

THE SOCIETY OF KNIGHTS-ERRANT

WANDERING VIGILANTES WITH A PENCHANT FOR romanticism and art, these elegant champions drift across the eastern lands in search of wrongs to right, wealth to redistribute, and damsels to save. Or so they would like you to think.

In truth, their proclivity for quoting sage proverbs and their adherence to chivalrous customs mask their true nature as tavern-frequenting mercenaries motivated mostly by glory and gold.

Records claim that a group of idealistic warriors, driven by the noble aim of bringing justice to a tumultuous era, formed the Society of Knights-Errant some 400 years ago. While the moral fabric that once governed the guild has significantly decayed, the Society of Knights-Errant has nevertheless managed to entrench itself as a popular and legitimate institution known for bringing despots and monsters to heel.

GOALS

Gone are the days when knights-errant peddled their talents from village to village out of a genuine conviction in doing good in the world. Currently, the Society of Knights-Errant is little more than a platform for its members to garner fame. Adventurers join the guild for the opportunity to compete against each other, be recognized for extraordinary feats, and amass obscene amounts of wealth. It just so happens that the best way of achieving these goals is to (usually) quell the dangers that beset the common folks.

Contemporary knights-errant have learned that the masses fall head over heels for highbrow conduct. Reciting poetry, debating literature, and playing music are all strategies knights-errant might use to build a following among the public. Because their interest in the arts is rarely genuine, the erudition of most knights remains superficial.

GUILD MEMBERS

From fortune-seeking street urchins to young aristocrats seeking to one-up their peers, the Society of Knights-Errant boasts a membership encompassing a wide array of backgrounds. Regardless of one's initial station, the guild formally states that every individual deserves the chance to etch their name into the annals of history.

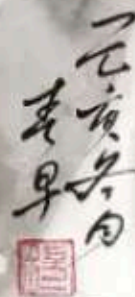
Despite this proclamation of openness, many guild chapters have deteriorated into chauvinistic fraternities catering to men in the prime of their youth. The existence of these patriarchal pockets has naturally resulted in an extreme scarcity of female applicants — though few would choose to join the guild to begin with. Women who do thrive in this hostile ecosystem typically accomplish more than their male counterparts.

Misogyny aside, knights-errant can be a positive force in the world. One who flashes their guild insignia can deter a group of highwaymen from mugging a caravan. A corrupt magistrate sleeps with an eye open whenever a knight-errant steps foot into his jurisdiction. The knights claim that the good they do offsets their wanton indulgence in revelry and licentious behaviors.

CORE BELIEFS

Gifted warriors opt for membership in the Society of Knights-Errant instead of other guilds due to certain principles its associates appear to uphold. These core beliefs include:

Fated for greatness. Each member is convinced that they are destined to transcend the trappings of the mundane. Members seldom pass up an opportunity to test themselves or gain fame.



Cultivating sophistication. Most knights-errant dabble in literature and in at least one of the following pursuits: fine arts, calligraphy, or music. They understand that the crowds they seek to impress do not hold philistine brutes in high regard.

Guardians of the weak. Knights-errant harbor a gendered view of society wherein men assume the roles of protectors and providers. This belief can lead to commendable acts of bravery as well as shockingly regressive conduct.

Sanctity of swords and spears. Knights-errant deem sword- and spear-like weapons as the most heroic. Being proficient in these arms is a must for any self-respecting knight. Most chapters of the guild do not even entertain candidates who have specialized in other types of weapons.

Spells are for the meek. Guild members believe in perfecting their martial prowess through rote practice and accumulated experience. Individuals with powers granted by gods or supernatural patrons evoke disgust and disdain.

CULTURE

Perceiving themselves as the protagonist of an unfolding myth, the typical knight-errant considers their guild as a means to acquire power and renown. Though a knight-errant may partake in merriment with his peers, he is not expected to assist in their endeavors. He is just as inclined to refuse their aid, fearing it may obscure his time in the sun.

Competition seeps into every aspect of the guild, culminating in ritualized duels that sometimes conclude with a participant's death. Interaction among guild members is peppered with flowery idioms carrying veiled insults and backhanded compliments.

It follows then that most knights-errant do not actually enjoy each other's presence. The company of a loyal steed is infinitely preferable, closely followed by that of an intimate consort. The allure of adventure may occasionally draw a knight-errant to a questing party, but the road to supremacy should always be walked alone in the end.

