



DUNGEONS OF DRAKKENHEIM

Warring factions fight for control of a cursed city warped by extradimensional magic but containing powerful secrets and untold opportunities.

Designed by Monty Martin, Kelly McLaughlin, and Mike Underwood

Complexity rating: ● ● ●

The Pitch

Fifteen years ago, the city of Drakkenheim was destroyed by an eldritch storm of falling stars. Now, the city is a dismal urban wasteland contaminated by otherworldly magic and haunted by hideous monsters. In a *Dungeons of Drakkenheim* campaign, you'll risk dangers worse than death by delving through the city's ruins in pursuit of fantastic wealth, lost knowledge, and powerful artifacts.

TONE AND FEEL

Dramatic, Haunting, Post-Apocalyptic, Sandbox

THEMES

Body Horror, Corruption, Faction Conflict, Personal Ambition, Uncovering Secrets of the Past

TOUCHSTONES

Fallout: New Vegas by Obsidian Entertainment, *The Witcher* series by CD Projekt Red, *The Broken Earth* series by N.K. Jemisin, *The Color out of Space* and other stories by H.P. Lovecraft, the *Resident Evil* series by Capcom, and *Warhammer: the Old World* by Games Workshop.

Overview

If your group decides to play this campaign, give your players the following information before character creation.

DRAKKENHEIM IS NO MORE. An eldritch storm of falling stars devastated the city, leaving behind a meteorite that would have lasting effects. Fifteen years later, Drakkenheim is a dismal urban wasteland contaminated by otherworldly magic and haunted by hideous monsters.

Shards of magically potent but corrupting and unstable delerium crystal grow across the city, desired by mage and smuggler alike. In addition to delerium, fantastic wealth, lost knowledge, and powerful artifacts all lie ready for the taking.

However, even those who survive the immediate dangers of Drakkenheim may not return unmarked. Extended exposure to delerium—or to the dreaded Haze that covers parts of the city—causes corruption that manifests in terrifying mutations, eventually transforming even the hardiest mortals into murderous abominations.

Five major factions vie for power and control of the city's destiny, seeking to restore the city, plunder its riches, or use the power of delerium to change the fate of the world:

The Hooded Lanterns. The remnants of an expedition that failed to reclaim the capital, this group now wages a guerilla war against the monsters, bandits, and scavengers that have taken root in the nation's capital.

The Queen's Men. A collection of gangs and thieves' groups, they are unified by the enigmatic Queen of Thieves. They use the lawlessness of the city to steal, smuggle, harass residents, and leverage power.

The Knights of the Silver Order. This organization of devout warriors are sworn to combat supernatural evil, dark magic, and otherworldly incursions. They seek to purge Drakkenheim of all traces of delerium.

The Followers of the Falling Fire. This splinter sect of the Faith of the Sacred Flame is unified by a vision of sacrifice and salvation in the face of the threat of delerium.

The Amethyst Academy. This group contains and mobilizes the “mageborn” of the world, operating as both schools and a magical guild. The Academy lost a powerful stronghold when the city fell, and now they work to reclaim it while also studying the magical potential of delerium.

Four Quick Facts about Drakkenheim

The setting of Drakkenheim diverges in some key ways from the implicit defaults of Daggerheart:

The gods are silent and distant. Gods don't manifest physically, speak with worshippers, or interfere with earthly matters. Planar cosmology is mysterious and unknowable, but sages have developed many conflicting (and wildly incorrect) theories.

Spellcasting with the Splendor domain is not granted by gods. Those accessing divine magic tap into sacred energies through devotion, meditation, and resolve.

Individuals cannot access the Codex domain through study alone. While use of the Codex domain does require intense study, the magic of this domain (and others like Arcana and Grace) is borne in the blood, which can be harnessed via practice and study. The laws of the land bar non-divine spellcasters from holding noble titles.

Powerful NPCs and spellcasters are exceptionally rare. Due to Drakkenheim's importance, the city has attracted an unusually high proportion of such individuals.

Content Warning

Drakkenheim portrays a dark fantasy world. We recommend players and Game Masters have an open conversation at the start of the campaign to discuss their preferences and acceptable content. In support of this conversation, please note references to the following are common in this adventure:

- Violence, murder, blood, gore, cannibalism, and body horror
- Degenerative mutations causing physical disfigurement and supernatural madness
- Rats, spiders, insects, demons, undead, ghosts, and other monsters
- Natural disasters, large-scale loss of life, civil war, displaced persons, and refugees
- Moral ambiguity, social/political manipulation, religious zealotry, and military nationalism

The campaign does not contain explicit sexuality, sexual assault, racial prejudice, systemic racism, homophobia, or transphobia. Any inferences to such are wholly unintentional.

Dungeons of Drakkenheim © 2025, the Dungeon Dudes. All rights reserved.

Daggerheart™ © 2025 Darrington Press, LLC. All rights reserved. Published under license from Darrington Press, LLC.

Reference to copyright material in no way constitutes a challenge to the respective copyright holder of that material. The Dungeon Dudes, the Dungeon Dudes logo, Dungeons of Drakkenheim, and the Dungeons of Drakkenheim logo are trademarks of the Dungeon Dudes.

Ghostfire Gaming and the Ghostfire Gaming logo are trademarks of Ghostfire Gaming Pty Ltd.

Darrington Press™, Daggerheart™, and the Darrington Press logo are trademarks of Critical Role, LLC and used under license.

Communities

All communities are available, but some have unique aspects within a *Dungeons of Drakkenheim* campaign. As needed, provide the following information to your players. Ask the supplemental background questions as needed.

HIGHBORNE

Many highborne communities in Westemär focus on the nation's nobility and their machinations: diplomatic, strategic, mystical, religious, and more. While the throne lies empty, much of Westemär's feudal system remains intact, carrying on with an empty throne while nobles await their opportunity to seize power.

- What allegiances do you have to the nobility of Westemär, Caspia, or Elyria? What allies within that hierarchy can you draw upon?
- What status do you hold personally within your highborne community, and what power do you have access to through connections and oaths?
- What opportunities would a restored ruler of Drakkenheim present to you and your allies?

LOREBORNE

Many loreborne communities center on or are enabled by the Amethyst Academy. Others grew alongside scholarship within the Faith of the Sacred Flame, maintaining the teachings, histories, and prophecies accumulated over generations.

- What knowledge was lost within Drakkenheim that you seek to regain?
- What wonders do you seek to unravel with the power of delerium?
- What secrets of Drakkenheim's are you here to ensure stay buried?

ORDERBORNE

Orderborne communities are most common in places where the Faith of the Silver Flame is strongest, with people organizing their lives by the principles of the faith. Orderborne communities are also prevalent among the military cultures of some nations, where discipline and hierarchy are paramount for maintaining combat readiness in a world thrown into chaos by the destruction of Drakkenheim.

- What about Drakkenheim's chaos you find most objectionable?
- What tenets are you willing to bend or break to pursue your goals in Drakkenheim?
- Which tenets of order do you cling to most tightly when entering a city swallowed by chaos?

SLYBORNE

Slyborne communities are common across the region, and most of the larger criminal organizations on the continent have some kind of interests in Drakkenheim, whether it's looting, smuggling, delerium mining, or something else.

- An associate of yours ran away to Drakkenheim to lie low after a job went awry. Who are they to you, and when did you last hear from them?
- What treasure have you dreamed of pilfering from the cursed city? Where would you start if you finally decided to go after it?
- An old rival of yours went to join the Queen of Thieves not long ago. What do you fear will happen if they spot you in Emberwood or the city itself?

WANDERBORNE

After the destruction of Drakkenheim and the following civil war, many communities were broken and scattered across the region, refugee groups fleeing for safer climes. Some of these continued traveling as wanderborne communities, joining existing nomadic groups traveling across the continent.

