



4 NONPLAYER CHARACTERS



Merisiel glided up silently behind the dark elf. She didn't recognize the priestess's bone regalia, but she didn't need to. They were all the same, down here.

"Do you really believe that?" The voice in Merisiel's head was low, throaty.

Suddenly the bone midden at Merisiel's feet erupted in writhing green tentacles. Merisiel slashed wildly, but even as she swung she could feel stinging barbs piercing her leather armor. Across the pit, the priestess laughed, her right hand twisted into a glowing copy of the tentacular horror.

"Stupid surface dwellers. You're all the same..."

CAST OF CHARACTERS

While player characters provide the focus and driving force of a game's plot, over the course of even a single adventure dozens or even hundreds of other characters take their entrances and exits, sometimes aiding, sometimes threatening, yet always contributing something to the tale. These are nonplayer characters, the populations of entire campaign worlds, the monsters and villains of plots crude and nefarious, allies and agents, royals and shopkeepers, and the limitless arsenal of a storyteller's imagination. For every player character with complete statistics and volumes of background there exist countless NPCs, some just as nuanced and well developed as veteran heroes, others two-dimensional and stereotyped, destined to speak but once before fading back into anonymity. Regardless of their role or impact on a campaign, a GM's legion of NPCs enables him to weave the tale he has to tell. Some swiftly become favorites, either of the players or GM, and take on roles bordering on the PCs' significance. Others are challenges to be avoided or overcome, whether reoccurring opponents or ravenous things straight from a bestiary's pages. Still others exist merely to give color and life to a world, commoners and passersby who merely brush against the PCs in their adventures, aiding, hindering, or simply living their lives as natives of a shared fantasy. Whether recurring or transitory, helpful or menacing, NPCs serve as the living descriptions of a campaign world, each eliciting a reaction from the collected players, and each helping to take the tale beyond the realm of one-sided narrative and into the experience of a vibrant, living adventure.

This chapter delves into the world of nonplayer characters: from designing the types of characters a GM might want to include in his story to making even the most peripheral personalities memorable. Beyond such advice and toolboxes of character creation also comes advice on detailing those most important of NPCs: villains. As with many sections in this book, this chapter can serve as a reference and toolbox for GMs during the course of their games, making use of the tables at the end of the chapter either as aids to give unanticipated characters a little extra flair or resources to provide your favorite NPCs the details they need to be truly memorable. In addition, an NPC Sheet is included in the back of this book for you to record the details of the NPCs you create.

DESIGNING NPCs

NPCs are a pivotal element in many Pathfinder adventures, especially those in which the PCs must deal with crucial non-combat situations or act in a civilized area. Like the supporting cast in a movie, NPCs cover a variety of roles with different degrees of importance, from second leads to

extras, and the way the GM designs them is open to a wide range of possibilities. Besides being potential opponents, NPCs can be an exciting source of support, information, and intrigue during an adventure. As *dramatis personae* in their own rights, important NPCs become the mouth and hands of the GM in the game world, allowing him to break from descriptive and rules-based talk in order to speak and act in first person. When acting out NPCs, the GM can roleplay fantasy characters as players do, sometimes putting on dozens of different personas in a single game session. Designing NPCs outside of gaming sessions is a task the GM should dedicate some time to as he creates his stories, although improvisation can be the source of unexpected and excellent ideas. In addition to time and imagination, the creation of NPCs requires good judgment, accuracy, and economy in generating a balanced set of abilities, writing a correct stat block, and giving the right amount of detail. Designing NPCs thus becomes an exercise of creativity, which the GM can cultivate by reading fantasy literature or watching fantasy on the screen.

While there is no right or wrong process for designing NPCs, creating interesting, useful, and memorable characters can be a daunting task. Chapter 14 of the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook* addresses the creation of NPCs from a rules standpoint—what one might consider the “science” of NPC creation. As this chapter delves into the “art” of creating NPCs, it's up to the GM to decide for himself—often on a case-by-case basis—the best methods for designing new characters. For villains and other major characters, this often means coming up with a concept and then devising unique statistics to support it. When building more mundane characters, utility and ease of use often take priority, with the GM adding personality to preexisting stats. In either case, the path to creating a valuable NPC begins with determining the character's role in a game.

NPC Roles

The functions performed by a character in a story are a way to define her role, as linear or complex as it may be. A character might constantly perform a single function, which makes for a linear role (like the cruel and unforgiving tyrant who does nothing but harass the heroes), or multiple functions, which makes for a complex role (the official that initially helps the heroes, but at some point turns against them after being bribed). These functions easily apply to prominent NPCs in Pathfinder adventures, and translate into the game as follows.

The Villain: Almost on a par with the hero, the villain is a necessary figure in a story-oriented Pathfinder adventure. More than any other NPC, the villain gives the GM the opportunity to exercise his creativity, thespianism, and deviousness.

In most campaigns, villains are predominantly characters with evil alignments. Since alignment is a required element in the game profile of an NPC, it can be a focus in the creation of the villain herself. Choosing one of the three tones of evil (chaotic, lawful, or neutral) and making a villain distinctive by adhering to that tone instead of just assigning her a generic “bad person” label can be a challenge for the GMs. For a storyteller who values the interpretative and narrative elements of the game, maintaining this ethical aspect can be as important and tricky as consistently keeping up an NPC’s accent or mimicking one’s low intelligence in strategic situations. Villains need not be merely characters with evil alignments, though. Modern fantasy literature, while deeply influenced by ancient myth, tends to characterize evil in subtler ways. Often bad guys are not ultimately corrupt, destructive, and terrifying evil beings. Eschewing the traditional concept of “pure evil,” modern villains often find themselves toned in different shades of gray rather than being a solid black in their nefariousness. A wizard who resorts to forbidden magic to restore a lost loved one, a leader who warmongers in the hopes of reclaiming his people’s ancient empire, or a cleric who hunts down non-believers in the name of righteousness—all of these offer basic examples of good ideals turned to evil ends. Of course, the nuances of a villain’s character and goals might ultimately prove as varied and rich as those of any PC, giving the GM limitless opportunities to exercise his imagination and deviousness in the crafting of all manner of exciting schemes.

In folktales, the villain is the source of woe in all its forms, and the Old English substantive for “evil” (*yfel*) was used by the Anglo-Saxons to mean “harm,” “crime,” “misfortune,” or “disease.” In keeping with these definitions, a villain’s possible functions might vary widely, her *modus operandi* defining her as much as her personality or goals. In crafting a villainous NPC, the GM might consider what type of game he wants to run and what abilities he needs his villain to possess, considering these variables to shape the antagonist’s aspect and attributes. If a villain needs to spy upon the heroes, she probably needs *scrying* magic, stealth, or a scouting minion; if she needs to impersonate a PC or NPC ally, she probably needs to be a transmuter, a shapeshifter, or the employer of a doppelganger; if she needs to provoke an accident, she must be able to curse the PCs, poison their food, bribe their associates, or the like. Behind the entire sequence can lurk a powerful, masterminding villain (often a devil, dragon, or magic-user in folktales), while different functions are assigned to different minions (the sneaky one who spies, the strong one who charges, the cunning one who deceives, and so on). Such elements need not be set in stone at a villain’s creation, and might be altered during the course of a

GOOD TO READ, GOOD TO PLAY

A good RPG session plays like a piece of good fiction reads. Although it may sound a little philosophical, this adage is reasonably accurate. The similitude between gaming and reading is subtle and hints at the importance of a story within the game. While the act of roleplaying might be compared to impromptu theater (in at least the time actively spent playing at the table), the reference to reading recalls the preparation work that precedes it. More than actual play itself, it is the backstage of the game that benefits from the GM being well read and imaginative, since knowing or researching a wide range means being able to summon additional details at the gaming table. Among the things found in books, of course, are interesting models for NPCs. In fantasy, these models come in literally thousands of shapes and sizes, but this variety proves much less substantial than it might look on the surface as most fantasy characters fall within the range of a relatively small number of archetypes. Yet for all the basic similarities of such characters, be they PCs or NPCs, it’s the nuances that set them apart. While King Conan and King Arthur occupy much the same role in their respective story cycles, their specifics distinguish them, creating distinct and memorable heroes despite any similarities. GMs become better storytellers by exposing themselves to such characters, whether in fiction, film, history, or any number of other pastimes. Taking inspiration from the works of other storytellers thus proves one of the surest ways a GM might add depth to his own characters and ultimately improve his game.

campaign, but should help frame a GM’s thoughts when deciding what villains he needs for his game.

The Donor: A typical character in folktales, often appearing as a wise and subtly powerful figure, the donor is usually limited in her actions, either because she is old or because she is a mystical or pacifist creature detached from mundane conflicts. Sometimes the heroes encounter the donor by chance, and sometimes the search for a donor is an intentional step in their quest. The donor is called such because she provides the heroes with something of value: special training (a fighting technique, a magic song), information (a hint to a riddle, a secret about a PC’s ancestry), or a talisman (a magic item, a helpful creature). The donor is usually good and benevolent, but might exact a high price for her help or put the heroes through a trial to test their mettle. In any case, donors usually keep their distance from the PCs, and the players seldom, if ever, get to know everything about them. A donor is the kind of ally

that helps with information, shelter, and equipment, not one that accompanies the PCs on their adventures. Used with moderation and cleverness, the donor is the most likely figure to appear when the heroes need to be rescued. In this case, the intervention of the well-known but unpredictable donor (especially if the heroes have some way to summon her help) works much better than an awkward *deus ex machina*. Powerful, good, and wise monsters—such as gold dragons, angels, or lammasu—are ideal donors, as well as any high-level NPC of a magic-using or knowledgeable class.