ORGANIZATION & STRUCTURE

Partly because of the intense rivalry among guild members, the Society of the Knights-Errant operates within a flat hierarchy. There is no guild master — only the most skilled warriors at a given time. These individuals hold no formal authority over other members but share the same goal: to build an enduring legacy by overcoming increasingly dangerous challenges.

A network of functionaries manages the day-to-day activities of the guild. These clerks are stationed in every chapter, processing applications and managing contracts. They provide lodging to any member who requests it and stock the armories with equipment for sale. Functionaries are distinct from knights-errant and steer clear of the latter's daredevil way of life.

SIZE

Constant peril and infighting keep the number of knights-errant low. These factors, coupled with the stringent requirements for becoming one in the first place, ensure that only a few dozens roam the land at any moment.

A small countryside village might welcome one knight-errant every few months (and each visit would be a cause for celebration). A capital city with a permanent chapter could see as many as 10 knights roaming its streets.

DUTIES, CONTRACTS & ENFORCEMENT

Besides paying a small monthly fee, knights-errant have no official duties. While contracts and bounties are regularly presented across guild chapters, members are under no obligation to accept them. It should be noted that those who routinely shirk these assignments will find their progression within the guild limited. An exception applies to higher-ranking members whose achievements have earned them the privilege to hold out for more exciting (and lucrative) missions without any detriment to their reputation.

The Society of Knights-Errant is loosely enforced. Functionaries hold little sway over wayward knights. Severe infringements, such as recurring failure to pay monthly fees or breaches of contract terms, should technically be met with forceful retribution from senior members. In practice, those who have the ability to browbeat non-compliant members seldom dole out punishment, as they view such tasks beneath their stature. An ineffectual knight can remain part of the guild for years, enjoying its many benefits, as long as he does not offend the wrong person.



GUILD MECHANICS

PREREQUISITES

1. The Society of Knights-Errant accepts the following classes to its fold: **Bards, Fighters, Monks, Paladins, Rangers, and Rogues.**
2. Candidates must have reached the **3rd level of their class.**
3. Candidates must be proficient with a **glaive, greatsword, longsword, scimitar, shortsword, or rapier.** They can also be proficient with a **halberd, lance, pike, quarterstaff, or spear.**
4. Candidates must have proficiency in **History (Intelligence)** or **Performance (Charisma).** If not, they must pledge to gain proficiency in one or both of these skills as early as possible upon admission.
5. Candidates are usually **male.** Female applicants who satisfy the aforementioned prerequisites can gain admission by passing a Charisma (Persuasion) check against a guild functionary.

FEES

- Accepted candidates must pay a one-time fee of **2gp** to be officially inducted into the guild.
- Members must pay a monthly fee equal to **2gp per level** to retain membership.

BASE PERKS

- Members are offered room and board at any chapter free of charge.
- Members can purchase basic equipment at any chapter at reduced costs; higher-ranked members have access to magic items.

SUGGESTED CHARACTERISTICS

The Society of Knights-Errant is agnostic when it comes to the personality traits, ideals, and bonds of its members. Even evil-aligned members can find a home in the guild as long as their actions do not sully its good name.

PERSONALITY TRAIT

d8 Personality Trait

- 1 I uniquely mingle with powerful or influential people; commoners are a waste of my time.
- 2 It's important to act virtuously; people look up to me.
- 3 I prefer working independently; the thought of sharing glory with weaklings repulses me.
- 4 My devotion to the arts is real; I aim to find beauty in everything I contemplate.
- 5 Art is nothing but an instrument to me; I dabble in it because I must.
- 6 There's nothing more gratifying than leading a band of adventurers across the realm.
- 7 Life is only worth living when I am free to do whatever I want, whenever I want.
- 8 I genuinely try to help those in need, but there are times when I just can't muster the motivation to do it.