- Did your community wander before the meteors, or are they newly itinerant? If they're newly itinerant, what old customs from before your displacement are still practiced?
- How has Drakkenheim's fall changed the route your community traveled across the continent?
- What once-friendly communities treat your people differently now that any stranger could have hidden mutations and potentially turn into an aberration?

WILDBORNE

The most prominent wildborne communities are those outside the nations of Elyria, Westemär, and Caspia. Wildborne characters in Drakkenheim are likely from distant lands like Terene, the Keys of Grey, or the Isles of Skye. People from these distant lands practice a range religious beliefs that diverge from the Faith of the Sacred Flame.

- What does your religion lead you to believe about the reason for Drakkenheim's fall?
- What custom or food from your homeland do you miss most here in Westemär? What here has won your heart or appreciation?

"A lot of people seem hopeful to find the royal family alive in the city, as if that's going to fix everything. First off, they weren't all that great, second of all, the chances they are alive are.... dismal."

— Sebastian Crowe

Ancestries

All ancestries are available, but some have unique aspects within a *Dungeons of Drakkenheim* campaign. As needed, provide the following information to your players. Ask the supplemental background questions as needed.

HUMAN

The overwhelming majority of the population of the world of Drakkenheim is human, including the nobility in nations like Westemär, Caspia, and Elyria. Most accommodations are built to fit humans' needs, including in the ruined city of Drakkenheim.

Humans have long mingled with other peoples, resulting in various mixed-ancestry people. Though such people often bear distinctive physical traits, such individuals are recognized for their shared human origin.

- What loved ones or friends did you lose in Drakkenheim's fall or the ensuing civil war?
- What do you do to cling to normalcy even through the world feels anything but?

DWARF, ELF, HALFLING

Human communities are most common; however, dwarven, elven, and halfling communities and leaders are known and accepted. None of these ancestries would be met with surprise when appearing in Emberwood Village or Drakkenheim.

- How did the destruction of Drakkenheim and the resulting chaos in Westemär impact your life? What is another time in your family's history that human bickering and warmongering upset their lives?
- Did you grow up with other members of your ancestry around you, or were you just surrounded by humans? How has that impacted your relationship to your ancestry?

DRAKONA, GOBLIN, KATARI, INFERNIS, ORC

These ancestries are rarer than dwarves, elves, and halflings, but they are widely known across the setting. Characters of these ancestries might have a harder time remaining anonymous or passing unnoticed in Drakkenheim and the surrounding regions though.

- How many people of your ancestry were living in Drakkenheim when it fell? Is there a neighborhood where they were especially prevalent?
- Is there a common form that aberrations of people who were formerly your ancestry take in the city? What are they called?



Gertrude
Ironhelm

On Ancestries in Drakkenheim

The Drakkenheim setting is intentionally human-centric, focusing on the juxtaposition of everyday humans against the varied and strange monstrosities of Drakkenheim.

You're welcome to say that your version of the world is one where all ancestries are equally common. But to maintain the themes of this campaign frame, be careful that any given ancestry doesn't appear only as aberrations, making them seem like they are always monstrous. People of the uncommon ancestries should be as varied and nuanced as humans, elves, and dwarves.

Classes

All classes are available, but some have unique aspects within a *Dungeons of Drakkenheim* campaign. As needed, provide the following information to your players. Ask the supplemental background questions as needed.

BARD, SORCERER

Most PCs of these classes are considered mageborn, often educated by the Amethyst Academy, learning to harness and control their magic.

Some bards and sorcerers strike out on their own after completing their studies, maintaining a looser association with the Amethyst Academy, finding the strictures of academy life stifling.

Other PC bards and sorcerers might be one of the rare few that develop magic without the notice of the academy and had to learn to use magic on their own.

- How do you feel about the role of the Amethyst Academy plays in the lives of magic users?
- When has membership in the Amethyst Academy given you an opportunity you otherwise wouldn't have had?
- When has being a member of the Amethyst Academy kept you from doing something you deeply wanted?

DRUID, RANGER

The arrival of the meteor has led to a perversion of the natural world that continues to spread across the continent. Those with connections to primal forces know that the best place to stop the spread of corruption is in Drakkenheim, at the source.

- Were you sent by your community to investigate the contamination and how it effects nature, to wipe it out, or something else entirely?
- What signs of corruption in the land have you noticed over the past years? How have you and your compatriots tried to keep the contamination at bay?
- How do you feel about the other magic users being controlled by the Amethyst Academy? What is your relationship and that of your peers to the academy?

ROGUE

Drakkenheim presents incredible opportunities for those cunning enough to exploit them, and many rogues live for opportunities like this.

While not every scoundrel wields magic, the rogues that do would be considered mageborn. Some accept the label and join the Amethyst Academy, sharing their cunning and craft with their more scrupulous colleagues. However, many thieves' guilds and other criminal organizations have negotiated long-standing "arrangements" with their local Amethyst Academy representatives that leave magic-wielding rogues free to use their magic...as long as they don't draw too much attention. Additionally, the Academy asks for the occasional discrete favor.

- Did you train at the Amethyst Academy, learn from a fellow scoundrel, or are you self-taught?
- Why do you wish you could practice your magic more freely? Have you considered approaching the Amethyst Academy for official recognition?
- What unsavory task were you asked to do as quid pro quo to ensure the Amethyst Academy's benevolent disinterest?

SERAPH

In this world, divine magic (including that of the Splendor domain) is not granted by gods. Instead, individuals tap into sacred energies through devotion, meditation, and resolve. Violating one's religious tenets won't result in a loss of this ability, but a crisis of faith might.

- Do you hold to the tenets of the Faith of the Sacred Flame, another religion, or a more personal doctrine?
- What does tapping into the sacred energies feel like for you? Do you receive direct instructions, feelings and impressions, or nothing at all?
- What methods do you use to maintain and reaffirm your connection to divine power: meditation, study, service, or something else?

WIZARD

Depending on the player's preference, wizards can take several forms within the world of Drakkenheim. The differences is mostly in terms of presentation and what the player wants for their PC in terms of associations and their place in society.

Most wizard PCs are considered mageborn and are trained by the Amethyst Academy. A PC that focuses on the Codex domain is a classic Academy mage, though they might dabble in the Splendor domain.

Alternatively, you might create a wizard that focuses on the Splendor domain to be a priest or Flamekeeper of the Sacred Flame, even if they utilize an occasional spell or grimoire from the Codex domain, which can be presented as specialized divine workings.

- If you present as a divine magic user, are you actually faithful or do you merely present as a faithful to maintain your independence from the Amethyst Academy?
- When has being a member of the Amethyst Academy given you an opportunity you otherwise wouldn't have had?
- What has being a member of the Amethyst Academy kept you from doing something you deeply wanted?

"There are many who have lost things in Drakkenheim... friends and family, trinkets and truths...I just hope you don't end up among them in your quest to find yours."

— Neo Hjena

Player Principles

If your group decides to play this campaign, give your players the following information before character creation.

CULTIVATE FACTION ALLIANCES, BUT WATCH YOUR BACK

Your group needs support from the factions to access certain parts of the city, but those groups try to use you as part of their own greater plans. You can try to maintain alliances with multiple factions, but the deeper things go, the harder it is to keep those alliances from becoming mutually exclusive. Keep your relationships with the factions in mind, but understand that they consistently put themselves first.

If you refuse a faction's advances or requests, be prepared for some kind of backlash or retribution. Drakkenheim is not a place where powerful people take rejection lightly.

EMBRACE CORRUPTION... OR REJECT IT

Pursuing delerium can bring you wealth and power, but it comes with the dangers of corruption and the potential for losing yourself completely. With study and formidable will, you may be able to tap into the immense power of delerium without being taken over by contamination, but you are always walking a razor's edge.