The Helper: Helpful and supportive, as the name implies, the helper tags along with the PCs on an adventure, or frequently encounters them during it. Once met, the helper remains a constant presence in the story (as opposed to the donor who is met only rarely or once). The helper can be a magical creature or expert companion that allows the heroes to face a particularly difficult situation or an “NPC object,” like a sentient weapon or a genie-summoning device. The helper is usually good, although mercenary helpers or intelligent magic items with annoying twists are common in fantasy stories. A compelled helper is entirely possible (such as the tenant of an *efreeti* bottle), with no limit to alignment whatsoever. Due to her constant presence at a PC’s side, the helper probably needs a more detailed development by the GM than any other allied NPC, especially when she does not belong to the category of “bound creatures,” like familiars, animal companions, and special mounts. When the GM introduces a helper, especially one with a rich background and a detailed personality, she is likely to give lots of information about herself to the players, perhaps even her stat block for use in a battle. Whereas the donor remains mostly a mystery, the helper is much like a fellow PC in terms of amount of knowledge gained about her. Helpful, skilled, or magical monsters—usually less powerful than donor-like ones—can be excellent helpers, fey creatures, fragile outsiders, and magical beasts being the some of the more suitable types. Even a weak NPC-class character who possesses a key ability or magic item might be an excellent helper.

The Patron: This NPC directly sends the heroes on their quest or sponsors them somehow. Above all, the patron is interested in his goal and wants to achieve it via the PCs. The patron is usually a notable exponent of some established rule (the archetypical patron in folktales being the king of the land), and an important element of his function is maintaining an honorable deal with the PCs. Patrons usually have goals aimed at improving their own or their community’s fortunes and are often generous in their deals with the PCs. When the patron is good, his role can merge with the donor, as he provides something useful for the heroes and supports them with his resources. The patron can also be evil, though, and his

role can merge with that of the villain, as he deceives the PCs about his purpose, sends them on a suicide mission, or uses them as scapegoats or *agents provocateur* against their will. A patron does not need particular skills or magic powers, as his power and potential to reward are what really matter. For this reason, the patron function can easily be performed by non-spellcasters and NPC-class types, the aristocrat being the most iconic.

The Victim: This NPC is the direct target of the villain’s woe. His role can merge with the helper if he lends a hand to the heroes during the adventure, or with the patron should he possess the ends but not the means to aid himself. Most probably, the victim is good and evokes sympathy from the PCs. Without the need of a donor’s wisdom, a helper’s skill, or a patron’s wealth, the victim can simply be an embodiment of weakness and vulnerability, but he can also share the characteristics of one or more of the aforementioned roles. It is also possible to conceive of a victim as an evil being. For example, an evil witch might be exposed to the threats of a dragon neighbor (a thing that makes her a genuine victim), and put on the traditional disguise of the good old woman to coax the heroes into helping her. In some situations, the NPCs can become victims of the PCs, the most classic case being the prisoner dilemma, where the heroes must decide what to do with captured foes.

NPC Basics

Once a GM knows what role his NPC needs to fulfill, the character’s details can begin taking shape. While not every NPC needs to be a unique masterpiece of imagination, every character the PCs interact with—those important enough to have a speaking role—should have at least three core elements: appearance, motivation, and personality. These aspects answer three questions fundamental to every NPC, from shopkeepers to kings: how do they look, what do they do, and how do they do it? How much effort the GM puts into detailing and refining the answers to these questions relates proportionately to the NPC’s importance to a story and his time spent interacting with the PCs. As such, an NPC who appears but once probably only deserves a few notes or a moment’s improvisation to convey the most basic traits, while a major character benefits from greater details, which might be revealed or evolve as the PCs interact with him. Thus, GM should consider the following character aspects as they design their NPCs.

Appearance: Every NPC worth describing has an appearance, something that sets the character apart and distinguishes her from the faceless masses as a unique individual. This might be nothing more than reference to the color of an NPC’s hair and noting her age, or it might be a detailed account of her beauty or ugliness. A detailed description can do much to determine whether an NPC is memorable but might also suggest deeper

elements. Some of an NPC's physical traits dictate rules aspects (race, blindness, a limp, and so on), others can be merely cosmetic, and still others might reveal clues in a well-planned plot. For GMs wishing to delve past the superficial, some traits might even prove portentous. In folktales and myths, a typical example is the "mark of the hero," which allows others to know her true identity. Such traits can lead to identification (like Odysseus's leg scar) or provoke some kind of reaction in a monster. In the past, it was a common belief in some cultures that evil people are somehow marked, but also that a hero is born with a distinctive sign on the body or receives it during her initiation or adventures. Fantasy literature features innumerable examples of such traits used as plot devices, and whether meaningful or random, a unique description of an NPC is among the primary elements that help a character stand out in the players' minds.

Motivation: With any character, regardless of the storytelling medium, it's vital to know what is at stake for that individual. Knowing an NPC's motivation is the best way to have her behave in a logical and coherent manner in the game. An NPC who is out to avenge her murdered family members will be more motivated—and therefore braver—in situations where that goal is at stake. A normally timid scholar might take greater risks to recover a rare tome than to rescue a princess. Motivations need not be elaborately detailed for most characters; one line such as "family murdered by orcs" or "obsessed with gaining knowledge" is often sufficient. By the same note, not every motivation needs to be dramatic either. The vast majority of NPCs met in a campaign likely have quite mundane goals, such as "move to a new town," "romance the local starlet," or "work for weekly pay." While many such goals frequently prove beneath a party's notice, the more interesting and unusual objectives typically come to light along with the extraordinary character who possesses them.

Personality: This element describes an NPC's basic outlook on life, and typically one or two descriptive notes to this purpose are all that are needed. Is the NPC friendly and helpful? Or is he gullible, cynical, pessimistic, sarcastic, lazy, or hot-tempered? Such personality traits govern how the NPC reacts to most situations, commands, or requests. Giving an NPC an interesting and dynamic personality means making the interaction with him more enjoyable, both for the GM, who must impersonate the NPC, and for the players, who are in for a pleasant chat, compelling argument, or good listening experience. An aspect of an NPC's personality that deeply affects his behavior and decisions, if known by the PCs, can be exploited to win his confidence or outmaneuver her, depending on the situation.

In recurring NPCs, the GM might create more elaborate and nuanced personalities,

or even change a character's attitude slowly over time—novelists and screenwriters call this character development, and the history of literature and film is filled with works themed solely around events leading to a single change in a character's outlook. Thus, a character who might begin with no more than the note "conniving and ill-tempered" can evolve dramatically with details like "distrustful of elves" and "sympathetic toward youths who remind her of her lost son." How much work a GM puts into detailing an NPC's personality should relate directly to the character's importance to a campaign. Few PCs will care if the local smith aspires to move to the big city if he never has a speaking role, while a major villain with no greater personality than "heartless and hateful" will likely feel two-dimensional after the third or fourth meeting.



MAKING NPCs UNIQUE

Assuming that the GM decides to give an NPC some depth, he will likely want to make her as memorable and entertaining as possible, and might consider the following points to help raise an NPC above a two-dimensional stereotype.

Alignment: Is the NPC's alignment coherent with her actions? Does her alignment give her any advantages or disadvantages? Alignment should be an effective guideline in defining the behavior and choices of an NPC. Most often, a rigid adherence to a good and evil alignment makes for more memorable characters, but characters whose goals and deeds vary through shades of gray help lend an air of realism to the game world.

Ally: Who is the NPC's best friend? What is her relationship with the NPC and the PCs? Like the PCs, NPCs often have someone at their side to help them. Designing an NPC's cohort, hireling, or bound creature as a special ally with a unique personality and cool abilities can be a way to make her master more interesting.

Background: What happened to the NPC in the past? Does that affect the PCs in the present somehow? Designing a background for an NPC, the GM can give an explanation for her appearance, behavior, and characteristics, and perhaps for class abilities, special powers, or unique features. An NPC's background can merge with that of the adventure itself (especially if the NPC belongs to a long-lived race), making her an interesting source of information or even a living witness to some key event in the past.

Object: Does the NPC possess an object that sets her apart somehow? What is this object like and how does it affect the game? An object such as a magic item can work much like an ally in giving an NPC more flair and weight, and can do it with more subtlety and effectiveness than a living creature. In fantasy, a totally unassuming character can become the protagonist of a story only because she possesses an artifact. Borrowing or acquiring the object from its owner can be a goal of the PCs, of course, and can be done through persuasion, bribery, or combat.

Quirks: A quirk can be anything that sets a particular NPC apart: a fondness for garlic, a distrust of elves, the habit of telling the same story over and over, or even a catchphrase such as "my old gran always used to say..." One or two quirks do a lot to convey personality, but beware, too many and the character becomes cartoon-like and ridiculous.

Secret: Does the NPC have a secret? How can it be revealed and what might be the effects of the revelation? The secret can be knowingly kept by the NPC or something unknown to her. In any case, a twist in a major NPC's background usually entails a twist in the

story, and the GM can reveal the NPC's secret not only to add excitement, but actually to change the course of an adventure. A secret can also be seen as a focal point in an NPC's background that might shape the character into more than she initially seemed to be.

Voice: An NPC's voice—accent, tone, and choice of words—is an invaluable tool in conveying personality. Not every GM has the acting talent to present pitch-perfect NPCs by voice alone, but most GMs can surprise themselves—and their players—with a little effort.

NAMING NPCS

Creating interesting and authentic-sounding fantasy names is a constant challenge for GMs. Even if monsters and NPC extras can remain anonymous, the slightest amount of non-combat interaction immediately triggers the need for a name. With the flourishing of the fantasy genre, almost all fictional names have been repeated, twisted, and anagrammed ad infinitum, and like NPCs themselves, names constantly run the risk of making a lame impression on the players. The GM should not be excessively afraid to make such mistakes, as lousy names are often an aspect of real life, but he should nonetheless ponder the following possibilities.

Real Names: Sounding familiar and open to variations, real names are often a good place to start. Fantasy literature provides many examples of characters with real-life, common names, although such real-world names are rarely used alone, and are more often coupled with a fictional family name or a title that hints at a character's occupation, aspirations, or qualities.