IDEALS

d6 Ideal

- 1 **Ambition.** Becoming the single greatest warrior alive is all that really matters. (Any)
- 2 **Focused.** The machinations of lords and kings do not interest me; I'm only concerned with surpassing my limits and refining my art. (Neutral)
- 3 **Freedom.** My work compels me to go where I please or do anything I please – within reason. (Chaotic)
- 4 **Chivalry.** Although the world is my oyster, I am still tethered to codes of honor and social decorum. (Lawful)
- 5 **Justice.** There's intrinsic satisfaction in ridding the land of evil and injustice. (Good)
- 6 **Tyranny.** The strong do what they can, and the weak suffers what they must. (Evil)

BONDS

d8 Bond

- 1 My weapon represents the purest expression of artistry; I have dedicated my life to perfecting my art.
- 2 My sworn brother became a knight-errant, so I joined the organization to remain close to him (and to prove that I'm better).
- 3 The plights of the people galvanize me to search for monsters to slay and criminals to apprehend.
- 4 A rival guild member once slighted me in front of my peers. I will not rest until I make him pay for his transgression.
- 5 My existence revolves around delectable meats and opulent wines. I will fiercely defend my lifestyle against anything that threatens it.
- 6 The person I love was rescued from danger by a knight-errant. By pursuing this path myself, I hope to win their affection.
- 7 I was raised to hold art and education above all else. I've become a knight-errant to better safeguard these ideals from the turmoil of this world.
- 8 I've come to realize that gold is the solution to all my problems. I strive to build as much wealth as possible.





FLAWS

d6 Flaw

- 1 I'm not nearly as brave and valorous as songs and tales portray me to be.
- 2 I am a worldly being; I can easily be manipulated by the promise of valuable trinkets and carnal pleasure.
- 3 My learnedness in the arts does not make me less prone to violent outbursts.
- 4 I look down on people who can't match my skills.
- 5 My dedication to my craft has rendered me uninterested in anything that doesn't advance my goal.
- 6 I'm daring to the point of foolhardiness; I'm ready to risk it all for fame and glory.

CONTACTS

By virtue of the exploits that precede them, most knights-errant can call upon a large number of acquaintances and a smaller number of curated contacts. However, the knights' unbridled ambition often places them at odds with prominent political figures and adventurers.

Roll twice on the Guild Contacts table (for an ally and a rival) and twice again on the Non-Guild Contacts table.

GUILD CONTACTS

d8 Contact

- 1 I had a secret romance with one of the guild members.
- 2 A childhood friend is active in a different chapter.
- 3 The person who taught me how to hold a weapon is an accomplished member of the guild.
- 4 The knight-errant whom I admire the most has heard of my achievements.
- 5 My sibling just got hired as a functionary.
- 6 The newest recruit already owes me a big favor.
- 7 I am drinking buddies with one of the guild's messenger imps.
- 8 I maintain regular communication with the functionary who approved my membership.

NON-GUILD CONTACTS

d10 Contact

- 1 Ever since joining the city guard, an old friend has been pestering me about potential openings within the guild.
- 2 The local tavern owner is fond of my patronage.
- 3 One of the tavern's courtesans has been my confidante for many years.
- 4 A bandit lord has made numerous overtures to get me to join his gang.
- 5 The town bard insists on accompanying me on every adventure.
- 6 My informant has been somewhat evasive as of late.
- 7 The mayor enjoys parading me in her entourage.
- 8 An eunuch has been trying to use me to gain influence in the provincial court.
- 9 The nobleperson who finances my expeditions is checking up on me more often than I would like.
- 10 The city guard captain likes to chide me about my selective adherence to the law.

RANK AND RENOWN

Reputation is strongly linked to one's standing within the guild. The majority of members are celebrated locally, whereas the highest-ranking affiliates enjoy recognition spanning nations and continents. Heightened renown within the Society of Knights-Errant does not entail added responsibilities or authority, but accomplished members have access to special privileges that their lower-ranked brethren do not.

RANK 1: HEROIC WANDERER (英勇遊俠)

Prerequisites: Renown 10 or higher in the Society of Knights-Errant, completion of a high-profile contract
Your track record establishes you as a valuable asset, enough to set yourself apart from the novices. Words of your deeds reverberate from one town to the next; some bards have even incorporated your tales into their songs. Guild functionaries respect you and prioritize your needs over those of lower-ranked members. Most knights address you with begrudging respect and can be persuaded to lend a hand.