PLAY YOUR ARCHETYPE AND FORGE YOUR OWN DESTINY

Selecting a character archetype helps clarify how your character connects to the opportunities and dangers presented by the city and sets you up to pursue your character's personal quest and motivations for risking their life in the most dangerous city in the world.

Each PC should have one overarching goal that drives them throughout the campaign. This can relate to their character archetype or contrast it, but whether the PC is seeking answers about the von Kessel bloodline, looking for answers about the disappearance of a loved one, or seeking important treasures, this goal must be strong enough for the PC to risk fates worse than death to achieve.



Olivya Hintz

GM Principles

Keep the following principles in mind while you GM this campaign.

MAKE DRAKKENHEIM FEEL ALIVE

Events in Drakkenheim advance regardless of the PCs' actions. Have the factions pursue their own agendas and make moves based on their own motivations, turning the PCs' actions into opportunities and trying to use the party as a playing piece in the great game to control the city.

When the party revisits a location, consider how that place has changed and situations have escalated since they were there last. A once-calm neighborhood might have been claimed by a faction or had buildings ruined by a skirmish or monster attack. Making the world feel alive keeps the players on their toes and ensures that the danger of the city stays fresh across the whole campaign.

MAKE EXPLORATION THRILLING AND PERILOUS

In Drakkenheim, a journey as simple as moving through the city can make for an entire session of dramatic, tense play. While fixed locations may host the most pivotal encounters in the campaign, every moment inside the city carries danger and opportunity. Emphasize the lurking dangers, utilizing environments to track movement and provide inspiration for challenges along the way.

Look to dramatize the small, pivotal moments of exploration. Build suspense and dread as the group traverses a new location. Make the party work to find places to rest, reminding them that no place is ever truly safe.

Tempt the players with the promise of treasures and opportunities for those willing to delve into the city's shadows. Provide clues, seeding the potential for profit and discovery in exchange for risking dangers like Deep Haze, creature ambushes, and prolonged exposure to the Haze.

SHOW THE INTERPLAY OF FACTIONS

The factions need groups like the PCs to advance agendas and break the stalemate in Drakkenheim, but those agendas are much larger than the party, and the factions have their own complex relationships with each other. Gesture toward the developing faction plots and schemes, and show their aftermath when they come to fruition.

Show the players how the factions' fortunes rise and fall as the PCs' actions shift the balance of power.

TEMPT WITH THE POWER OF DELERIUM

Delerium presents endless opportunities for magical research and exploitation.

Several factions and other merchants pay good money for delerium, creating a steady income for those brave enough to face the risks of harvesting the dangerous crystals.

Show how those who exploit delerium wield terrifying power, enticing the PCs to risk using delerium themselves.

Distinctions

Use this information to prepare your campaign. You can also share it with your players as needed.

DELERIUM & CORRUPTION

The meteorites that crashed into Drakkenheim are comprised of delerium, an iridescent crystal of vast magical potential found throughout Drakkenheim. These lambent delerium stones emanate unnatural energies that induce madness and monstrous transformations.

Despite these dangers, delerium is ideally suited for crafting magic items and fueling mighty new spells. All manner of occult magicians crave its supernatural power; thus delerium commands a high price within arcane circles and underground markets alike. Many prospectors risk everything to collect a few fragments, but the true origins of the strange mineral remain unknown. The rival factions stand divided over whether the crystals should be destroyed, harnessed, or worshipped, and their simmering disagreements threaten outright war.

MAGIC AND SPELLCASTERS

Mortal spellcasters are rare, and those who can wield magic more powerful than a simple spell or grimoire are rarer still.

Most magic-wielding people are regarded as “mageborn,” meaning that the ability to access magic is inborn rather than as the result of prayer or ritualistic practice. But notably, mageborn acts as a social category that classifies people, not a declaration of metaphysical truth. Some that use magic as adherents of the Faith of the Sacred Flame can use magic without prayer but are not considered mageborn because of the way they move in the world and how they use magic.

Many people regard spellcasters with superstition and awe. There was a time when magic users not associated with the Faith of the Sacred Flame faced extreme persecution, and echoes of those prejudices remain. However, nearly everyone can recognize spellcasters who are faithful of the Church of the Sacred Flame or mages of the Amethyst Academy by their symbols and attire.

Spellcasters who are not (or do not claim to be) members of those recognized organizations are often mistrusted and feared by commoners.



DRAKKENHEIM, THE CURSED CITY

Drakkenheim was a grandiose capital city famous for its many architectural wonders. The even-handed rule of House von Kessel fostered a vibrant and industrious spirit that welcomed folk throughout the realm and beyond, and the city was an international hub for trade and culture. Nearly a hundred thousand people called Drakkenheim home, and thousands more lived in small villages and hamlets a few days travel from the city. Only a few hundred people survived the cataclysm that devastated the city, and the folk who lived in the surrounding countryside have abandoned the area for safer regions.

The recorded history of Drakkenheim stretches back about six hundred years, but a settlement and fortification have stood since antiquity. The city was named after its founders, the now-extinct House von Drakken. Four distinct dynasties have ruled the city since, with House von Kessel claiming the throne one hundred fifty years ago.

Drakkenheim is divided into three main regions:

- The Outer City contains estates, suburbs, and slums surrounding the city walls.
- The Inner City is protected by the City Walls and accessible through five Gates.
- Castle Drakken holds a palace and the military fortifications that lie atop a high crag.

The city itself is further divided by the Drann River. Common parlance calls the two halves the North Ward and the South Ward.

Castle Drakken

The mighty Castle Drakken looms over Drakkenheim. Once a royal palace, administrative hub, and military fortress, the castle is now a grim monument to chaos and horror. Any who wish to discover what ultimately happened to King Ulrich IV or unearth conclusive evidence to prove a royal claim must eventually delve into the castle itself. Those who come bearing the Seals of Drakkenheim may even be able seat a new ruler upon the Throne of Drakkenheim, if they can defeat the deadly creatures conjured by the Haze and the former castle guardians left unhinged by its influence.

Chapel of Saint Brenna

Chapels devoted to the Sacred Flame form the heart of many neighborhoods in Drakkenheim. These were places of religious worship, weddings, community gatherings, and funerals, as each stands over a small crypt where common folk interred the cremated remains of the dead.

However, many are also the resting place for the mummified bodies of priests and seraphs of the Sacred Flame, and some even contain reliquaries for holy artifacts. The Chapel of Saint Brenna holds a particularly valuable relic whose location was unknown until recently: the Scepter of Saint Vitruvio. Now three factions seek this relic: the Followers of the Falling Fire, the Knights of the Silver Order, and the Queen's Men.



Cosmological Clocktower

The Cosmological Clocktower is built on the Market Square Plaza at the heart of Drakkenheim. Created at the behest of an eccentric monarch, this mechanical wonder mysteriously stopped one hundred eleven years ago, and its function as a public belltower was replaced by Saint Vitruvio's Cathedral.

Many early expedition teams into the ruins used the clocktower as a landmark and bivouac; remarkably, the tower attic lies just above the Haze. Yet the highest spires of Drakkenheim are no safer than the streets below, especially since a bloodthirsty flock of harpies took to roost in the tower.

The Crater

The meteor crashed upon the South Ward of Drakkenheim. Once the industrial hub of the city, little remains here save blasted ruins and a massive mist-filled crater. The edge of the crater is a long-sought destination for prospectors and pilgrims alike who seek the vast deposits of delerium there. Few have ventured deeper within, however. Shrouded deep within the most dangerous and contaminated region in all of Drakkenheim, madness and ruin fester in the pulsing Delerium Heart.