Cultural Names: If the GM's world, or a region of it, reproduces a historical culture, using names from that culture's language is an obvious choice for local NPCs. If the fantasy culture is analogous to a historical culture from Earth, like ancient Egypt, the GM can research basic information about that culture's language, find out its most common component syllables, and combine them to create new names that sound and feel like the real thing. Countless books and online resources offer lists of names by country or culture, and often include various inspirational meanings. Such names at best feel authentic and at worst fantastical, yet should work either way.

kennings: Kennings, poetic words that express a metaphor, are a great choice for fantasy names. The GM can combine telling words about a character in a single word and use it alone (such as "Knife-eater") or in connection with a distinctive first name (such as "Nuada Silverhand"). Archaic forms of common words might also be used to create kennings to great effect. GMs should be thoughtful when granting an NPC a name that obviously doesn't suit the character (like a seamstress with the name "Redblade"), as the name might prove comedic or, in some

cases, prophetic. Regardless, such names tend to be all the more memorable for the incongruity.

Invented Names: The GM is, of course, free to throw vowels and consonants in the lottery wheel and see what happens. In this case, the sequence of certain letters and the length of the name can be used to convey a suitable verbal image. Savage creatures might have guttural names, full of hard and grunting sounds, while more elegant beings might use soft, lilting vowel sounds. GMs might go so far as to try to invent names tied to an NPC's race or culture, like the sounds in a mermaid's name being reminiscent of the rush of the surf, or a stone giant's name sounding as though it were full of breaking rocks. In any case, the GM should make sure to say his newly invented name out loud several times with several variations to avoid any laughable mistakes—or obvious rhymes—mid-game.

STEREOTYPES

One danger a GM might encounter when designing NPCs is to rely too heavily on the stereotypes drawn from well-known characters in fantasy stories. Myths and folktales prove rife with repetition and overly familiar characters, leaving GMs with quite a challenge in coming up with original NPCs. The key is to take the old building blocks and arrange them as differently, imaginatively, and yet as reasonably as possible. If groan-worthy and tired NPC tropes cannot be avoided, they should be worked into something fresh and palatable, or traditionally pleasant. Is it bad for the innkeeper to be an ex-adventurer? Not that bad if we have an innkeeper with an interesting personality or secret. Is it bad for the good king's advisor to be sly and scheming? Not that bad if she turns out to be the clever, if shady, opponent of a greater villain manipulating the throne. As long as his creation is balanced, functional, and believable, the GM should think of originality as a welcome addition rather than a necessity.

MONSTROUS NPCs

The concept of NPC includes any and all creatures not controlled by a player, although NPCs are commonly associated with a measure of deliberateness and design work, while monsters are more likely drawn whole cloth from the pages of the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* or similar ready-made resource. Any creature has the potential to be an NPC, though. Anything the PCs decide to talk with instead of slay might have a reaction: something to say, views shaped by its culture, and an attitude toward the PCs dependant on its alignment and the PCs' actions. Many monsters are simply NPCs whose purpose is to be an opponent for the PCs, but spells like *charm monster* can change all that very quickly, and so can other actions on

AVOIDING NPC OVERWORK

A lovingly crafted, fully realized NPC can take almost as long to create as a player character. While the players only need to create one character each at any time, the GM might need to create several NPCs for each adventure. Here are a few tips for GMs to help avoid NPC burnout.

Efficiency: If an NPC only needs generic “townsperson” stats, there is no need to calculate every skill point for a given NPC or to roll stats for every soul in a village. Some NPCs—such as the anonymous voice at the back of the crowd shouting, “Burn the witch!”—do not need stats at all. Although the rules exist to create every commoner in complete detail, creating full statblocks should be saved for NPCs who really need a significant level of detail.

Go Generic: A selection of generic NPC stats might require work at the start of a campaign, but they will be used again and again. Adjusting a point here and a point there is enough to fit most NPCs for their purpose in a particular adventure. Chapter 9 provides complete statistics for many regularly occurring fantasy NPCs, though highly specialized games might be well served by filling in any expected gaps.

Repurpose: Game stats never go bad. If an adventure calls for specific stats and the GM has access to them from another source—past campaigns, published adventures, this guidebook—repurposing those statistics can save a great deal of effort, and with a few changes, the players will never know they weren't custom-built for the current adventure.

A Word Is Enough: There is no need to create a detailed life story, even for a major recurring NPC. Where backstory is important, a few short notes usually provide everything the GM needs.

the part of the PCs, such as not simply killing everything they encounter. Turning monsters into NPCs creates some great roleplaying opportunities. For example, all orcs and kobolds are not alike—at least in their own opinion—and they have goals of their own beside standing in a dungeon location waiting for PCs to come and kill them.

GMs should remain aware of a creature's setting and believability when considering monstrous NPCs. Although a conversation with a hobgoblin might prove novel in the right circumstance, the surest way to make the local green grocer interesting is not to make him a bugbear, while having the true villain of a campaign be an awakened pigeon can shatter the believability of even the most outlandish fantasy campaign. An unusual race should never be considered a replacement for the work of creating an interesting personality and motivation for a character, and monstrous NPCs should be thought through just as thoroughly as normal NPCs.

LIFE OF AN NPC

Once a GM knows what roles he needs NPCs to fill in a game and has a few notes about their specifics, it's time to let the NPCs loose in the venue of an actual game. Transforming an NPC from an idea into an actual personality interacting with or facing off against the PCs proves one of the most challenging and rewarding aspects of any roleplaying game, often being one of the surest differences between a mediocre game and an extraordinary one. However, it requires not just a measure of acting talent but also fine judgment on the part of the GM to make an NPC feel like an active individual while avoiding common traps that such characters can present.

BUILDING CONNECTIONS

In order to help the players see NPCs as actual characters and not just conveniences or cardboard opponents, the GM must work to build relationships. In the real world, people get to know other people through mutual connections or repeated contact. The more contact, the more a connection grows—for better or worse. In the game world, PCs might get to know NPCs the same way.

NPC Friends and Family: Giving player characters NPC dependents and family members is often an unpopular move, as players can readily see them as nothing but a liability. They are sometimes overused to drive adventure plots: the kidnapped sweetheart, the accident-prone brother or cousin, the gambler buddy who is forever needing to be rescued from his creditors, and so on. For players (and therefore PCs) to regard an NPC with any kind of affection, she has to be useful at least as often, and to the same degree, as she is a liability. Otherwise, as in real life, patience becomes exhausted and friends and relatives are disowned.

Many adventurers are rootless wanderers, either far away from home and family or separated from them by war, tragedy, or death. If a PC has relatives in the game, they should be established right at character generation, as part of the character's backstory and with the involvement of the PC. A barbarian has fellow tribesfolk, a cleric has brothers or sisters in faith from a seminary or novitiate temple, and so on. It's a weak and potentially frustrating move to merely have an NPC appear in a session and claim connection to or entitlement with a PC without the player's consent. When built into a character's story and gradually developed (usually over the course of an entire campaign) to be a useful and interesting addition to a story, such NPCs can swiftly become favorites, worth both running to and protecting when need be.

NPC Contacts and Traders: Often shopkeepers and simple townsfolk get overlooked in a campaign, but even in such seemingly mundane interactions clever GMs can find

opportunities to forge connections and have the fates of PCs and NPC intertwine. Such supplementary characters have every bit as much potential to be interesting and useful NPCs as those integral to an adventure. Giving these characters even basic personalities encourages PCs to cultivate contacts with them, potentially building a foundation for a growing business relationship or friendship. Once a sense of value is established, the GM can begin to use such NPCs as means of passing along information, routes into future adventures, or even simple boons (see pages 88–89).

NPC Allies, Followers, and Hirelings: It has been said that the primary duty of a leader is to be a fit person for others to follow, and it is the duty of every PC to nurture good relations with NPCs in their employ or under their command. The attitude of any NPC toward the PCs (both individually and as a group) is something the GM should note and track, and that should be reflected back in the NPC's attitudes and actions. Several options exist for PCs to interact with helpful NPCs and hangers-on. While many such NPCs follow the PCs for payment or their own reasons, when there is a clear chain of command linking the PCs to an NPC, the Leadership feat likely comes into play. These rules should make it easier for PCs to get what they need out of specialized NPCs in terms of service and obedience, but it does not entail carte blanche to mistreat an NPC or routinely put him into unreasonable danger. Eventually a mistreated follower will desert the PCs, or harbor a grudge that leads to sloppy work, vulnerability to overtures by an enemy, or even an attempt on the life of one or more PCs.

DEAD ENDS

Sometimes the death of an NPC leaves the player characters at a dead end, especially if the NPC dies before passing along some information that is vital to the progress of the adventure. The PCs might kill an NPC they were supposed to interrogate, or an unlucky die roll might claim the NPC's life too soon. This situation is not so much of a nightmare as many GMs might think, and there are many ways to deal with it.

Dying Words: If an NPC has information to give the PCs—and if she regards them as friends and allies—the information can be passed on with the NPC's dying breath. A message like this will be short—probably no more than a half-dozen words—and there will be no opportunity for the PCs to ask questions. “Look behind the altar” or “Beware the third pillar” work well as dying words, but “The leader of the Merchants' Guild is secretly the high priest of an evil cult” does not.

Searching the Body: Searching a dead NPC's body can provide the PCs with a handwritten note or some vital object that might allow them to piece together the information they might otherwise have gained from the living NPC. Again, there is no opportunity to ask questions, and the PCs

will have to make sense of the information for themselves. In the event of death by particularly destructive means, a page or two might be blown clear. The PCs will have to act quickly but might be able to recover some information.

Speak with Dead: If the PCs are able to recover a dead NPC's body, the spell *Speak with Dead* allows them to ask a number of questions, depending on the caster's level.

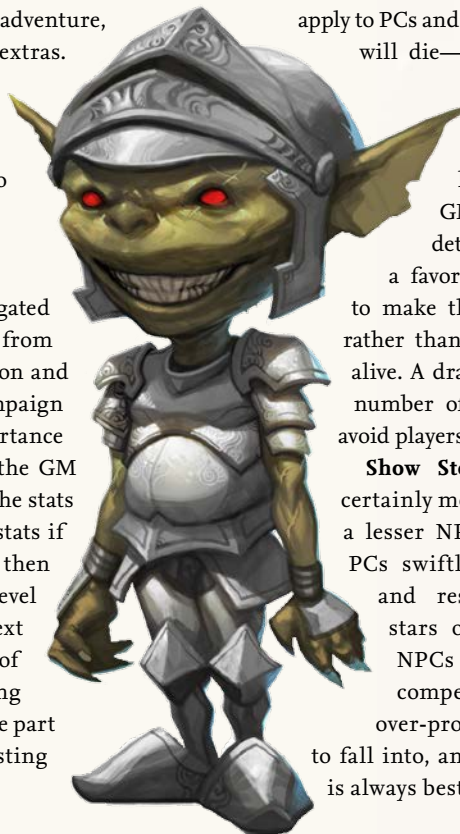
Ghostly Visitations: If all else fails, the PCs might receive a visit from the dead character's ghost, or have a vision in a dream, which conveys about the same amount of information as dying words. Such supernatural messages should be brief and rarely used, lest they lose the feeling of supernatural portentousness.

