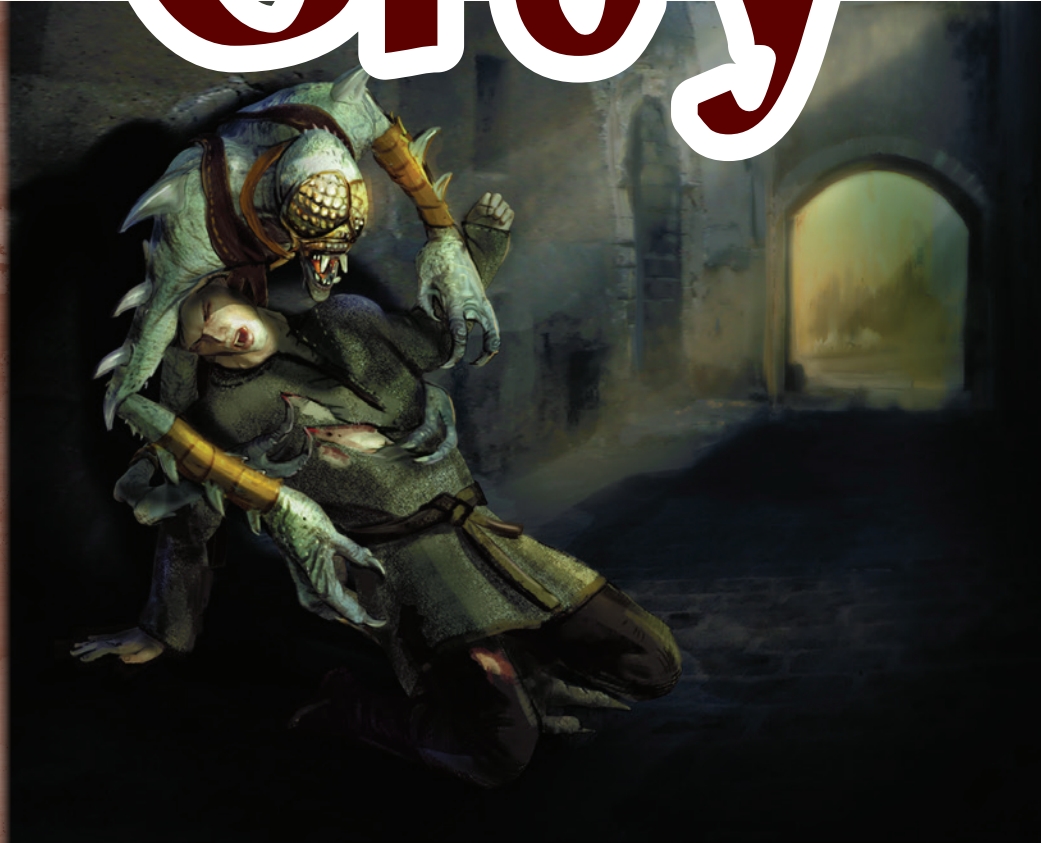


10 interesting encounters in a City



Random encounters are passé. Your players crave more nuanced encounters, where decisions matter and challenges are varied. Below are what I think are 10 interesting random encounters in a city.

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PATHFINDER
COMPATIBLE

THE UNDERFOOT

GUILD

(CR 1)

The PCs are surrounded by a gaggle of 12 children in rags. They loudly ask for food, complain about their hunger, and otherwise distract the PCs as they pick their pockets. The children will continue to make **Thievery** checks (+5) until they are caught, stealing gold coins, rings, and anything they can with each attempt.

When the children are discovered, they break into small groups and run (**DC 15 Acrobatic** check to catch a group, **DC 11 to grapple**). A child who is caught quickly spills the beans and returns any items they are holding.

The children call themselves “The Underfoot”, and are led by a precocious 7-year-old named Dirtface. The Underfoot have escaped from the nearby Prance Orphanage under an abusive elderly headmaster named Guliver Prance. The children hate all adults and are trying to steal enough coin to hire mercenaries to kill Guliver.