Inscrutable Tower

Alongside the distant Paradox Castle and the Enigma Zigurat, the Inscrutable Tower is one of three widely known strongholds of the Amethyst Academy. Though there are five more hidden throughout the world, this was unquestionably the greatest of them all. The loss of the tower was a nearly crippling blow for the otherwise mighty and resourceful Academy, though the Directorate has taken great pains to conceal this uncomfortable fact.

During the fall of Drakkenheim, a section of the tower was shattered by a meteor, leaving the debris of the tower library floating in mid-air. Inexplicably, the tower did not collapse. Instead the top third simply floats in place as if the tower was still whole.

Rat's Nest Tavern

A small chunk of the meteor broke off and crashed into the Rat's Nest Tavern in the Sprawl, utterly destroying most of the building. However, an intact delerium crystal was left behind. Unfortunately, a ratling colony has created a burrow under the taphouse basement and moved the meteorite into their warrens. The ratlings have grown bold enough to launch raids throughout the ruins and take several captives in the process.

Queen's Park

Resting in the northern heart of the city between the Inscrutable Tower and Castle Drakken, Queen's Park was built to honor the queens of Drakkenheim who ruled as monarchs, but those who were royal consorts have also been commemorated here. Over time, more monuments to other well-known women who defined the history of Drakkenheim were constructed here as well. Common-folk and nobles alike spoke fondly of losing themselves in Queen's Park as they wandered its elegant beauty on summer afternoons. Now covered by the Deep Haze, one might indeed become lost here forever.

Saint Vitruvio's Cathedral

Saint Vitruvio was a mighty seraph of the Sacred Flame, the patron saint of Drakkenheim. Along with the ancient gold dragon Argonath, this righteous warrior saved Drakkenheim from a marauding army led by chromatic dragons that descended upon Westemär from the eastern vale centuries ago. Argonath gave their life in that battle, and Saint Vitruvio subsequently died slaying the half-dragon warlock behind the terrible scourge. Their bones and equipment have been kept as holy relics since, as Saint Vitruvio prophesied the gold dragon could be resurrected should Drakkenheim ever fall to darkness.

After the meteor fell, these hallowed halls became a charnel house: the lair of the monstrous **Lord of the Feast**.

EMBERWOOD VILLAGE

Two decades ago, Emberwood Village was little more than a farmers' market, a blacksmith's shop, a pub, a small chapel, and a few dozen cottages.

As the town lies five miles south of the city, it was not directly damaged by the meteor shower; however, it suffered some damage from the reverberation of the impact across the land. Over the past fifteen years, the contamination in Drakkenheim has affected the countryside for miles around. The once-fertile fields and dense woods are now barren and dying.

Emberwood Village persisted despite the odds. After the civil war, adventurers showed up in the town. Explorers headed toward the city needed a safe place to tend their wounds and rest, and so Emberwood Village gradually became a boom town on a new frontier for adventure.

Each of the factions has representatives operating in Emberwood, recruiting adventurers and keeping an eye on the other factions. Each faction has services and resources they can offer to groups in their good graces: healing, magical items, purchasing delerium, and so on. Additionally, the town includes numerous abandoned cottages and homes that the party can rent to have privacy between expeditions into the city, though few are in good condition.

Bark and Buzzard

Nestled amongst the residential cottages of Emberwood Village, this small one-level public house is a popular spot for locals and adventurers seeking a peaceful place to unwind.

Caravan Court

A marketplace has sprung up surrounding the boarded-up water well in the village square. This colorful collection of caravans, wagons, canvas tents, and makeshift stalls is the hub of commerce for adventurers, scavengers, and prospectors looking to make their fortune in Drakkenheim. Dozens of canny merchants have set up shop here to cater to the needs of the factions and explorers, with exorbitant prices caused by the lack of alternatives and high cost of bringing goods to Emberwood.

Traders and new goods arrive here daily, and the market is constantly abuzz with explorers looking to sell relics and treasures unearthed in Drakkenheim or buy equipment needed for a dangerous trip into the city ruins. Among the bustle, heavily armed and armored thugs load ponderous wagons with locked and leaden chests filled with delerium shards for trade in distant cities. Activity carries on through the afternoon, but most pack up shortly after sunset to head to the taverns and bars for drinks.

Notable merchants include the following:

Eren Marlowe (they/them), a human commoner who sets up a small makeshift stall with a few wooden tables displaying jars of dried fruits, packages of cured meats, jugs of water, mead, and bags of assorted nuts.

Armin Gainsbury (he/him), a bespectacled and beanpole-shaped human commoner, carries all manner of adventuring gear.

Aldor the Immense (he/him), a massive human man nearly seven feet tall and almost as wide. He is garbed in masterfully tailored jet-black silk that flatters his frame. He deals in magic items and delerium. He is accustomed to small-time heroes attempting to browbeat him, would-be seducers looking to cut a deal, and two-bit thieves trying to rip him off.

Red Lion Hotel

Upon a small hill overlooking the village is the impressive Red Lion Hotel. Before the meteor struck, it was known as Stavros Manor, home to **Kosta Stavros** (he/him), who served as the Reeve of Emberwood Village. Stavros converted his home into a hotel that serves wealthy explorers, merchants, and nobles conducting business near Drakkenheim. Stavros is an older man with a sallow face, thinning hair, and monocle, always garbed in a rich blue vest and doublet.

Chapel of Saint Ardenna

Located at the heart of Emberwood Village is a small chapel of the Sacred Flame. The circular fieldstone building has a copper-domed rooftop, thin windows set with stained glass, and simple wooden double doors. Within the chapel is a bronze brazier of the Sacred Flame, alight with golden fire that burns all night and day. It serves as a peaceful place of quiet worship in the harsh wasteland surrounding Drakkenheim.

The chapel is maintained by **Flamekeeper Hanna** (she/her) and several human acolytes. Hanna is a young woman who wears a simple white and yellow frock and keeps her black hair tied in a braid. Hanna was merely an acolyte when the last Flamekeeper died several years ago, but she opted to take up the position herself rather than abandon the folk of Emberwood Village. She believes the Faith of the Sacred Flame is needed here now more than ever, and she offers hospitality, kindness, and prayer to any who visit the chapel.



Gaga Turmanishvili



Hooded Lanterns



Silver Order



Queen of Thieves



Falling Fire



Amethyst Academy

Factions of Drakkenheim

Five key factions dominate the conflict over control of Drakkenheim, each with their own methods, goals, and sources of power.

Hooded Lanterns

Formally known as the 4th Provisional Expeditionary Force to Reclaim the Capital, the Hooded Lanterns are an irregular military drawn up from veterans of the Civil War and remnants of the old Drakkenheim City Watch.

They are now reduced to waging a guerilla war against the monsters, bandits, and scavengers that infest the nation's capital. Led by the dour **Lord Commander Elias Drexel**, the Lanterns boast support from several noble families that set aside their feuds. These houses believe that if the city is restored, evidence may emerge revealing the true heir to the throne...or enable a cunning house to seize the crown.

Not far from Shepherd's Gate lies the **Drakkenheim Garrison**. This former stronghold of the city guard made a perfect base of operations for the Hooded Lanterns. The Garrison takes up an entire city block; fortified stone walls extend from a squat round keep and enclose several barracks, stables, workshops, and storehouses. Deep beneath the garrison is a well-secured stockade prison.

Queen's Men

The Queen's Men are a hodgepodge alliance of gangs and thieves' groups unified under the flag of the enigmatic Queen of Thieves. They prey on the pilgrims, prospectors, and explorers drawn to the city, extort and rob adventurers, smuggle delerium to disreputable clients, and more. The Queen of Thieves dreams of building an influential and powerful criminal empire forged in the lawlessness of the ruins, and the group conspires against the other factions at every turn.