WHO'S IN CONTROL?

The term "nonplayer character" suggests that NPCs are characters played by the GM, but according to circumstances and GM preference, they might also be played by one or more assistant GMs, or by players whose characters have died in situations where it is not feasible for the party to meet a replacement PC. PCs who gain devotees might also take on the role of playing one of their followers. Who plays which NPCs is ultimately up to the GM, but often making a secondary character a player's responsibility allows the GM to remain focused on the story and keeps him from giving a single character and her retinue an unfair amount of attention. Regardless of who plays an NPC, the important distinction is that PCs play the "starring roles" in a roleplaying adventure, while NPCs are secondary characters and extras. Yet remember that just because NPCs are usually played by the GM, they don't always have to be and can afford new or guest players a unique opportunity to participate in the game.

BEYOND EXPECTATIONS

Occasionally a throwaway NPC, one relegated to a limited role and with few expectations from the GM, comes to life, captures the attention and interest of the PCs, and grows into a campaign regular. If an NPC starts to assume an importance beyond that planned for in her creation, the GM should not be concerned. Continue to use the stats created for the character (or generic NPC stats if necessary) until the gaming session ends, then make it a priority to create the required level of detail for the character before the next session. NPCs that grow organically out of a challenging adventure, an entertaining interaction, or merely player enthusiasm are part of what keeps a campaign vital and interesting for even the most farsighted GM.



NPC TRAPS

As NPCs make up one of the most pervasive and important parts of any campaign, they also present an opportunity for some of the greatest problems. Where faulty rules can make challenges unbalanced, a misused NPC risks ruining a game's believability or causing player frustration. Therefore, GMs should bear a few common NPC traps in mind.

Competitiveness: Although NPCs are usually played by the GM and some have goals conflicting with the PCs, the GM should not make the mistake of competing with the players. Roleplaying is a collaborative experience, not a competitive one, with an adventure's story being told by the very act of the PCs overcoming challenges. If an NPC impedes this fundamental arrangement, the story doesn't progress and the players might grow frustrated and disinterested. While this doesn't mean the PCs have to win all the time, any failure should be temporary and feel as though it adds to the story or is rooted in the rules of the game, not in the favoritism of the GM for his pet creations. After all, the game ends if the NPCs ever "win."

Over-Protectiveness: While players can (and should) become very attached to their characters, a GM can sometimes become too attached to a particular NPC. The GM might become so invested in such characters that rules are bent or broken and the players' suspension of disbelief is threatened. Nothing is more harmful to a game than accusations—or even suspicions—of GM bias, and groups have even been known to disband over them. The rules apply to PCs and NPCs with equal force, and NPCs will die—sometimes even NPCs that the

GM spent a great deal of effort creating or for whom he had greater plans. If an NPC's death leaves the PCs at an impasse, the GM still has a number of options as detailed earlier. If the NPC is simply a favorite, then the GM should strive to make the character's death memorable rather than trying desperately to keep her alive. A dramatic death is preferable to any number of improbable survivals and can avoid players nursing grudges over GM bias.

Show Stealers: While a major villain certainly merits some time in the spotlight, a lesser NPC who regularly upstages the PCs swiftly garners the players' dislike and resentment. The PCs are the stars of the show, so to speak, and NPCs are supporting characters, not competitors for screen time. As with over-protectiveness, this is an easy trap to fall into, and erring on the side of caution is always best.

NPC BOONS

Fantasy literature is filled with examples of characters with wondrous powers who have no interest in being heroes or villains. Sages content to watch events unfold as they will, clerics imbued by the gods with special powers, herbalists with knowledge of special concoctions, all have unique abilities and insights that are theirs alone and, should such characters come to favor friendly adventurers, might use their special influence and abilities to turn the course of entire campaigns. To represent the unique skills and powers of individual NPCs and to grant PCs an occasional rules-related benefit for their interaction with the characters of a campaign's setting, the GM might devise boons to have certain important NPCs grant those PCs they come to favor.

In short, a boon is a quantifiable, non-monetary way an NPC might help the PCs. This might take the form of a discount on goods or services, a one-time bonus on a specific skill check, or even a simple magical benefit that only that character can provide. The nature of a boon depends more on an NPC's role in a campaign world than any statistical element. As position in society doesn't necessarily correlate with class levels or specific rules, boons are largely based on a GM's sense of logic and campaign believability. A young prince who is merely a 1st-level aristocrat might thus be able to grant a far more favorable boon—granting a pardon, financing a voyage, decreeing a law—than a baker statted out as an 11th-level commoner.

Boons are not wantonly granted, and PCs should not expect to gain useful aid from every NPC they meet. Only NPCs with an attitude of helpful grant such benefits, and usually even then only to PCs they've come to trust over a significant period of time or those who have done them meaningful personal services. In such relationships, NPCs are more likely to favor an individual than an entire adventuring party, making it possible for only one party member to be granted a boon while less favored members are overlooked. PCs shouldn't expect all NPCs to grant boons; some just might not have anything special to provide or aren't important enough to have much to offer. The success of those who try to extort boons from characters using mind affecting magics is largely up to the GM, as the effects of mundane boons might easily be guessed, while more unique ones might only be known to the NPC. Regardless of the effect, PCs should never have direct control over the granting of boons—PCs never get boons they can grant and cannot force even the closest allies to grant benefits against their will.

What a boon entails varies widely, depending not just on the NPC who provides it, but the tastes of the GM and

needs of a campaign. At their heart, boons are intended to be a simple way for GMs to provide PCs with a minor rules-related benefit in reward for developing bonds with NPCs. Boons are never monetary, though they often have a monetary value, and should feel like favors between friends, not something that would change the life of either the characters or NPC. They might occasionally involve established elements of the rules—like a discount on equipment or adding a bonus on a skill check in a specific situation—but such occurrences should prove minor. Boons tend to take three forms: favor boons, skill boons, and unique boons.

Favor: Any character of any class or social level might seek to aid their friends, with favors embodying such benefits. A shopkeeper granting a 10% discount on his goods, a nobleman using his influence to set up a meeting with a local lord, or a retired adventurer loaning someone his masterwork longbow all count as favors.

Skill: Certain NPCs can share their expertise in specific fields or pass their influence on to others. Skill boons are minor bonuses on skill checks that an NPC might pass on to a favored PC. As a guideline, skill bonuses usually grant either a +2 bonus on a skill in a very specific situation—never on all uses of a skill—or a one-time +4 bonus on a specific skill check. For example, a famous merchant might give a character his signet ring, providing a +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks made with other merchants in his home city's marketplace; a scholar of a lost city's lore might instruct a PC, granting her a +2 bonus on Knowledge (history) checks made regarding that ruin; or a guardsman might even allow a friendly PC to call in a favor he has with a local pickpocket, granting a one-time +4 bonus on an Intimidate check made against that individual.

Unique: The rarest of all boons, unique boons are special powers an NPC might grant that are exclusive to that character and fall outside the purview of his class's typical abilities. Unique boons are special abilities too minor to be part of a character's class abilities or so specific to a story's details as to require a GM's customization. A ghost who can grant a favored PC the power to see through her evil illusionist husband's illusions; a cleric of the god of light who can grant a blessing that causes an ally's weapons to deal an additional +1 point of damage on all attacks made against the shadowy creatures haunting the nearby catacombs; or an alchemist who can concoct a potion making the drinker immune to brown mold for 24 hours, all might be example of unique boons. As such boons have the most flexibility and the widest potential for exploitation, GMs should limit unique boons to be useful only once or to prove relevant for but a single adventure.

What follows is a list of boons that might be offered by members of each of the NPC classes in the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*. As it would be impossible to cover all

the possibilities of NPC situations and potential boons, the rest of this section should be considered a guide to creating your own boons or a shopping list from which you might choose boons to add to NPCs in a campaign. GMs looking for more specific examples should see Chapter 9, as each NPC therein includes an example boon that might be granted by such a character. Although the boons listed here detail some granted by characters with specific NPC classes, any NPC of any class can grant a boon.

ADEPT

While users of divine magic are often regarded simply as healers, their wisdom and vaunted positions mean they can have much more to offer.

Favor: Free healing on a single occasion.

Favor: Letter of recommendation to lower-ranking priests, ordering them to help the PCs as required (granting the aid of a 1st-level adept hireling for 3 days).

Skill: Favorable introductions to contacts in a local church, providing a PC a +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks made to influence members of that specific church.

Skill: Proves especially knowledgeable in mysterious alchemical techniques, granting a PC a +4 bonus on one Craft (alchemy) check made to create an alchemical item.

Unique: Can brew 4 unique potions that instantly heal the disease filth fever.

Unique: Allows the PC to commune with the spirit animal of his tribe, granting the PC the ability to *speak with animals* of a specific regional species once per day.

ARISTOCRAT

Aristocrats vary in rank from village squires to emperors, with most having wealth and position that grants them great influence in a community.

Favor: Provides an invitation to an aristocratic event, such as an estate party, royal gala, or public celebration.

Favor: Use of influence to save the PCs from prosecution for a crime.

Skill: Offering a day-long primer on local courtesies, granting the PC a +2 bonus on a Knowledge (nobility) check for the city or region.

Skill: Attends a character on his visit to the royal court, granting the PC a +4 Sense Motive check on interactions with the court's members during that outing.

Unique: Loans a ship and provides a crew for a voyage to a distant land.

Unique: Grants a PC a minor, landless title that affords him access to certain local rights.