The PCs could stop the children, steal from them, return them to the orphanage, or take their coin and kill Guliver.

RELEASE THE REVENANT

(CR 2)

As the PCs pass the gallows one night, a hanged woman opens her eyes. Confused and disoriented, the undead explains that her name is Shira. She was a shopkeeper unjustly murdered by Herbent Gruem, a captain of the guard, for her refusal to pay protection money.

Growing increasingly agitated, Shira begs the PCs to release her so she may exact her revenge and put her soul at rest. The PCs must decide what to do, and quickly—she tears her rope only 3 rounds after requesting freedom.

Treat Shira as a **Wight** (*Pathfinder® Second Edition Bestiary*).

KOBOLD PIT TRAPS

(CR 3)

The Copperscale kobold gang has been digging Hidden Pit traps (*Pathfinder® Second Edition Core Rulebook*) underneath various alleys around the city. By killing and looting the victims, they are making a tidy profit. Unfortunately for them, the PCs are the next to fall.

The pit leads to a 30 ft. by 30 ft. unlit room. Waiting within are a **Kobold Scout**, **Kobold Warriors x2**, and a **Kobold Dragon Mage (green scales)** (all of them can be found in the *Pathfinder® Second Edition Bestiary*).

In the corner sits their unspent loot in large bags: 43 gp in coins, rings, and jewelry. Much of the jewelry is engraved. A **DC 15 Recall Knowledge** check can identify the objects, and returning them to their owners’ next of kin yields an equal reward.

THE PENITENT WEREWOLF

(CR 4)

A haggard, prematurely grey woman named Haegris seeks the PCs out. She claims to be a **Werewolf** (*Pathfinder® Second Edition Bestiary*), and responsible for half a dozen murders in the city. A full moon is fast approaching, and she has been unable to restrain herself in previous months. Haegris begs the PCs not to go to the authorities, and asks them to find a cure.

Haegris was bitten by her sister, Aega, an unrepentant werewolf who now stalks outside the city walls. Once the PCs deal with Haegris, they can take on the greater challenge of Aega.

The PCs could kill Haegris or figure out how to subdue her as she wishes and work on a cure. They must also decide whether or not to go to the authorities, and if they want to solve the “unsolved” murders.

THE RESELLER

(CR 5)

A man in dirty (but once expensive expensive) clothes calls the PCs to his stall in a side alley. He calls himself The Reseller, a

purveyor of articles no longer needed by their former owners.

He offers the PCs a full set of magic items for very low prices: a +1 *greatsword* for 20 gp; a +1 *chain shirt* for 100 gp; a +1 *buckler* for 100 gp; and a *brooch of shielding* for 30 gp. If pressed, the Reseller admits that he found the items on a corpse just outside the city walls. The corpse was covered in deep gashes, but untouched by wild animals.

Unknown to both the Reseller and the PCs, each item comes with a curse, binding itself to the user after 24 hours of use until the *remove curse* spell can extricate the two. When a wearer critically succeeds at a check, the cursed item inflicts 1d4 persistent bleed damage. If multiple items are worn, the creature gets 1d4 persistent bleed damage per item worn.

A DC 15 **Recall Knowledge** check on the items tie them back to the Penigrie household, and ultimately back to Rovert Penigrie. Rovert slew his brother Mikkal in anger a month ago, stole these items, and apparently suffered this terrible curse as a result. Returning the items to the grieving Penigrie household lifts the curse on them.

PLAGUE OF LOCUST (CR 6)

For the past few days, rumors have been circulating of food shortages and a cloud of demon locust. As the PCs walk through the market on a sunny day, the locusts descend in a rabid cloud.