The Queen's Men control the neighborhood of **Buckledown Row** in the eastern Outer City, an infamous row of dive bars and dingy taverns, now a chaotic staging ground and place of eternal revel.

Knights of the Silver Order

The Knights of the Silver Order are an organization of oathbound seraphs and devout warriors sworn to combat supernatural evil, dark magic, and otherworldly

incursions. A militant wing of the dominant Faith of the Sacred Flame, a full regiment led by **Knight-Captain Theodore Marshal** has been dispatched to Drakkenheim to annihilate the corrupted crystals, slay every monster it has created, and hunt down every diabolical mage who would wield its power to work evil magic.

The Knights operate out of **Camp Dawn**, which they constructed a few miles southwest of the city, just outside the furthest edge of the Haze.

Followers of the Falling Fire

The annihilation of Drakkenheim incited a serious religious schism within the Faith of the Sacred Flame. A new sect has emerged, known as the Followers of the Falling Fire, which adheres to the prophecies of former **Flame-keeper Lucretia Mathias**. She attests that delerium is a divine gift, not a blight, and that these sacred stones offer salvation against a greater darkness yet to come.

The mainstream clergy have excommunicated Lucretia Mathias and branded her followers as an insane cult with heretical beliefs and blasphemous practices. Even still, masses of devout commonfolk now embark on a dangerous pilgrimage to Drakkenheim to take their place in a divine plan.

The Followers have taken **St. Selina's Monastery** as their home, a cloistered refuge on a small hill overlooking the Drann River in the South Ward of the city.

Amethyst Academy

The Amethyst Academy is a magical school for sorcerers and wizards, where students practice magic in remote castles and secluded universities. Directed by a shadowy cabal of powerful archmages, the Academy also operates an enterprising mage guild that controls the manufacture of magical wares and orchestrates an influential arcane syndicate that provides occult counsel to the nobility of the continent. However, the Academy was dealt a terrible blow during Drakkenheim's destruction, as the city was home to their greatest stronghold: the Inscrutable Tower.

Archwizard Eldrick Runeweaver leads the Academy's efforts to access the tower and safeguard the secret lore within. Meanwhile, their survey teams conduct research regarding delerium's supernatural qualities and unknown dangers. The mages plan to harness the crystals' vast energies to craft magical items and power new arcane spells.



Inciting Incident

You can use the prompt below to start your campaign, or create your own inciting incident.

The Amethyst Academy sees nearly unparalleled potential in the application of delerium but have been limited by the size of the specimens they've been able to procure. The Academy is determined to acquire larger intact pieces, but they're quite rare in the Outer City.

If the party includes a **Mageborn** (or other member of the Academy), River has sent them a missive asking that they and their associates meet her at Eckerman Mill for a special assignment.

If the group includes a **Noble**, a messenger from the Hooded Lanterns finds the group upon their arrival in Emberwood Village, passing along a letter from Captain **Petra Lang** (she/her) offering them an opportunity from the Amethyst Academy (see above) as asking for a personal favor for the Lanterns by rescuing her brother and fellow Lantern lieutenant, **Ansom Lang** (he/him), captured while scouting Rat's Nest Tavern for the Academy.

If the party does not include any of those archetypes, rumors flying around Emberwood Village state that the Amethyst Academy is very eager to acquire larger pieces of delerium, and that interested parties should inquire at Eckerman Mill.

Eckerman Mill is a dilapidated windmill that rests atop a lonely hill northwest of Drakkenheim. Scattered about the mill are remnants of countless expeditions, including a well-used bonfire pit surrounded by a few well-worn logs for seating.

The mill is often used as a meeting place for adventurers entering Drakkenheim from the northwestern side of the Drann River. The mill is rife with chalk graffiti and carvings, transforming the walls into an impromptu message board. Crossed-out names of adventurers, living and lost, appear alongside dire warnings, cryptic riddles, and amateur drawings of horrible monsters encountered in the ruins.

The GM and players should collaborate on creating a few rumors that have been scrawled on the walls of the mill. The players may want to carve their characters' names on the wall before their first expedition into the city, ensuring that they are remembered even if their journey is cut short.

River (she/her) is a short infernis woman in her late twenties, professional but warm. She presents the mission:

The academy needs larger pieces of delerium for study and experimentation. Intelligence suggests that the Rat's Nest Tavern was destroyed by a breakaway piece of the original meteor. If that fragment is still whole, it would be invaluable to the Academy. Rat-like humanoids known as ratlings are frequently found near the tavern, suggesting they use it as a base. It's possible they moved the meteor fragment as well. Ratlings are traditionally hostile to outsiders and very protective of their treasures.

River offers each member of the group a **Minor Health Potion** for taking on the mission, promising a bag of gold each should they return with a large piece of intact delerium.

PCs may contend with the maze-like warren built under the tavern crater, hostile ratlings, and the challenge of extracting a delicate twenty-pound delerium crystal from a five-hundred pound meteorite.

Session Zero Questions

Ask any of these questions to your players, or make your own.

What memory of Drakkenheim from before the meteor do you cherish most? What do you fear will happen when you revisit that place?

What superstitions about Drakkenheim does your character believe?

You bore witness to some magical wonder enabled by delerium research. What was it, and how much delerium will it take to recreate?

How did your party come to be traveling to Drakkenheim together? Have you already agreed to work as a group pursuing your goals in the city, or is it an alliance of convenience...so far?

What horrific or thematic elements do we want to hold at arm's length during the campaign, and what do you want to omit entirely? How does the group want to adjust the list of mutations or other elements to ensure that the horror of the campaign is unsettling but not triggering?



Campaign Mechanics

The following mechanics are unique to this campaign.

CONTAMINATION

Characters encounter deadly eldritch contamination caused by creatures, delerium, and other magical phenomena in Drakkenheim. Abilities, equipment, and spells that protect against diseases, magic, or poisons do not work against contamination. It cannot be healed naturally nor readily removed with low-level magic. Player characters must work with the factions and find creative solutions to manage these problems during their adventures.

Fading Hope

Contamination is measured on a scale of one to six. As a PC gains contamination, they find it harder to remain hopeful. When a PC gains a level of contamination, temporarily cross out one of their Hope slots. Until this contamination is removed, the PC may not hold Hope in that slot. If a PC already has Hope slots crossed out by scars, contamination begins with their first un-scared hope slot. As a result, PCs with scars struggle with a lack of Hope due to contamination.



Unless they have access to Hope from other sources, PCs at Contamination Level 4 and higher cannot use their class Hope Feature. Instead, they gain access to more powerful mutation abilities (see below).

Contaminated Domain Cards

Delerium contaminates everything it touches, but it offers great power in exchange. In certain circumstances, characters gain access to contaminated versions of domain cards, learning them from NPCs experienced with the power of delerium, from studying forbidden research, or from risky direct experimentation within the Haze.

Contaminated Domain cards offer more powerful versions of the same features at the expense of giving the GM more Fear.

A character may not have both the contaminated and uncontaminated version of a domain card in their loadout at the same time.

Example Contaminated Domain Cards

■ DELERIUM GRASP

(Arcana 2 – Cinder Grasp)

Recall Cost: 1

Contaminated Spell

Make a Spellcast Roll against a target within Melee range. On a success, give the GM a Fear to have the target instantly burst into eldritch flames, taking d12+3 magic damage using your proficiency and become temporarily *Consumed by Octarine Flame*. If the target takes Severe damage from this attack, they must mark a Stress or gain 1 Contamination Level.

When a creature acts while *Consumed by Octarine Flame*, they must take an additional 2d6 magic damage and mark a Stress if they are still *Consumed by Octarine Flame* at the end of their action.