COMMONER

Although not usual famous or wealthy, commoners have a wide variety of skills and can usually come up with creative ways to repay favors.

Favor: Provides room and prepares an elaborate feast in a PC's honor.

Favor: Provides a 50% discount on a high quality, non-magical item made using one of his Craft skills.

Skill: Freely uses his highest Craft or Profession skill for the PC for a month of service (perhaps crewing a vehicle or ship, tending to a rare plant, or training an animal).

Skill: Shares rural remedies, granting the PC a +2 bonus when using Heal to treat diseases.

Unique: Creates a map or leads a PC through the local wilderness to a secret location only he knows about.

Unique: Competently manages a home or business for an absentee PC.

EXPERT

Skilled craftsmen, professionals, and learned members of society regularly have a wide range of specific talents and obscure information that can prove useful to PCs.

Favor: Provides material for a PC, cutting the price to create a non-magical item in half.

Favor: Can find a seller to buy any non-magic item or a buyer for any magic item.

Skill: Grants access to an exceptionally well outfitted workspace, granting a PC a +4 bonus on a specific Craft or Profession check.

Skill: Teaches a PC a trick of the trade, granting a perpetual +1 bonus on one Craft or Profession check that the PC and expert share.

Unique: Obtains membership in a regional guild, providing a PC with a 10% discount on a certain kind of goods in a wide region.

Unique: Can create a special tool that opens an ancient lock, circumvents an impassible trap, or replaces a part of a fabulous broken mechanism.

WARRIOR

Professional warriors typically have a wide range of experience and useful contacts among other career combatants, those they serve, and those they oppose.

Favor: Gifts a PC one non-magical weapon, piece of armor, or adventuring gear.

Favor: Can guard a precious object or hide it where none will find it.

Skill: Relates his experience patrolling the local sewers, granting a PC a +2 bonus on Knowledge (dungeoneering) checks in the city sewers.

Skill: Provides information with which to blackmail a local criminal, granting a PC a +4 bonus on Intimidate checks against local street thugs.

Unique: Can form a posse, bringing together a group of 2d4 low-level warriors to aid in one specific plan.

Unique: Grants the secret of a specialized fighting style, providing a PC with a +1 bonus on initiative.

VILLAINS

A good villain has to be more than just an evil, high-level NPC or monster at the end of a dungeon bash. While the basics of NPC creation covered earlier in this chapter offer advice in developing NPC personalities, no NPC deserves more careful and detailed development than a major villain. To be memorable, a villain has to have a personality, a powerful and believable hold over her minions, and an evil plan that threatens an area significant to the PCs—a settlement, country, continent, or even the world. Villains are arguably the most important type of NPCs—as, after the PCs, they likely receive the most time “on screen”—and the GM should detail them as thoroughly as possible, with complete statistics and full descriptions and understanding of their appearances, personalities, motivations, and every other feature that makes them unique, as all of these elements will likely come up in one way or another as a plot unfolds.

Not every local thug or monster chieftain needs to be a fully realized villain, though. While the PCs will likely face and defeat numerous opponents over the course of a campaign, only the most significant ones or those the GM plans to return to time and time again need to be fleshed out into extensively detailed characters. A villain's character often proves important to the type of campaign being run and the threats therein—brutal villains typically have brutal means, while more cunning opponents tend toward more subtle plots. In many ways, an adventure is embodied by its main villain or villains, and GMs should take the time to prepare accordingly. GMs hoping to run effective and memorable villains in their campaigns should consider some of the following advice.

VILLAINOUS ARCHETYPES

A strong concept is the first step in designing a memorable villain. Several of the most basic villainous archetypes are presented here, and with a bit of imagination a GM might create countless permutations of such characters.

Crime Lord

Crime lords are usually rogues or multiclassed characters with their highest level in the rogue class. A crime lord sits at the heart of a shadowy web, taking a cut from all illegal activity within his domain and dispensing rough justice to those who transgress whatever rules she imposes. They usually operate in cities. Crime lords are typically lawful evil or neutral evil, and can be of any race.

Personality: Most crime lords see themselves as entrepreneurs whose business does not happen to be legal. They are pragmatic and ruthless, but not necessarily evil or unreasonable.

Followers: Crime lords rule mainly over rogues, and may affect a title like “Master of the Guild” or “King of Thieves.” Their inner circles almost always include a few warrior types as muscle and at least one assassin. They usually rule their followers by fear, making grisly examples of anyone who crosses them.

Plans: Most crime lords do not have grand plans beyond holding and expanding their turf and maintaining a decadent lifestyle. Occasionally, a crime lord might attack the local authorities—often in response to an official crackdown on the bribery and corruption that keeps eyes looking the other way. A successful crime lord may eventually take on the role of an evil overlord or create an anarchic “city of thieves” where almost anything goes.

Evil Overlord

The evil overlord is a powerful ruler, often of a martial class, who has established control over an area in the campaign world. She rules with an iron fist, taxing the locals to death and exacting harsh penalties for the most trivial of crimes. Evil overlords can be of almost any race, and tend toward lawful evil alignment.

Personality: “Might makes right” is the evil overlord's motto. The peasants suffer because they are weak, and the overlord's minions live well because they are strong enough to take from the weak. The evil overlord is the strongest of all, and rules by right of that strength.

Followers: The evil overlord's followers are ruled by strength or fear. Those who rebel or fail are made into gruesome examples. Higher-level followers are kept suspicious and resentful of each other so they do not think of joining forces against their mistress. Instead, each one vies for favor while scheming to bring down the others. Most of an evil overlord's followers are fighters or warriors. She probably also has one or two special retainers: a torturer or executioner who carries out the overlord's brutal justice, a wizard or cleric who uses magic and spies to ensure the rank and file are kept obedient, a pet monster, or perhaps a champion—strong but very loyal (and perhaps also very stupid). High-level fighters make good champions, but so do combat-oriented monstrous races like ogres and trolls.

Plans: A typical evil overlord values wealth and power more than anything else, and most of her plans revolve around trying to acquire more of both. Short-term objectives might include finding or taking powerful magical weapons and other items, killing neighboring rulers and taking their lands, robbing temples and other sources of wealth, and executing anyone who objects. Longer-term objectives typically involve conquest: from the local area to the entire world. Any ruler or other character who is more powerful than the overlord is seen



as a threat and must be killed or brought under control until he can be dealt with once and for all.

Evil Priest

An evil priest is typically a cleric or adept, although he may have some levels in other classes in keeping with the interests of his patron deity. Evil priests can be of any race or evil alignment. They can operate in one of three basic ways, according to their personality and the status of their religion: a tyrant who rules an area and burns anyone who objects as a heretic, a vizier who manipulates political power and acts as the power behind the throne, or a cultist who commands a subversive congregation from the shadows.

Personality: Not all evil priests are religious fanatics. Some are simply ambitious and unscrupulous. Others may be sadists, megalomaniacs, or psychotics. Just as evil overlords justify their actions by strength, evil priests always have some religious rationale, which might make sense only to them.

Followers: The followers of an evil priest include lower-level clerics, guards, and others of all classes

who might be fanatically devoted or simply frightened into obedience. New followers are often recruited with promises of power, wealth, or pleasure, according to the nature of the priest's deity. Special followers might include an inner circle of acolytes, creatures from other planes, and undead. If the priest is the power behind a throne, he might also have a network of spies, assassins, even an army at his command.

Plans: A tyrant might plan to spread the faith by conquest, with increased wealth and power as pleasant side effects. A vizier could scheme to gain and keep political power, and then set the country on the path to war and the conquest of infidel lands. A cultist might want to destroy all of a region's forms of authority so his cult can take power or—especially in the case of chaotic cults—summon their patron to wreak havoc and destruction.

Mad Wizard

The mad wizard (or any other magic user) offers a useful villain archetype for dungeon adventures, as few question that insane geniuses build elaborate

underground lairs stocked with monsters and traps. Some powerful wizards use their magic overtly, setting themselves up as petty rulers, while others work more subtly, lurking in the shadows as advisors to powerful individuals. Mad wizards might be of any race or alignment, but are seldom good.

Personality: A mad wizard's insanity or obsession has a significant role in determining his plots. Megalomaniacs want power (all the way up to divine power), paranoids want to eliminate everything they see as a threat, whereas the slighted want revenge for some real or imagined injury. A host of phobias and obsessions can also add color or themes to the means by which they pursue their objectives.

Followers: Those who follow mad wizards either share the wizard's obsession or are terrified of what might happen to them if they do not obey. In addition to lesser spellcasters, mad wizards may employ warrior types as guards and commoner types as servants. Perhaps more than any other kind of villain, mad wizards are prone to collecting monsters, often trusting them more than their humanoid minions.

Plans: A mad wizard's plans are often grandiose. Taking over a kingdom is just the first step in taking over the world, and then the universe. Dealing with demons might be part of a larger scheme to bring down a demon lord and establish the wizard as overlord of an infernal realm. Mad wizards dream big, and dismiss accusations—and even undeniable proof—of their twisted minds.

Scheming Noble

A scheming noble is an ideal villain for a campaign highlighting political action. This type of villain is normally an aristocrat, though typically multiclassed to provide a greater challenge. Scheming nobles are usually lawful and of the same race as the regional sovereign and other nobility.

Personality: Nobles are raised on intrigue, decadence, and manipulation. Outwardly, they might affect the personality of a loyal retainer or of boon companions who have a ruler's ear. Beneath the facade, they scheme for ways to advance themselves and eliminate rivals.

Followers: Scheming nobles are often attended by a number of paid servants, guards, even assassins. Ultimately, if someone sells a service, they might be on the noble's payroll. Some followers might be motivated by actual loyalty or personal ambitions, but most are well compensated both for their service and for their silence.

Plans: These villains envy what others possess. Less ambitious schemes might include engineering scandals and planting evidence to bring down rivals, while grander plans might include ruling the kingdom, either by stealing the throne or by turning the sovereign into a puppet.