FEATURE: KNOWLEDGE CHANGES FATE (知识改变命运)

A dilettante in high culture no longer, your refinement in history and the arts rivals that of royal tutors. You gain the following benefit(s):

- If you are proficient in the History (Intelligence) skill, you have advantage on Performance (Charisma) checks.
- If you are proficient in the Performance (Charisma) skill, you have advantage on History (Intelligence) checks.

RANK 2: LUMINARY WARRIOR (明星武士)

Prerequisites: Rank 1 and renown 25 or higher in the Society of Knights-Errant, completion of multiple high-profile contracts

You have journeyed across faraway lands and defeated all manner of treacherous foes. Your mastery of your art is matched only by your skill with your weapon. The mere mention of your arrival triggers a city-wide celebration in your honor. You walk the halls of any guild chapter as if they were yours. At this rank, fellow guild members, cognizant that they will never match your achievements, regard you with deep admiration and yearn for your recognition or companionship.

FEATURE: FLASHING BLADES, SHINING SWORDS (刀光剑影)

Having crossed steel for thousands of hours, you have acquired a scientific understanding of combat. You recognize your opponent's style at a glance, spontaneously devise counters, and flawlessly execute these maneuvers in the midst of the action. You foresee the dynamics of an encounter before they unfold and replicate its ebb and flow with remarkable precision. You gain the following benefit:

- You can use a bonus action on your turn to enter a state of trance. This state lasts until the start of your next turn, but you can extend it by continuing to use your bonus action. While in trance, you can add your Wisdom modifier to your AC and increase your weapon's critical hit range by 1. If your Wisdom modifier is less than +1, treat it as +1 for the purpose of this feature.
- Whenever you take damage while in trance, you must make a Constitution saving throw to remain in this state. The DC equals 10 or half the damage you take, whichever number is higher. If you take damage from multiple sources, you make a separate saving throw for each source of damage.
- You can use this feature once per encounter.

RANK 3: PEERLESS UNDER HEAVEN

(天下无敌)

Prerequisites: Rank 2 and renown 50 or higher in the Society of Knights-Errant, completion of an epic quest

You have reached the apogee of your mortal limits. Poems recount how you single-handedly alter the outcomes of large-scale battles by boldly charging into hundreds of adversaries alone. Rumors circulate about how you crash down from lofty peaks to smite champions of evil before ascending back up amid swirling clouds. Statues in your likeness stand in prominent cities, and primordial entities watch your moves warily. At this rank, the guild is yours to shape. While you do not have direct authority over other members, you have unrestricted access to all magical items at no cost. Functionaries unflinchingly obey your every whim.

FEATURE: BUTTERFLY CROSSES THE SEA (蝴蝶穿海)

Through sheer force of will and disciplined physical training, you have learned how to unmake the spiritual laws that constrain your body, transforming into a translucent, semi-incorporeal beast, such as a graceful dragon or a majestic stallion. You gain the following benefit:

- You can use a bonus action to transform yourself, along with everything you are wearing and carrying, into a semi-incorporeal beast. You can stay in this shape for up to 6 hours. You regain usage of this feature when you finish a short or long rest.
- While in this form, your only method of movement is a flying speed of 60 feet.
- You're immune to nonmagical damage. You return to your original form if you drop to half of your total hit points.
- While in this form, you can't talk or manipulate objects, and any objects you were carrying or holding can't be dropped, used, or otherwise interacted with. You can't attack or cast spells.



NON-PLAYABLE CHARACTERS

From warrior-poet apprentices to mythical figures of tremendous power, the Society of Knights-Errant teems with colorful figures who can aid or thwart player characters at any tier of play.

ZHU WUNENG, CUSTODIAN OF THE HEAVENLY ALTARS

From the corner of your eye, a towering hunk of muscles hurtles towards you, its meaty, clawed fists clenching an oversized rake. As the figure draws nearer, its porcine features become more discernible, revealing stained tusks jutting from sagging jowls, a flaring snout speckled with coarse, wiry hairs, and large, floppy ears dangling in cadence with the creature's thunderous steps. The anthropomorphic boar screeches to a halt a few paces from you, its rotund belly brushing against your face. As its beady eyes lock into yours, the creature conjures some semblance of a smile, before bursting into a boisterous laughter punctuated with snorts and chortles.

Choose your words carefully, as you address Zhu Wuneng, the Custodian of the Heavenly Altars!