■ UNCANNY FOCUS

(Blade 4 – Deadly Focus)

Recall Cost: 2

Contaminated Ability

Once per rest, you can apply otherworldly focus toward a target of your choice. Until you attack another creature, you defeat your target, or the battle ends, gain a +1 bonus to your Proficiency. When you force the target to mark HP, you may give the GM a Fear to force the target to mark an additional HP.

OCTARINE BRACE

(*Bone 3 – Brace*)

Recall Cost: 1

Contaminated Ability

When you mark an Armor Slot to reduce incoming damage, you can give the GM a Fear to mark any number of additional Armor Slots.

OCTARINE WALL

(*Codex 5 – Manifest Wall*)

Recall Cost: 2

Contaminated Spell

Make a Spellcast Roll (14). Once per rest on a success, give the GM a Fear to create a temporary wall of octarine magic between two points within Far range. It can be up to 50 feet high and form at any angle. Creatures or objects in its path gain a level of contamination and are shunted to a side of your choice.

A creature that touches the wall must make a Reaction Roll (14) or take d12 magic damage using your Proficiency. The wall stays up until your next rest or you cast Octarine Wall again.

OTHERWORLDLY SHIMMER

(*Grace 3 – Hypnotic Shimmer*)

Recall Cost: 1

Contaminated Spell

Make a Spellcast Roll against all adversaries in front of you within Close range. Once per rest on a success, create an illusion of otherworldly colors and lights that temporarily Enthralls targets you succeed against. While Enthralled, they cannot use reactions and cannot take any other actions until they clear the condition. You can give the GM a Fear to make an *Enthralled* target mark 1d4 Stress, once per target.

Mutation

When a PC gains Contamination Level 2 and 4, draw a Mutation card from the Mutation Deck, which manifests as the corruption warps their body. Each mutation has two features describing its mechanical impact on the character, as well as prompts to help roleplay the physical and emotional effects of the mutation. One of these features is only usable when the PC has Contamination Level 4 or higher, representing how the mutation develops when the PC is more corrupted.

Most mutations require marking Stress to use, and some require that the PC give the GM a Fear, providing more fuel for them to introduce dangers and complications to the story. The more a PC comes to rely on their mutations, the more disheartening they become to their friends and allies and closer they get to letting the corruption consume them entirely.

NPCs gain contamination similarly to PCs, but their mutations can be expressed in simpler adversary or NPC features rather than the full mutation rules used by PCs.

Example Mutations

BELLY MAW

A toothy mouth appears on your stomach.

Belly Bite: When you succeed on an attack against a target within Melee range, you can **mark a Stress** to bite the target, dealing an extra 2d4 physical damage.

Lashing Tongue: If you have Contamination Level 4, **give the GM a Fear** to make a target within Very Close range temporarily *Restrained* and *Vulnerable*.

- What awful flavors does this maw crave? What does it feel like to be hungry all the time even as you feed your normal mouth?

SPATIAL DISPLACEMENT

You are partially phased-out of this plane of existence. All sensations are hazy and muted.

Delerium Step: You may **mark a Stress** to teleport up to Close range. If you immediately make an attack, add a bonus equal to your Contamination Level.

Phased Out: If you have Contamination Level 4 or higher, give the GM a Fear to halve incoming physical damage.

- How do you feel about always being out of sync with the rest of the world? What do you smell, taste, hear, or feel from the realm beyond while you touch it?

Monstrous Transformation!

A creature who reaches Contamination Level 6 is transformed into a horrific monster controlled by the Game Master. Once triggered, the transformation completes after the next action roll. It is thereafter permanent.

Game Masters are encouraged to collaborate with the player to create a suitably grotesque description of the transformation. The Game Master chooses the creature's new form and statistics as an adversary, be it as a delerium dreg, a haze hulk, or something stranger.

Removing Contamination

There are precious few options for removing contamination. Some individuals have the ability to perform a ritual to purge contamination, but it is time intensive, requires expensive materials, and may not be offered to just anyone.

In Emberwood Village, Flamekeeper Hanna can conduct this ritual but requires payment for the magical components (sanctified oils, alchemical reagents, etc.)

Having this ritual performed allows a PC to take the Purge Contamination downtime move, which is only available on a long rest. A PC can take this action twice in one downtime to remove up to four levels of contamination in one day.

PURGE CONTAMINATION

The PC undergoes an exhausting ritual to rid themselves of corruption, removing two Contamination Levels.



Delerium Soul
Sorcerer

"As useful as magicians and wizards can be when organized, You should always have a bag of tricks...for sale of course."

— Pluto Jackson

CHARACTER ARCHETYPES

This campaign frame details five character archetypes that PCs can select to assist the process of making this campaign feel specific and personal to the group. Players pick archetypes during Session Zero so that they know what is expected of them and can incorporate these archetypes into their character creation process. This allows their characters to fit the world and have the greatest opportunities to connect personally with the events of the campaign.

During Session Zero or prep for this adventure, the GM should read or paraphrase the following text:

Since Daggerheart is a game for telling character-focused stories with shared-narrative authority, this campaign presents five archetypes to help us make this adventure feel specific and personal to the party. Each archetype represents a way that your character fits into the larger story of Drakkenheim. I'll describe the questions below, and ideally, each PC will take on one archetype. It is okay to have two PCs with the same archetype, since there are many ways to fit each archetype.

Once each player has picked an archetype for their character, we'll draw from the archetype background questions to describe each PC's personal quest, the overriding goal they seek to accomplish in Drakkenheim. This clarifies the PC's motivations and gives the GM ways to engage the PC.

A character's personal quest does not have to be tied to their archetype, though many players may find that the background questions for their archetype set them up to decide a personal quest that relates to their archetype.

If a player does not connect with any of the archetypes and does not want to pick one, they should work closely with the GM to make sure they have a strong motivation for being in Drakkenheim and the GM knows how to incorporate them to the same degree they can with characters filling the archetypes provided.

Mageborn

You were born with the ability to channel magical power, making you both a source of envy and/or fright for many across the continent. Wars have been fought over mageborn rights, and now the Edicts of Lumen officially state that mageborn must be a part of the Amethyst Academy to hold a place in society. Unofficially, some mageborn slip through the cracks through error, neglect, or subterfuge. In truth, "mageborn" is a social category first and foremost.

Delerium holds untold promise for magical research and could even create the opportunity to redraw the lines of power that keep mageborn locked in towers and barred from holding noble titles. No matter your objectives in the city, the magic that courses within you, and the way society views you with both suspicion and awe, play a key part in the story your fate in Drakkenheim.

- Are you recognized by the Amethyst Academy, or have you kept your magic secret? What do you fear most should your power be discovered or your status in the Academy revoked?



- Some kind of arcane secrets call you to the city. Is it the promise of delerium and arcane secrets, freedom from the strictures of the Academy, or something else?
- Why do you seek a cure for contamination above everything else? Who do you want to save from eternal misery as an abomination?

Missionary

What happened to Drakkenheim was just the beginning of something greater, of that much you are certain. The city has some great fate, and you intend to be a part of it. Your faith and relationship to the faiths of the continent are central to your identity and inform the reasons for your journey to Drakkenheim.

- What do you think about the theology of the Followers of the Falling Fire? Do you believe in Lucretia Mathias's vision, or is she just another heretic?
- You've received a vision about Drakkenheim. Did you glimpse a fragment of the city's fate, its secret past, or something stranger? The vision draws you somewhere in specific – is it the crater, Castle Drakken, or another locale? Do these visions plague your nightmares or bolster your spirits?
- You've been called to reclaim a relic lost during Drakkenheim's fall. Do you seek to follow St. Vitruvio's path and reclaim his raiment, or does another holy artifact call to your spirit?