ADVANCED VILLAINY

Some GMs might seek challenges and variety beyond what mere archetypes can offer. While sometimes this merely means using villains in different ways, it could also mean drawing upon the hundreds of different races and rules elements that the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game affords creative GMs. Noted here are a few suggestions to keep a campaign's villains both despicable and unpredictable.

Recurring Villains: Only the very greatest villains should be able to come back from defeat, and this should happen very rarely. Otherwise the players might develop a feeling of futility, along with suspicions about the GM's impartiality—which can severely disrupt a campaign. The notes on the “pet NPC” from earlier in this chapter apply with particular force to major villains.

In order for a comeback to be possible, the villain must have escaped in such a way that the players do not feel cheated. There are some exceptions to this, but they are few: the villain might come back in undead form, for example, or in a resurrected but still somehow damaged body. In most cases, however, if the PCs killed the villain fair and square, she should remain dead—end of story.

A villain should never come back from death more than once. If the players start to feel that nothing their characters do can put an end to the villain, frustration and suspicions of cheating grow. The reappearance of a defeated challenge should be greeted with shock and surprise, not with knowing groans.

Stacking Villains: An alternative to villains coming back to life is to stack them, one behind the other. For example, a psychotic killer might be a religious fanatic under the partial influence of an anti-paladin, who in turn is the protégé of an evil priest intent on starting a holy war. The killer is removing members of a noble house to bring it down and create a power vacuum that could lead to civil war. The anti-paladin plans to take advantage of the chaos to attack one barony after another rather than facing a united realm. This is a limited example, but enough to demonstrate the principle that defeating one evil only sets the PCs on the path of a greater threat. This is much more intriguing to most players than a villain who is resurrected again and again.

Monstrous Villains: Villains are not necessarily humanoid, and everything in this chapter applies equally to villains of all races and species. Some races lend themselves better to providing particular types of villains—an orc makes a good evil overlord, for example, although some imagination is needed to make such a creature into a scheming noble—but playing against type can be very rewarding. The main thing to keep in mind is intelligence. A villain, almost by definition, is an

evil creature with a plan, and if a creature does not have the intelligence to formulate an evil plan, it cannot be a convincing villain.

Nonliving Villains: What if an intelligent sword dominated a dim (but very strong) owner and became the brains of the operation? What if a cursed helm or some other item changed a character's alignment and turned him into a villain? A villain that is not a living creature can provide some surprises and plot twists that will keep the PCs very busy—especially if one of them slays the supposed villain, loots the intelligent sword, and instantly falls under the weapon's thrall.

PLAYING VILLAINS

The time and effort that goes into the creation of a major villain is wasted if the villain does not get enough time with the player characters. Every GM knows the frustration of spending hours crafting a great villain, only to have him cut down in a few rounds with scarcely a word exchanged. Every villain deserves a moment to defy or mock the PC, and there are a number of ways to arrange this without fudging dice rolls or railroading the players.

Hands-On Management

As every villain knows, minions cannot be trusted. Some are disloyal, many are incompetent, and the rest are too lazy to do a good job. This gives the PCs a chance to see the villain before the final showdown and become familiar with his personality. The villain can be present while the PCs are chewing through lower-level minions—shouting orders and threats, casting spells and other long-range attacks, taunting the PCs, and escaping before they can get within reach. Depending on the layout of a particular area, the villain can be standing at the back of the troops (and cutting down any who try to flee), looking down on the action from a balcony with a bodyguard or two, and so on. No matter the circumstances, the villain will always have an escape route planned, and a fine sense of timing about when to use it.

Secret Villains

Spells like *detect evil* are the bane of any villain whose identity needs to be a surprise. There are spells and magic items that can conceal a character's alignment and even make an evil character appear to be good, but the greatest defense is a crowd. At a royal court, for example, there should be a cross-section of people, many of them neutral. Inevitably, though, some will be evil or chaotic. Are the PCs going to scan the alignment of everyone in the castle, or the city? What will they do about those who read as chaotic or evil? If the villain keeps his head down, it could take the PCs forever to work through the list of suspects—time which the true villain can use to great advantage.

THE VILLAIN'S ESCAPE KIT

Sometimes a villain needs to appear and then get away. With all the versatility and options at the hands of a capable party of adventurers, this can prove quite difficult for the villain and dangerous to the plot should she get trapped. At the same time, PCs should never feel incapable of opposing the villain or suspect the GM of unfairly favoring the antagonist. If it's important that a villain escape, consider some of the following spells when planning her contingencies.

Airborne Escape: *Air walk, elemental body, feather fall, gaseous form, levitate, overland flight, spider climb, wind walk*

Barriers: *Acid fog, animate plants, antilife shell, blade barrier, black tentacles, cloudkill, entangle, fog cloud, incendiary cloud, interposing hand, magic circle, minor creation, obscuring mist, plant growth, prismatic wall, spike growth, spike stones, solid fog, stinking cloud, storm of vengeance, wall, web, wind wall*

Hindrances: *Dimensional lock, hold person, hold portal, hypnotic pattern, power word blind*

Instant Egress: *Blink, dimension door, ethereal jaunt, etherealness, phase door, teleport, transport via plants, tree stride, word of recall*

Illusory Escape: *Hallucinatory terrain, illusory wall, invisibility, minor image, mirror image, mislead, persistent image, programmed image, project image, silent image, simulacrum*

Rapid Retreat: *Expeditious retreat, haste, longstrider, mount, phantom steed, time stop*

The Disembodied Voice

Spellcasting villains can use magical means to taunt and provoke the PCs without exposing themselves to any danger. *Scrying* and *clairvoyance* spells allow the villain to keep an eye on the PCs and adjust the minions' tactics accordingly, while *magic mouth*, *whispering wind*, and similar spells let the villain give orders and issue taunts. Various illusion spells allow the villain to appear before the PCs without any risk.

A Bolt-Hole

Every good villain has an escape route prepared for use if the final showdown goes in the PCs' favor. Only fools, fanatics, and psychotics ever fight to the death—most others will try to escape as soon as it becomes apparent they cannot win. There are plenty of spells and magic items that a villain can use to escape and live to fight another day. The sidebar lists some of the spells, and with a little imagination it is possible to come up with more. The keys are planning (some spells will need to be cast in advance) and keeping a close eye on casting times and saving throws. A low-level spell with no saving throw can often be more useful than a higher-level spell that does have a saving throw.

NPC CREATOR'S TOOLBOX

The following pages present hundreds of options to help inspire or randomly generate interesting and nuanced nonplayer characters of all types, from simple townsfolk to stern guardsmen to notorious archvillains. GMs might use one or more of these tables to create interesting and realistic NPCs on the fly during a game or when looking for more ideas to flesh out a campaign's major characters.

TABLE 4-1: NPC BACKGROUNDS

d%	Background
1–3	Military veteran
4–6	Reformed criminal
7–9	Comes from a long line of tanners
10–12	Once owned an inn that was burnt down by bandits
13–15	Former alchemy lab assistant
16–18	Disgraced noble
19–21	Fought on losing side of civil war/revolution
22–24	Former prostitute
25–27	Refugee from land overrun by evil
28–30	Pious member of a notorious family
31–33	Ran away from a duel
34–36	Left at the altar
37–39	Criminal who retired after betraying rest of gang
40–42	Orphaned
43–45	Recovering addict
46–48	Childhood playmate of somebody important
49–51	Killed someone in self-defense
52–54	Escaped slave
55–56	Falsely convicted and then escaped from jail
57–58	Former indentured servant
59–60	Ran away as a youth and joined the circus
61–62	Abandoned spouse and children
63–64	Former sickly child who overcompensates as an adult
65–66	Failed priest
67–68	Failed merchant
69–70	Passed a guild test but too disillusioned to practice
71–72	Outwitted powerful monster
73–74	Practiced magic before a traumatizing accident
75–76	Died but came back through magic
77–78	Lost a magic item with potent abilities
79–80	Ran for office and suffered a humiliating defeat
81–82	Inadvertently saved the life of a future villain
83–84	Lost a spouse or child
85–86	Used to have to beg for food
87–88	Former artist suffering from a creative block
89–90	Raised by members of a different race
91–92	Former witch hunter
93–94	Pledged to keep a fantastic secret
95–96	Wanted for serious crime
97–98	Oppressed for race, sexuality, religion, etc.
99–100	Monster reincarnated as a human

TABLE 4-2: NPC GOALS

d%	Goal
1–2	Get a good night's sleep
3–4	Sire a child
5–6	Prove noble heritage
7–8	Visit the next village
9–10	Solve a mystery no one else really cares about
11–12	Earn enough money to retire
13–14	Climb a mountain
15–16	Get a different, and better, reputation
17–18	Make friends with the PCs
19–20	Erase past failures with a single dramatic act
21–22	Move out of parents' house
23–24	Get in better shape and learn to fight
25–26	See the ocean
27–28	See a particular holy text, fresco, or building
29–30	Find a new home for a mistreated animal
31–32	Get into the history books
33–34	Return home despite obstacles
35–36	Overcome a significant personal vice
37–38	Get proof that the afterlife exists before dying
39–40	Travel
41–42	Get married
43–44	Humiliate a rival
45–46	Find a missing child
47–48	Learn to gamble
49–50	Carry on a family tradition, like enlisting in the army
51–52	Go on a pilgrimage
53–54	Marry a childhood sweetheart
55–56	Commit a holy text to memory
57–58	Complete some sort of creative work (write a play, carve a statue, etc.)
59–60	Find a better job
61–62	Avoid bankruptcy
63–64	Impress a disapproving parent
65–66	Impress a love interest
67–68	Achieve a higher social rank
69–70	Start own business
71–72	Help child get a good start in life
73–74	Become the recipient of an actual miracle
75–76	Redeem family name
77–78	Hunt and kill a particular sort of monster
79–80	Continue to live in family estate despite danger
81–82	Solve a murder
83–84	Cross an ocean
85–86	Discover the meaning of life
87–88	See an angel
89–90	Murder someone
91–92	Get cured of a disease or other affliction
93–94	Become a monster
95–96	Become a hero
97–98	Marry a prince/princess
99–100	Rule a country