Origins. His grotesque appearance notwithstanding, Zhu Wuneng is of celestial persuasion. Before his expulsion from Mount Celestia, Zhu Wuneng was known as Ongkanon, a wordly planetar devoted to Torm, the god of righteousness and war. At the zenith of his influence, the mighty angel commanded a host of 80,000 and served as the heavens' foremost tactician in amphibious warfare.

Contrary to his angelic kin, Zhu Wuneng secretly indulged in earthly vices like drinking, promiscuity, and gluttony — habits acquired during his frequent and lengthy extra-planar campaigns. He masked the less savory aspects of his behavior well enough, constantly ingratiating himself with his superiors. His pleasant disposition, coupled with his immaculate military record, made him a popular guest at banquets, parades, and various other events that would typically be above his standing.

Downfall. Maintaining this façade took its toll. As his military success accrued, Zhu Wuneng grew audacious in pushing the boundaries of his epicurean living. His boldness reached heights where he openly carried a wine gourd on his person and courted the lesser angels in his domain. It was only a matter of time before his actions were deemed incompatible with the prevailing codes of conduct.

The tipping point occurred during a high-profile soiree where Celestial deities convened to celebrate a rare visit from Selûne, the goddess of the moon. A minor invitee, Zhu Wuneng spent most of the night brooding in a corner, far from the luminous glow of the guest of honor. His gaze never let up from her lithe silhouette.



An intoxicated Zhu Wuneng eventually mustered the courage to approach Selûne. His words slurred, but his intentions were painfully transparent. The moon goddess sharply sidestepped his advances, her piercing eyes hardly containing her contempt. Selûne then invited the planetar to revel in the remainder of the night, concealing the fact that she had already sentenced him for his impudence.

Nadir. Zhu Wuneng awoke on the Material Plane, cursed with a wretched swine-like aspect. His splendid wings vanished. His divine greatsword, searer of fiendish flesh for centuries, was turned into a primitive rake fit for clearing refuse. Many of his powers were stripped too; whereas he once darted through the clouds, his new form condemned him to bumble on land. The evocation that once summoned columns of cleansing flame now conferred him a rudimentary shape-changing feature.

For decades, Zhu Wuneng struggled in vain to integrate into the human settlements of the eastern hinterlands. Though he was able to secure menial jobs thanks to his prodigious strength and endurance, his base instincts consistently unraveled whatever goodwill he had managed to build. He was not above gorging on the crops he had helped plant and grow, leaving entire families to starve. Nor could he abstain from approaching the partners of his fellow farmers. As such, Zhu Wuneng constantly found himself exiled from the communities that had tolerated him, spending much of his time searching for new ones.

Redemption. Zhu Wuneng's path to redemption owes much to the compassion of the god Ilmater. Unbeknownst to the fallen angel, Ilmater consigned him to a pilgrimage aimed at recovering a collection of sacred texts lost in the distant east. The Crying God saw an opportunity for Zhu Wuneng to fulfill his penance and reclaim a place on Mount Celestia. By the time Ilmater's agents came to recruit him, Zhu Wuneng had been reduced to a feral beast wallowing in a warren, his dignity eroded by years of ridicule and ostracization.

Zhu Wuneng took well to the pilgrimage. For the first time since his arrival on the Material Plane, he was treated with dignity. He relished facing the perils of this journey, several of which tested the limits of his physical capabilities. Over the course of sixteen years, Zhu Wuneng and his companions searched every nook and cranny of the continent, vanquishing ancient fiends and freeing oppressed populations in the process. The good-for-nothing pig no more, Zhu Wuneng became known as the “Boar Saint” — a brave, if somewhat slothful, hero of the people.

Ascension. In truth, there were no sacred texts to retrieve. As Zhu Wuneng and his comrades were all renegade celestials who had transgressed against the heavens in their own ways, the so-called pilgrimage was in reality a chance for them to atone for their sins. By ridding the region of malevolence and enduring myriad hardships, the adventurers had earned the privilege to stand once more among the angels and gods of Mount Celestia.

Zhu Wuneng’s ascension was only partial. Despite his significant contributions to the campaign, he was unable to overcome his vices. His tendency to neglect his duties and to be distracted by fine wine or village maidens did not go unnoticed. The verdict decreed that he would obtain a measure of divine powers but be condemned to exist as a boar for eternity. His newly bestowed title, “Custodian of Heavenly Altars”, serves as a somber reminder that he would never rise to the heights from which he had fallen.