Noble

For some in the nobility, Drakkenheim is the seat of House von Kessel, regardless of its condition. The fate of the city will determine the fate of Westemär, if not the entire continent. You are a member of or a vassal to a noble family with interests in Drakkenheim, and your presence in the city reflects that family's interests.

- You are tracking a lost member of the house to learn their fate or return them to the fold. Who are they, and what do you fear has become of them?
- Do you seek answers about potential surviving heirs to House von Kessel or other documentation that your house could use to gain power or secure their future?
- Someone has wronged your house, and your best lead as to their location points to Drakkenheim. What did they do to earn your house's ire, and what are you to do with them when you find them?

Survivor

The party's initial expedition will not be your first time in Drakkenheim. You once called the city home, and its destruction looms large in your life.

Like so many, your life was upturned by the city's destruction, and now you're back to make some order from the chaos or find meaning in the city's new state.

- What memories do you have of the city's fall? How did you survive? What loved ones did you see die or transform into monstrosities before you escaped?
- Where have you lived since the city's fall? Were you

involved in the succession war? Have you returned since the meteor came, or did you keep far away?

- What answers do you seek from the city? Do you seek the cure for a loved one you believe to still wander the city in a transformed state, or does some other unfinished business require secrets exclusive to Drakkenheim?
- Who do you most blame for what your life has become due to the city's fall? What revenge or justice do you seek in recompense for the pain you've suffered?

Treasure Hunter

Drakkenheim is a land of opportunity. Fortunes have been made and lost in the city, and you're here to play the odds and come out on top.

The city is filled with riches and prizes of all sorts: delerium, the seals of Drakkenheim, relics of the faith of the Sacred Flame, and more.

- What treasure or wealth do you seek to claim or regain from the city? Do you have a crushing debt to repay or a life's dream to fund? What lines will you cross to obtain this wealth?
- Someone or some faction stands in the way of your quest for wealth and security. Who is it, and how are they standing in your way?
- You see one of the factions as the key to your treasure. Which is it, and why will it take gaining their trust or seeing their downfall to claim your prize?



DELERIUM

Delerium found in Drakkenheim is usually fused into the ground or stone buildings and may be carefully extracted using handheld mining equipment such as shovels, picks, hammers, and chisels. Lacking proper equipment, extraction takes ten times as long. Massive clusters are impossible to extract without heavy equipment or powerful magic.

Prolonged exposure to the Haze or delerium force PCs to make rolls to resist contamination, as do some environments, adversary features, and other sources. These are reaction rolls using different traits depending on the source of the contamination. A PC might roll Instinct to keep from wandering in an area of Deep Haze, Finesse when handling or extracting delerium, or Strength when resisting a direct attack from a contaminated source.

Raw delerium is extremely volatile, causing arcane anomalies when damaged or targeted by magic. Those anomalies can range from benign but strange, to potentially disastrous, to advantageous for those flexible enough to take advantage of the chaos.

Delerium can be found in varying sizes. The larger a single piece of delerium, the greater its power and therefore its value for research and sale. Additionally, larger pieces of delerium are harder to extract intact, breaking into smaller pieces if complications arise.

- Chip – the size of a fingernail
- Fragment – the size of a thumb
- Shard – the size of a palm
- Crystal – the size of a fist
- Geode – the size of a head
- Cluster – the size of a grown human

Example Arcane Anomalies

ARCANE OCCLUSION

All creatures within a Far range of the source of the anomaly become Invisible for a limited time, even to one another. Set a Standard Countdown (4), and until the countdown triggers, rolls to target creatures affected by the anomaly are made with disadvantage.

TEMPORAL LAG

Some creatures within the area are temporarily slowed. All characters within Far range must make an Instinct Reaction Roll (13) or become Slowed as part of their soul is dragged into an extradimensional realm. While Slowed, they have disadvantage on attacks and all other rolls that involve quick movement. A PC clears Slowed at the end of the scene or on a successful Presence roll as they forcefully pull their soul back into this realm.

Adversaries and NPCs in the range of the anomaly must make a Reaction Roll (13) or become temporarily Slowed.

EXPLORATION

Merely moving through the city of Drakkenheim is an adventure, and parties should never take travel within the Haze for granted. The GM is encouraged to make extensive use of environments to represent the threats of the city and make Drakkenheim come alive.

Each location should have its own environment stat block, but GMs can use the following environment as a baseline for exploration in Drakkenheim:

DRAKKENHEIM: OUTER CITY

Tier 1 Exploration & Traversal

A ramshackle slum consisting of crumbling tenements, wattle and daub cottages, and fieldstone shacks.

Impulses: Entice the unready, conceal danger, confound interlopers.

Difficulty: 12

Potential Adversaries: Delerium Dregs, Ratlings (any)

FEATURES

The Haze – Passive: Whenever the party enters the Haze for an expedition into the city, the GM should set an **Expedition Countdown** (5 – Decreasing Loop) that advances each time the party takes a short rest, spends a meaningful time in a location, or travels between two areas in the city. Traveling between the Outer City and Inner City always advances the countdown, and longer journeys within the city may advance the countdown more than once.

When the countdown triggers, the characters must make a Strength Reaction Roll or gain 1 Contamination Level. Once the Loop resets to zero, the PCs must make a Strength Reaction Roll (15) every time the countdown would advance. On a failure, they gain 1 Contamination Level.

Clear the Expedition Countdown when the PCs take a long rest outside the Haze.

What does the Haze smell like? Does it obscure some items or beings more than others? What is the nearest landmark you can see above the Haze?

Search the Ruins – Passive: If the party conducts a thorough search of an area (looking for scavenged supplies, lost treasures, unknown locations, a hidden foe, or a safe place to rest), call for a Group Action Roll. Each such roll takes at least an hour (advance the Expedition Countdown).

Critical Success: The party finds what they were looking for and something extra (loot, a clue related to another location, or something of value to a faction).

- Success with Hope:** The party finds what they were looking for without additional complications.

- Success with Fear:** The party finds what they were looking for, but must each mark a Stress.

- Failure with Hope:** The party doesn't find what they were looking for, but they do find something else useful.

- Failure with Fear:** The party fails to find what they were looking for and run afoul of adversaries or a major complication.

What are they looking for? What kind of neighborhood is this? What signs of the factions or adversary groups can be found here?

Endangered Pilgrims – Action: Reveal a group of pilgrims being attacked by Delerium Dregs or Ratlings. Set a Countdown (10) representing the pilgrims, which advances when a pilgrim is killed. If the PCs defeat or scare off the attackers, ask a player to roll their Fear die. If the result is under the current value of the countdown, the PCs each gain a Hope and a minor favor from the Followers of the Falling Fire.

Missionary, which of these pilgrims recognizes you as a person of faith, and what do you say to bolster their spirits?

Wrong Turn – Reaction: On any failed roll to navigate or search the ruins, advance the Expedition Countdown as the party gets turned around, traveling in circles and wasting time. You may additionally **spend a Fear** to introduce a new obstacle, threat, or group of adversaries.

What distracted or misled the PCs so that they didn't notice the problem right away? What creatures or faction agents are watching as the party travels in circles?

Patch of Deep Haze – Reaction: When the PCs move through the city or fail a navigation roll, **spend a Fear** to have the PCs stumble into a patch of Deep Haze a Very Far distance across. The PCs must make a Group Action to find their way out of the Deep Haze or be forced to make a Strength Reaction Roll (15) to avoid gaining 1 Contamination Level.

What is your first impulse when you realize you've been surrounded by Deep Haze? What feels different about being here than in the normal haze?