TABLE 4-3: NPC PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

d%	Characteristic	d%	Characteristic	d%	Characteristic	d%	Characteristic
1	Warts	26	Sweats a lot	52	Laughs nervously	78	Moustache
2	Bad breath	27	Giggles	53	Lisps	79	Beard
3	Big nose	28	Hobbles	54	Limps	80	Stubbly
4	Long fingers	29	Jolly looking	55	One eye	81	Obscenely fat
5	Stubby fingers	30	Cracks knuckles	56	Missing a finger	82	Strangely tall
6	Boils	31	Whistles when talking	57	Scarred face	83	Unusually short
7	Very clean	32	Cross-eyed	58	Picks teeth nervously	84	Double-chinned
8	Very white teeth	33	Harelipped	59	No teeth	85	Thin-lipped
9	Dazzling eyes	34	Rotten teeth	60	No fingers on one hand	86	Very hairy
10	Sweet smile	35	Generally filthy	61	Bald	87	Eyebrows meet
11	Beautiful curves/muscles	36	Tattoo	62	Comb-over bald patch	88	Wide mouthed
12	Dirty nails	37	Many tattoos	63	Shaved head	89	Missing a hand
13	Dirty hands	38	Covered in tattoos	64	Curly hair	90	Club-footed
14	Calloused hands	39	One pierced ear	65	Long hair	91	Missing a leg
15	Eye patch	40	Pierced ears	66	Short hair	92	Missing an arm
16	Glass eye	41	Pierced nose	67	Blonde hair	93	Horrible facial scars
17	Glasses	42	Pierced lip	68	Black hair	94	Clawed hands
18	Enormous sideburns	43	Tribal scar on forearm	69	Red hair	95	Webbed hands
19	Yellow teeth	44	Winks a lot	70	Gray hair	96	Scarred from pox
20	Scratches a lot	45	Hacking cough	71	Big ears	97	Terrible facial disease
21	Sneezes a lot	46	Spits	72	Fat	98	Covered in cysts
22	Compulsive blinking	47	Dreadlocks	73	Tall	99	Covered in pustules
23	Bites nails	48	Different colored eyes	74	Thin	100	Major deformity
24	Obviously dyed/unnaturally colored hair	49	Missing teeth	75	Short		
		50	Scarred	76	Homely		
25	Avoids making eye contact	51	Twitches	77	Handsome/beautiful		

TABLE 4-4: NPC PERSONALITY CHARACTERISTICS

d%	Characteristic	d%	Characteristic
1	Always agrees (but changes mind just as easily)	18	Prays a lot
2	Asks how much everything costs	19	Gives people treats (cookies, candy, etc.)
3	Likes to act mysteriously	20	Often appears surprised and slightly offended when spoken to
4	Makes snap judgments about people or situations and tries to diminish any later evidence contradicting that first impression	21	Tosses a coin to make decisions
5	Makes token bets about minor things	22	Has a list of numbered rules or maxims covering different situations and quotes them when appropriate
6	When talking to someone says that person's name a lot	23	Tells people the "real" reason they do things
7	Haggles over everything	24	Asks for advice or opinions about very unlikely situations
8	Brings own food and drink	25	Speaks with great formality; never uses contractions and employs bigger words than necessary
9	Says everything in a profound way	26	Easily distracted by minor events in the area
10	Know-it-all	27	Usually needs someone to explain a joke or metaphor
11	Polite, but calls attention to it with elaborate bows or other gestures	28	Has a particular core belief, potentially a rather odd one, and steadfastly looks at everything through the lens of that opinion
12	Constantly apologizes as a verbal tic	29	Likes to count things and have fun with numbers
13	Makes lots of threats but swiftly backs down if challenged	30	Always tries to find a compromise
14	Very mellow; advises people to take a philosophical approach to both success and failure	31	Always eating
15	Says as little as possible	32	Very bad liar
16	Snickers or laughs at the misfortune of others	33	Asks rude questions without realizing they cause offense
17	Gives people nicknames or uses terms of endearment		

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| <p>34 Grumbles and complains about the difficulties involved in any requested activities</p> <p>35 Very sensitive to criticism or conflict</p> <p>36 Absent-minded</p> <p>37 Blames trolls for every trouble he encounters</p> <p>38 Intellectual bully</p> <p>39 Makes allusions to events from history or mythology without bothering to explain them</p> <p>40 Doesn't kill insects or other pests, gently moves them out of the way instead</p> <p>41 Sniffs or tastes things</p> <p>42 Makes lists and checks things off</p> <p>43 Cannot keep a secret</p> <p>44 Seems slightly surprised whenever anyone else has a good idea or does something productive</p> <p>45 Easily moved to tears</p> <p>46 Easily angered</p> <p>47 Terrified of disease and sick people</p> <p>48 Has a stock phrase and an accompanying gesture</p> <p>49 Habitually mumbles a word that rhymes with the final word other people speak before they pause</p> <p>50 Delighted by puns and other sorts of word games</p> <p>51 Makes animal noises when feeling threatened or excited</p> <p>52 A connoisseur of fine food and drink who insists on lecturing about it</p> <p>53 Very superstitious; insists on carrying out elaborate practices to attract good luck and avoid bad</p> <p>54 Never turns down a dare or challenge</p> <p>55 Never uses one word when ten will do</p> <p>56 Propositions any even remotely attractive person encountered but makes panicked excuses should someone accept the offer</p> <p>57 Always has a reason why something won't work</p> <p>58 Careless about possessions, spends lots of time searching for overlooked nearby objects</p> <p>59 Tells boring stories about children or other beloved young people</p> <p>60 Constantly suggesting ways to make activities more "fun" and "exciting"</p> <p>61 Collects small, relatively worthless objects like spoons, salt shakers, or wine corks; enthusiastically inspects any encountered and extols their "unique" qualities</p> <p>62 Dotes on an obnoxious pet</p> <p>63 Ignores a loyal pet</p> <p>64 Self-loathing to an almost violent degree</p> <p>65 Occasionally chants annoying little rhymes</p> <p>66 Acts like someone from a lower social class as a sign of solidarity but comes across as offensive instead</p> <p>67 Openly scornful of organized religion and believes all gods are selfish liars</p> <p>68 Gets angrier and more determined with each setback</p> <p>69 Thinks most objects are magical wondrous items</p> <p>70 Seems to lack a moral compass when making plans (though</p> | <p>not in everyday life); often proposes horrific solutions to minor problems</p> <p>71 Quietly makes personal sacrifices to help others, including forgoing meals, "losing" warm clothing, and repaying nonexistent loans</p> <p>72 Suffering from some terminal illness</p> <p>73 Name-drops constantly</p> <p>74 Does a terrible job rather than refuse an unpleasant or unwanted task</p> <p>75 Never tires of learning new and interesting bits of knowledge</p> <p>76 Complains about smells no one else notices</p> <p>77 Can't stop drinking once starts</p> <p>78 Trying to master some kind of performance skill like juggling or ventriloquism but not very good at it yet</p> <p>79 Is a failed actor and blames everyone else for it</p> <p>80 Has a seemingly endless font of gossip; never stops chattering about various rumors and scandals</p> <p>81 Is a very distant noble and treats lower orders with disdain</p> <p>82 Very cheerful; tries to raise downcast spirits with songs, jokes, and uplifting stories</p> <p>83 Grows more and more relaxed the worse things get; conversely, on edge and nervous when things seem to go well</p> <p>84 Carries around a notebook to write down important information but has trouble reading own handwriting</p> <p>85 Makes up seemingly arbitrary rules of etiquette ("Redheads always sit on the left side of the table!")</p> <p>86 Avoids making any kind of physical contact; grows noticeably repulsed if touched and tries to clean self as soon as possible</p> <p>87 Always tries to be the center of attention</p> <p>88 Is a little unhinged when the moon is full</p> <p>89 Questions others about their background in order to determine if they are "suitable"</p> <p>90 From a place with different customs; often asks for explanations of everyday things</p> <p>91 Very jealous and possessive about a particular object or person; tends to view others as rivals and treat them as such</p> <p>92 Continually mentions a heroic battle he was in and how nothing else compares</p> <p>93 Gives people little colored cards to represent the emotional state they are creating (blue for sad, red for angry, etc.)</p> <p>94 Explains simple things that don't need explanations</p> <p>95 Wishes was a cat and seeks someone to polymorph him/her into one</p> <p>96 Refers to self in third person</p> <p>97 Has an imaginary ethereal friend</p> <p>98 Has a habit of eating live insects without realizing it</p> <p>99 Compulsively wipes or cleans things</p> <p>100 Asks a kobold glove puppet its opinion at inopportune moments</p> |
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TABLE 4-5: NPC OCCUPATIONS