Foundation. Before rejoining the heavens to assume his undying vigil, Zhu Wuneng founded the Society of the Knights-Errant as a parting gift to the mortals he had grown so fond of. Its objective was to simply continue the daunting mission Zhu Wuneng and

his allies had started: to rectify all injustices across the realm.

Unfortunately, Zhu Wuneng was wholly oblivious to the administrative considerations involved in establishing his guild. Notions like guild stewardship and bookkeeping were entirely foreign to him. He had no choice but to entrust the organization’s operations to its first recruits. His role within the order had been relegated to a symbolic one long before he departed for Mount Celestia.

INTERACTIONS WITH PLAYER CHARACTERS

Zhu Wuneng takes his sentinel duty seriously and only seeks out the player characters under exceptional circumstances. Two types of scenarios might convince him to pay a visit to the player characters.

First, Zhu Wuneng may attempt to persuade the player characters to dispatch an existential threat. Ambitious chromatic dragons, oni conquerors, and wicked naga lords are all fair game. Tyrants lording over kingdoms qualify as well.

Second, if at least one of the player characters is a knight-errant, Zhu Wuneng may task them to excise the undesirable elements within the guild. The angel is painfully aware that his creation has become a font of corruption. That many knights-errant engage in decadent activities cannot be helped, but their indifference to morality and fixation on personal glory are anathema to his concept of justice. Zhu Wuneng expects the player characters to restore the institution to its unblemished roots — by force if necessary. Tactlessly refusing his high-minded demand may turn him into a powerful enemy, though he is unlikely to resort to violence against the player characters.





ZHU WUNENG, CUSTODIAN OF THE HEAVENLY ALTARS

Large celestial, chaotic good

Armor Class 20 (natural armor)

Hit Points 370 (19d20 + 171)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
29 (+9)	18 (+4)	28 (+9)	21 (+5)	22 (+6)	8 (-1)

Saving Throws STR +16, CON + 16, WIS + 13,

Skills Perception + 13

Damage Resistances Radiant; Bludgeoning; Piercing; and Slashing from Nonmagical Attacks

Damage Immunities Poison

Condition Immunities Exhaustion; Frightened; Paralyzed; Poisoned; Stunned

Senses Truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 23

Languages All, Telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 21 (33,000 XP)

Proficiency Bonus : +7

Charge. If Zhu Wuneng moves at least 20 ft. straight toward a target and then hits it with a gore attack on the same turn, the target takes an extra 22 (4d10) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 24 Strength saving throw or be pushed up to 10 ft. away and knocked prone.

Divine Awareness. Zhu Wuneng knows if he hears a lie.

Innate Spellcasting. Zhu Wuneng's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 21). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: detect evil and good, invisibility (self only)

3/day each: dispel evil and good, raise dead, shapechange

1/day each: commune, control weather, plane shift

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). If Zhu Wuneng fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

Magic Resistance. Zhu Wuneng has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. Zhu Wuneng's weapon attacks are magical.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Zhu Wuneng makes three melee attacks with his Nine-Toothed Rake.

Nine-Toothed Rake. Melee Weapon Attack: +16 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. Hit: 18 (2d10 + 7) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead or a construct, it must succeed on a DC 24 Constitution saving throw or lose 7 (1d10 + 2) hit points at the start of each of its turns due to a bleeding wound. Each time Zhu Wuneng hits the wounded target with this attack, the damage dealt by the wound increases by 7 (1d10 + 2). Any creature can take an action to stanch the wound with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Medicine) check.

Gore. Melee Weapon Attack: +16 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 26 (4d10 + 4) piercing damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Zhu Wuneng can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Zhu Wuneng regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

Attack. Zhu Wuneng makes a melee attack with his Nine-Toothed Rake.

Move. Zhu Wuneng moves up to his speed without provoking opportunity attacks.