Random Encounters

Each time the GM ticks down the Expedition countdown, each player should roll their Hope die. If one or more 1s are rolled, consult the following table for suggestions on what kind of encounter to introduce:

RANDOM ENCOUNTER

# OF 1S ROLLED	ENCOUNTER TYPE
1-2	Opportunity or Minor Threat
3	Moderate Threat
4	Major Threat
5+	Overwhelming Threat

If the GM chooses not to introduce a random encounter, they can instead gain Fear equal to the number of 1s rolled.

Resting in Drakkenheim

When the PCs take a short rest while within the Haze, the GM gains Fear equal to $1d4 + \text{the party's Tier}$ ($1d4+1$ at Tier 1, $1d4+2$ at Tier 2, etc.).

Taking a long rest inside the Haze is impossible. Characters can sleep, but they will only gain the benefit of a short rest.



FACTIONS OF DRAKKENHEIM

Since tracking the complex interplay of the five factions and the PCs' relationships to them is key in a Drakkenheim campaign, you can use the following tools to lighten the load as a GM.

The five factions have their own relationships to one another, but those relationships constantly evolve with the PCs and each other as the PCs' actions become more important to Drakkenheim's fate.

Relationship

Faction Relationships represent the opinion and regard a faction has for the PCs as a group.

At the start of the campaign, set a d8 countdown die to 4 (Neutral) for each faction to represent the PCs' Relationship with that group. Depending on character archetypes and initial impressions, that initial value for a faction might be adjusted up (with the Amethyst Academy looking fondly on a party with 2 Academy members) or down (with the Followers of the Falling Fire taking a dislike to a group with a traditionalist Flamekeeper).

The party's Relationship with a given faction increases when the party completes an important mission for a faction or when the party takes notable action that advances the faction's interests or directly undermines a major rival.

The party's Relationship with a faction decreases when the party refuses a mission or demand, when the party acts against the faction, or when they uplift a rival of the faction.

Acclaim (see below) can also impact changes in Relationships. At low Acclaim, it will be harder for the PCs to increase their Relationships, but those Relationships will also be slower to decrease if the party acts against the faction, since they're not regarded as being important.

A faction can think poorly of the party (low Relationship) but be impressed by their actions (high Acclaim). Sufficient increases to Acclaim might raise the faction's overall opinion about the group (an increase in Relationship), and consistent disappointment or failure (low Acclaim) might dampen the faction's overall opinion about the party (a reduction in Relationship).

Queen's
Men Thug



MEASURING RELATIONSHIPS

RATING	RELATIONSHIP IMPACT
1	Hatred: The PCs are among the faction's most despised foes and expend significant resources to hurt them.
2	Hostility: The PCs are to be attacked, sidelined, or undermined whenever possible.
3	Dislike: The faction dislikes the PCs and hinder them if it doesn't cost the faction anything.
4	Neutral: The faction has no real positive or negative sentiment toward the PCs.
5	Interest: The party has gained some regard within the faction, but the faction is unlikely to render aid.
6	Approval: The PCs are regarded as useful pawns or potential allies. The faction helps the PCs in small ways.
7	Admiration: The PCs are well-loved by the faction and treated as important allies to be assisted where possible.
8	Loyalty: The faction sees the PCs as their closest allies and will expend major resources to help the party.

If a Relationship countdown would reduce below 1, instead decide how the faction takes major, likely violent, action against the PCs, attempting to wipe them off the board. If the countdown would increase above 8, instead decide how the faction provides the party with a major asset or offers a major boon.

Acclaim

To measure the PCs' relative fame or infamy in Drakkenheim, set a d8 countdown die representing their Acclaim. This countdown begins at 1 at the start of the campaign.

MEASURING ACCLAIM

RATING	ACCLAIM IMPACT
1	Unknowns , regarded as irrelevant or incompetent
2	Unimportant , but a piece on the board
3	Minor players , capable of making some moves
4	A notable group with some accomplishments
5	A rising power to be reckoned with
6	Major players , with an impact on the whole city
7	Movers and shakers helping to define conflict in the region
8	The most famous/infamous group in Drakkenheim

Acclaim changes when the PCs do something that makes waves in the city—eliminating a major enemy, liberating a location, bringing in a big haul of delerium, etc.

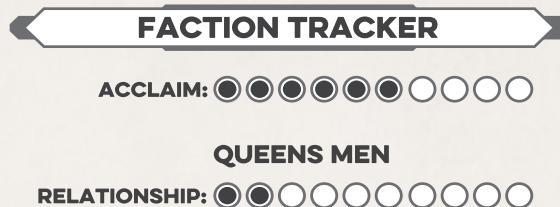
Set the party's Acclaim countdown to 1 the start of the campaign. The Acclaim countdown increases each time the party does something that makes them more important in the grand scheme of the battle for Drakkenheim. This Acclaim might be positive or negative for a given faction, but a high Acclaim means the party is important whether the faction likes them or not.

The Acclaim countdown decreases when the PCs suffer a major setback like a character death, a failed mission, collateral damage, or losing the support of a powerful faction.

Gaining Acclaim is easier when the countdown is low and harder when it is high. Losing Acclaim is always easy—Drakkenheim has seen heroes come and go many times already.

While the Acclaim countdown is low, it is harder for the PCs to increase their Relationships with factions quickly. But as they take on bigger challenges and gain status (increasing Acclaim), the factions take more notice of the PCs and care more about their interactions.

EXAMPLE RELATIONSHIP TRACKER



The PCs have refused multiple jobs from the Queen's Men, leading to an assassination attempt: the Queen's Men try to kill a PC in order to force the party to fall in line. However, the PCs fight off the ambush without any major injuries, which impresses the assassins.

While the faction is still resentful overall (Relationship 2), the party's display of prowess means that the members of the faction regard the party with respect, seeing them as formidable (Acclaim 6). The Queen's Men are unlikely to move against the party again for a while due to that higher Acclaim, but over time, that short-term respect may fade if the party's Acclaim falls, and the baseline negative relationship remains.

Turning Points

Over the course of the campaign, each faction may have one or two instances where they need something so desperately they are willing to reset their relationship with the PCs in order to get their help.

A month after the failed assassination, the Queen's Men are facing overwhelming attacks and are at risk of losing their footing in the Inner City. They make an offer to the party to wipe their slate clean and call off hostilities if the party can hold off the attacks long enough for the Queen's Men to reinforce their Inner City safehouses. The party's Acclaim has held steady at 6 (Heroes or Villains). On a success, the party's Relationship with the Queen's Men resets from 2 (Hostility) to 4 (Neutral).

Inter-Faction Relationships

The five factions have relationships with the four other factions in addition to their relationship with the PCs. Use a campaign sheet to track the relationships, which range from Nemeses (-3) to Close Allies (+3). The more intense the relationship, the more the faction acts for or against the other faction, even at risk to themselves. Factions that are Friendly (+1) render help if it does not require much effort or risk, but factions that are Nemeses (-3) go to extremes just to see the other suffer.

Example starting relationships:

AMETHYST ACADEMY

Friendly with the Queen's Men (+1)
Unfriendly with the Silver Order (-1)

FOLLOWERS OF THE FALLING FIRE

Friendly with the Hooded Lanterns (+1)
Enemies with the Silver Order (-2)
Unfriendly with the Queen's Men (-1)

HOODED LANTERNS

Enemies with the Queen's Men (-2)
Friendly with the Silver Order (+1)
Friendly with the Followers of the Falling Fire (+1)

QUEEN'S MEN

Friendly with the Amethyst Academy (+1)
Enemies with the Hooded Lanterns (-2)
Unfriendly with the Silver Order (-1)
Unfriendly with the Followers of the Falling Fire (-1)

SILVER ORDER

Enemies with the Followers of the Falling Fire (-2)
Unfriendly with the Queen's Men (-1)
Unfriendly with the Amethyst Academy (-1)
Friendly with the Hooded Lanterns (+1)



DRAKKENHEIM