Acrobat	Chandler	Groom	Mourner	Scaffolder
Actor	Chaplain	Guard	Mummer	Shepherd
Alchemist	Chimneysweep	Guide	Navigator	Sheriff
Almoner	Chronicler	Haberdasher	Nun	Shipwright
Ambassador	Cleaner	Harlot	Nursemaid	Shoemaker
Animal Keeper	Clerk	Harpist	Oarsman	Siege Engineer
Animal Trainer	Clothier	Healer	Officer	Sign Maker
Apothecary	Clothworker	Hedge-layer	Orator	Silversmith
Appraiser	Cobbler	Helmsman	Organist	Sineater
Archer	Coffinmaker	Herald	Ostler	Singer
Architect	Coin minter	Herbalist	Pack Handler	Skinner
Armorer	Composer	Hermit	Painter	Slaver
Artillerist	Constable	Historian	Parchmenter	Smith
Artist	Cook	Hornmaker	Pardoner	Smuggler
Assassin	Cooper	Hospitaler	Peddler	Soapmaker
Astrologer	Courier	Hunter	Philosopher	Solicitor
Bailiff	Courtesan	Infirmarer	Physician	Soldier
Baker	Custodian	Innkeeper	Pilot	Soothsayer
Bandit	Deckhand	Interpreter	Pimp	Spy
Banker	Diplomat	Jester	Pitch Maker	Squire
Barber	Doomsayer	Jeweler	Playwright	Stablehand
Bard	Dowser	Judge	Poacher	Steward
Barkeep	Dung Sweeper	Juggler	Poet	Stonecarver
Barker	Dyer	Keeper	Porter	Stonemason
Barrister	Embalmer	Knight	Potter	Storyteller
Bearer	Engineer	Laborer	Precentor	Surgeon
Beggar	Engraver	Lackey	Prelate	Swineherd
Bishop	Entertainer	Lady in Waiting	Priest	Tailor
Blacksmith	Executioner	Lamp Lighter	Prostitute	Tanner
Boat Builder	Falconer	Launderer	Puppeteer	Tax Collector
Boatswain	Farmer	Leatherworker	Quarryman	Taxidermist
Bookbinder	Farrier	Limner	Ranger	Teamster
Bouncer	Ferryman	Linkboy	Rat Catcher	Thatcher
Bounty Hunter	Fire Eater	Locksmith	Rent Collector	Tinker
Bowyer	Fisherman	Lookout	Roofer	Tobacconist
Brassworker	Fletcher	Madam	Roustabout	Tool Maker
Brewer	Footman	Magic Item Trader	Rope Maker	Torturer
Bricklayer	Forester	Magistrate	Sacristan	Tradesman
Builder	Fortune Teller	Maid	Sage	Turner
Busker	Fowler	Masseuse	Sail Maker	Valet
Butcher	Furrier	Master	Sailor	Verderer
Butler	Gaoler	Master-at-Arms	Sapper	Vicar
Candle Maker	Gamekeeper	Mercenary	Scholar	Vintner
Captain	Gardener	Mercer	School Teacher	Wainwright
Carpenter	Gatekeeper	Messenger	Scribe	Waller
Carpet Weaver	Gemcutter	Midwife	Scrivener	Warrener
Cartographer	Gentleman	Milkmaid	Scullery Maid	Watchman
Cartwright	Glassblower	Miller	Sculptor	Water Carrier
Cask Maker	Goldsmith	Miner	Scop	Weaver
Castellan	Governess	Minstrel	Seer	Weaponsmith
Chamberlain	Gravedigger	Moneylender	Seneschal	Weapons Dealer
Chambermaid	Grocer	Monk	Servant	Wheelwright

TABLE 4-6: NPC SECRETS

d%	Secret
1-2	Knows where a magic item is buried
3-4	Knows the best fishing spot
5-6	Knows who the murderer is
7-8	Is making liquor illegally
9-10	Knows why no one swims in the millpond anymore
11-12	Knows how to safely cook a poisonous fish
13-14	Is having an affair
15-16	Steals from his neighbors
17-18	Is a habitual liar
19-20	Is secretly related to another NPC
21-22	Knows what happened to all the rats
23-24	Is being blackmailed
25-26	Drinks heavily
27-28	Has a secret stash of funds
29-30	Is beaten by his/her spouse
31-32	Knows proper way to read a treasure map
33-34	Is an obsessive collector or hoarder
35-36	Beats offspring regularly
37-38	Is quietly religious
39-40	Knows location of a bandit hideout
41-42	Knows a particular monster's favorite snack
43-44	Is a spy
45-46	Hears voices in the graveyard
47-48	Knows who really runs the neighborhood
49-50	Knows where to contact the fey
51-52	Is an assassin
53-54	Has a secret illness
55-56	Knows why no one in the village eats meat anymore
57-58	Knows how to get the oracle to answer truthfully
59-60	Engages in some deviant behavior
61-62	Knows command word for a magic item
63-64	Owes the local moneylender substantial funds
65-66	Worships an evil deity
67-68	Knows some local secret
69-70	Has a secret identity
71-72	Was a very different creature prior to reincarnation
73-74	Knows how to placate an angry ghost
75-76	Is a member of a secret local cult
77-78	Is wanted for a crime
79-80	Murdered spouse
81-82	Makes secret donations
83-84	Lost paladinhood due to cowardice
85-86	Is a paladin working undercover
87-88	Is the bastard child of a noble
89-90	Knows when the heir to the throne sneaks away to visit an attractive peasant
91-92	Is terrified of a particular monster type
93-94	Has some orc blood in their family
95-96	Has some troll blood in their family
97-98	Knows where the meteor landed
99-100	Knows someone is not what appears to be

TABLE 4-7: NPC REWARDS FOR HEROIC DEEDS

d%	Reward
1-2	Wash or mend your clothes and equipment
3-4	Perform a skill check for you
5-6	Offer you a pet (dog, cat, pig, etc.)
7-8	Pray for you
9-10	Tend your mount
11-12	Pay for your lodgings
13-14	Buy you a small gift
15-16	Invite you to dinner
17-18	Sharpen your weapons
19-20	Gather supplies for you
21-22	Carry your belongings
23-24	Compose a poem praising your prowess
25-26	Compose a song praising your heroic qualities
27-28	Praise you loudly in public
29-30	Pay for your meals
31-32	Introduce you to a friend
33-34	Provide shelter
35-36	Write a letter or make some other sort of appeal to an authority figure on your behalf
37-38	Buy you a reasonable gift
39-40	Boycott one of your rivals or enemies
41-42	Look after your home while you are away
43-44	Provide you with an alibi
45-46	Carry a message for you
47-48	Follow someone for you
49-50	Loan you property
51-52	Call in an important favor and use it on your behalf
53-54	Cast a spell for you at no cost
55-56	Wait for a specific event and then light a signal fire
57-58	Organize a festival or other public event
59-60	Train an animal for you
61-62	Buy you a substantial gift
63-64	Become your friend
65-66	Sell you goods at a discount
67-68	Bury or hide something dangerous
69-70	Lie or cheat for you
71-72	Name a child after you
73-74	Start a fight for you
75-76	Publicly protest against a ruler or other powerful being
77-78	Sabotage a bridge, road, or something equally important
79-80	Raise a child or care for another relatively helpless creature
81-82	Spy on your behalf
83-84	Agree to work off a major debt that you cannot pay
85-86	Take the blame (and punishment) for a minor crime
87-88	Become your servant
89-90	Become your follower
91-92	Become your squire
93-94	Become your henchman/woman
95-96	Become your cohort
97-98	Offer the hand of a relative in marriage
99-100	Marry you

TABLE 4-8: RANDOM ADVENTURING PARTY NAME GENERATOR

Roll on the first and third columns to create a suitable name, making additional rolls on any combination of other columns as desired.

d%	Column 1	Column 2	Column 3	Column 4	Column 5
1-2	Mighty	Ebon	Lions	Swords	and Slayers
3-4	Quiet	Black	Dragons	Spears	and Merciless Inquisitors
5-6	Valorous	Green	Giants	Weapons	and Vanquishers
7-8	Undaunted	Blue	Angels	Scythes	and Slaughterers
9-10	Questioning	Violet	Tigers	Halberds	and Talkers
11-12	Selfish	Shade	Wolves	Daggers	and Avengers
13-14	Foolhardy	Shadow	Wolverines	Blades	of Justice
15-16	Brave	Pearly	Warriors	Scimitars	and Revengers
17-18	Noble	Blood-red	Fools	Lancers	for the Victims
19-20	Questing	Crimson	Monsters	Archers	of the Vendetta
21-22	Great	Brown	Aberrations	Swordsmiths	of the Endless Feud
23-24	Ignoble	Ochre	Outsiders	Crossbowmen	and Vindicators
25-26	Pious	Bright	Revenants	Monster-Slayers	and Payers
27-28	Strong	Moonlight	Snakes	Invincibles	and Punishers
29-30	Studious	Shadowy	Rats	Thrusters	and Torturers
31-32	Incredible	Dusky	Mad Dogs	Stars	and Gloaters
33-34	Stout	Rainbow	Demons	Gorgers	and Sinners
35-36	Sturdy	Pitch	Devils	Puddings	of Unspeakable Terror
37-38	Unbreakable	Tar	Beasts	Bows	with the Witch-Hunters
39-40	Fearless	Coal	Savages	Flails	for the Pilgrims
41-42	Blinded	Nadir	Griffins	Axes	for the Glorious Masses
43-44	Fearsome	Mold	Banshees	Gauntlets	of Murderers
45-46	Potent	Jade	Wyverns	Oozes	and Gibbeters
47-48	Commanding	Sage	Carnivores	Spines	and Merciless Questioners
49-50	Superior	Amethyst	Vultures	Sticks	the Tools of the Gods
51-52	Impressive	Coral	Sharks	Biters	the Speakers of Truth
53-54	Meddling	Tiger Eye	Panthers	Fists	the Wayfinders
55-56	Lucky	Obsidian	Vipers	Staves	of the Path
57-58	Contagious	Mithral	Spiders	Pikes	of the Way
59-60	Loud	Gold	Trolls	Iron Maidens	of the Faith
61-62	Holy	Silver	Ogres	Racks	of the Spirit
63-64	Unholy	Platinum	Crows	Burning Torches	of the Day
65-66	Ascendant	Copper	Ravens	Hunters	of the Night
67-68	Gripping	Adamantine	Eagles	Tramplers	of Gods
69-70	Fascinating	Steel	Dogs	Wounders	in the Dark
71-72	Infectious	Iron	Scorpions	Smashers	in the Sunlight
73-74	Eminent	Forged	Octopuses	Breakers	in the Shadow of Angels
75-76	Grave	Snow	Krakens	Fire	from Outside Reality
77-78	Compelling	Dark	Apes	Smoke	with the Right
79-80	Hypnotic	Light	Bears	Flames	with Righteousness
81-82	Persuasive	Day	Boars	Clubs	with the Gods
83-84	Irresistible	Night	Crocodiles	Guisarmes	with the Moon
85-86	Alluring	Deep	Cats	Whips	with the Angels
87-88	Fascinating	High	Lizards	Tridents	by the Side of Heaven
89-90	Magnetic	Long	Hyenas	Javelins	by the Hand of the Gods
91-92	Predominant	Gray	Hornets	Warhammers	as Whispered to by Things from Beyond
93-94	Magic	Stone	Raptors	Slings	as Commanded
95-96	Reputable	Ultramarine	Toads	Saps	by Faith
97-98	Famous	Mauve	Weasels	Falchions	for Glory
99-100	Beautiful	White	Wasps	Nets	in Sureness