THE JADE SABLE

Medium humanoid (Elf), neutral good

Armor Class 19 (studded leather armor)

Hit Points 170 (20d10 + 60)

Speed 40ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	20 (+5)	16 (+3)	17 (+3)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)

Saving Throws STR +8, DEX +10, CON + 7, INT +8, WIS +8

Skills Deception +11, Perception +8, Performance + 8, Stealth +5

Senses Darkvision 60ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Common, Elvish

Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

Proficiency Bonus : +5

Evasion. If the Jade Sable is subjected to an effect that allows him to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, he instead takes no damage if he succeeds on the saving throw, and only half damage if he fails.

Fey Ancestry. The Jade Sable has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put him to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. The Jade Sable's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 16). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

3/day each: butterfly crosses the sea, mirror image

Magic Resistance. The Jade Sable has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The Jade Sable's weapon attacks are magical.

Reactive. The Jade Sable can take one reaction on every turn in a combat.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The Jade Sable makes three melee attacks with his jian.

Jian. Melee Weapon Attack: +10 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit: 15 (1d4 + 11) slashing damage.

REACTIONS

Riposte. Whenever an attacker misses the Jade Sable with a melee attack, the Jade Sable can make a melee weapon attack against it with advantage.

THE JADE SABLE

A muffled cry from the room next door breaks the silence of the night. You rush to the stranger's aid, only to find his lifeless body on the floor, a pool of blood forming beneath. Next to the corpse, a translucent, weasel-like creature emitting a faint green sheen scurries about. It jumps out of the open window before you can draw your blade. Like a comet, it streaks through the stars before vanishing into the sky.

Origins. Born more adventurous than other elves in her community, Liang Feng ran off from her peaceful enclave on the same day she turned 50. Her next few decades were spent working as a calligrapher and practicing her newfound passion: swordplay. At the age of 120, she had enough confidence in her abilities to seek membership in the then-fledgling Society of the Knights-Errant. Smitten by her beauty and ambition, the guild's founding members, Zhu Wuneng included, were quick to accept her candidacy.

Deception. No one knows that Liang Feng has been a knight-errant for more than 400 years. The founding members who welcomed her into the fold have long died, and the few functionaries familiar with the historical records only know of "Liang Feng" as the first female inductee. Liang Feng has concealed her identity throughout the eras by assuming different male personas, faking their demise or withdrawing from public view when necessary. Today, her disguise is the Jade Sable, a masked assassin named after the semi-corporeal animal *he* is known to transform into.

Renunciation. Liang Feng joined the Society of Knights-Errant hoping to make the world a better place, but ultimately found herself powerless to stop the creeping corruption within the guild. Her attempts to cleanse the organization of its depravity have always ended in failure, with her having to adopt a new identity just to try again. Generations of infighting have left her weary, and she has now all but abandoned the ideals that once animated her actions.

INTERACTIONS WITH PLAYER CHARACTERS

Liang Feng's current identity, the Jade Sable, is that of an elusive assassin of far-reaching eminence. Bards have been singing of *his* (apocryphal) stories for many years now, so the player characters should be familiar with this figure.

Likewise, the Jade Sable is equally aware of the player characters, and their collective alignment dictates the assassin's course of action. If the player characters have no compunction about committing evil acts, the Jade Sable might be hired as their executioner. Otherwise, the Jade Sable periodically keeps tabs on the player characters from the shadows. In this case, contact should be made through happenstance. Depending on how the interaction(s) goes, the Jade Sable may prove to be a useful informant or even a reliable, if not reclusive, ally. Liang Feng may reveal her disguise to the player characters upon completing an epic quest.

BAN RONG, DIRGE OF THE RED PLAINS

The clip-clop of hooves echoes across the river plains, intensifying with each passing moment. A small group of horsemen approaches, their features veiled by the dense fog. What appears to be their leader produces a stringed instrument and begins weaving a haunting melody that portends sorrow and loss. As the lament reaches a crescendo, his henchmen roar in unison and charge at you, weapons drawn.

Origins. A lifetime ago, Ban Rong stood as a formidable general in the service of a regional lord. His military career came to an abrupt end when he was brutally cut down in battle, his forces decimated in an ambush. Upon discovering that his own liege had orchestrated his ruin, Ban Rong swore to never fall victim to betrayal again. Perched atop a cliff overlooking the turbulent sea, Ban Rong shouted to the heavens: “I would rather betray the world than let the world betray me!”

