zee is a 1st level Rogue (use half-orc rogue stats), and the bounty hunter is a 4th level elf ranger named Raya. The ranger also has a large ferocious badger as a companion, but the badger will stay outside near his mount.

In their confrontation, Zee will be loud and shrill. He will use strings of obscenities that would make a dwarven sailor blush. He is no match for the elf, but he will charge in gamely, scrambling around the bar, mixing with other patrons, knocking over anything not nailed down, kicking flailing and fighting with anything he can get his hands on and generally causing as much confusion as possible. One might think he's looking to escape, but he is not. The only way Zee knows to face a conflict is head on.



It will be very clear from Zee's rantings that the elf is trying to return him to slavery and an almost certain death sentence.

If the players stay out of it, then the fight will be over in a matter of minutes, and Zee will be captured and hauled out. If the players do nothing, no harm will come to them. If however, they choose to get involved and end up saving Zee, he will be forever grateful and will follow them around in eager puppy-dog fashion forever. Zee is crude and foul-mouthed and impetuous and short-sighted and brash and noisy and obnoxious and totally amoral. But he is also very loyal and responds to any sort of positive attention at all.