Knighthood. Ban Rong joined the Society of Knights-Errant, recognizing that the guild provided its members with a foundation to unabashedly pursue power in all its forms. His distinguished background, experience on the battlefield, and talent with the erhu immediately made him a heavyweight within the organization. As a knight-errant, Ban Rong forged a reputation as a prolific monster hunter — one who endangered civilians to eliminate his quarries. His ruthless methods quickly propelled him to affluence.

Outlaw. After building a veritable fortune, Ban Rong distanced himself from the guild and set out to carve his own dominion. Assisted by brigands and freebooters who had eagerly flocked to his banner, the warrior subjugated the hamlets of the Red Plains and crowned himself ruler of the region. On warm nights, Ban Rong can be seen plucking and bowing his erhu under the moonlight, wailing about his dreams of conquests and the overthrow of the one who forsook him — the very lord he once served.

INTERACTIONS WITH PLAYER CHARACTERS

Embroided in territorial disputes with neighboring lords and occasionally wanted for his crimes, Ban Rong prefers to neutralize intruders first and ask questions later. Player characters who can fight off his minions may be granted an audience. Should the player characters agree to further Ban Rong’s designs, the latter may reciprocate with a few favors of his own.

Ban Rong is open to cooperating with any non-chaotic player characters, though the good-aligned ones are unlikely to endorse his belligerent brand of politics. Player characters who spurn an alliance with him must do so diplomatically, as he will not permit them to leave peacefully otherwise. Good-aligned player characters should come into conflict with him sooner or later.



BAN RONG, DIRGE OF THE RED PLAINS

Medium humanoid (human), lawful evil

Armor Class 17 (hide armor)

Hit Points 161 (19d10 + 57)

Speed 30ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	13 (+1)	20 (+5)

Saving Throws STR + 5, DEX +5, CON + 5, INT +4, WIS +4,

Skills History +7, Perception +5, Performance + 9

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages Common, Dwarvish

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Proficiency Bonus : +4

Dirge. As a bonus action, Ban Rong targets one creature he can see within 30 feet of him. If the target can hear Ban Rong, the target takes a –2 penalty to its AC for one round.

Magic Resistance. Ban Rong has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. Ban Rong’s weapon attacks are magical.

Spellcasting. Ban Rong is a 9th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). He requires no material components to cast his spells. Ban Rong has the following bard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): friends, mage hand, message, vicious mockery

1st level (4 slots): charm person, command, comprehend languages

2nd level (3 slots): calm emotions, detect thoughts, kinetic jaunt

3rd level (3 slots): dispel magic, motivational speech, tongues

4th level (3 slots): confusion, freedom of movement

5th level (1 slot): dominate person

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Ban Rong makes three melee attacks with his jian.

Jian. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit: 13 (1d8 + 9) slashing damage.

HEI YING, THE THOUSAND MILES MARE

Hei Ying, the Black Shadow, is widely acknowledged within military circles as one of the three treasure horses currently dwelling in the eastern lands. Legend has it that this black mare can gallop with an armored knight on its back for three days and three nights without needing rest. As with the other two horses in its league, Hei Ying permits only the most singular of individuals to ride it.

INTERACTIONS WITH PLAYER CHARACTERS

Hei Ying once belonged to a knight-errant of some prominence. Following its owner's untimely death, the horse has been tended to by the guild. Hei Ying spends most of its days grazing on premium hay and gallivanting in open fields, blissfully unaware of the covetous hands conspiring against it.

Criminals and even unscrupulous knights-errant plot to make off with the horse. Player characters may cross paths with the creature if they get wind of such a scheme. Merely thwarting its abduction should not guarantee its obedience, given that the beast lacks the intelligence to comprehend its rescue. Bonding with the horse involves the prospective master consistently impressing it through skillful combat and pampering it with treats and tenderness.

HEI YING, THE THOUSAND MILES MARE

Large beast, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 103 (9d12 + 40)

Speed 60ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	17 (+3)	20 (+5)	3 (-4)	11 (+0)	10 (+0)

Skills Perception +3

Condition Immunities Exhaustion

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages —

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP)

Proficiency Bonus : +3

Kick. Hei Ying can make one hooves attack against a creature behind it as a bonus action.

ACTIONS

Hooves. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5ft., one target. Hit: 11 (2d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone.

Stomp. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5ft, one prone creature. Hit: 17 (2d10 + 6) bludgeoning damage.



ARTIST CREDIT

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