The locusts are black and crimson, covered in horrid spines. They eat everything they can, from fruit to cloth to flesh. Anything living takes 1d6 damage (no save) every minute they are outside. Attacking such a large mass of insects is futile, and the swarm is here for 1d4 days before moving on.

As if that wasn't bad enough, some seedy fellows are taking this opportunity to loot the hastily abandoned market. While many are eaten alive, the faster thieves dash in and out of stores, grabbing what they can from the streets.

The PCs could join in the looting, stop the burglars, help the city regain control, or seek help from a local druid to end the plague.

POISONED REVENGE (CR 7)

Hamdring was a hunchbacked human placed in an insane asylum by his family (despite being sound of mind). Here he endured years of torment and ridicule under the Warden. He eventually escaped to the wild and brooded on his revenge. Evil creatures were drawn to the magnitude of his suffering, and he befriended and then tamed a sympathetic **Manticore** (*Pathfinder® Second Edition Bestiary*).

With his family dead, Hamdring decides to exact revenge upon the Greenfields Asylum. The PCs arrive as he does, mounted upon his manticore and ready to tear apart the structure—and the Warden, piece by piece.

A STAMPEDE? HERE? (CR 8)

A foreign dignitary and trader named Xano Zabal Ryaxas has brought **Elephant x3** (*Pathfinder® Second Edition Bestiary*) to the city as a marker of his status and prestige. Unfortunately, the elephants were hastily bought, poorly trained, and are undisciplined. One too many whip cracks, and now all three elephants are charging about the city, destroying property and damaging everything they touch.

The longer the elephants rampage, the more damage is wrought. Various business owners could reward the PCs with up to 1,500 gp for speedy action, depending on goods saved.

Xano himself is embarrassed, and tries to deflect blame. With a **Charm DC 25** check, however, he admits guilt, pays the city for damages, and rewards the PCs with an additional 500 gp.

LIGHTNING IS MAGIC! (CR 9)

On a stormy night, the PCs either run into or are sought out by a mad gnomish “magician” named Goruptulon the

Magnificandescent. “Gorp” is obsessed with lightning, and considers it the purest of magical energy. He gives the PCs a large copper birdcage, 4 feet tall and weighing 50 pounds, and tells them to take it to the higher point in the city. There, it should be struck by lightning and start the reaction. If it is struck by lightning any other place, the bolt won’t be strong enough. He gives the PCs 100 gp upfront and promises another 500 gp when they return with the lightning-filled cage.

The birdcage staunchly refuses to be put in extradimensional spaces. Attempting to place it in a bag of holding is like trying to push a grape through a brick wall.

Climbing the structure with a conductive birdcage in a thunderstorm is perilous, but the exact nature of the climb should be unique to the structure. Choose some memorable building within the city: a wizard’s tower, king’s castle, arcane university, floating island, magic tree, etc. Getting to the top may take some combination of **Stealth**, **Athletics**, and **Deception** checks.

Furthermore, every few minutes outside, the PC holding the cage must make a **DC 20 Reflex** save or take 6d6 electricity damage from a lightning bolt. All PCs within 30 feet must make a **DC 20 Fortitude** save or be **deafened** for 1 minute.

When the cage is finally struck at the top of the tallest structure, an **Air Mephit** appears trapped within. The journey down, with the air mephit bargaining for its freedom, may be as perilous as the way up. When the PCs return to Gorp, he is thrilled and pays the remaining 500 gp.

A FATAL FALSE ALARM (CR 10)

The giant statues at the city walls (or outside the castle, or in the university...) have stood silent for centuries. Their magic properties are forgotten, and their history is nothing but myth.

The PCs, however, have become more and more powerful, carrying magical artifacts of greater and greater strength around the city. Finally, the statues register the PCs as a threat, and come to life (**Giant Animated Statue x4**, *Pathfinder® Second Edition Bestiary*).

During the fight, the city seems to come alive. Shingles slide off rooftops towards the PCs, sewers flood water, and cobblestones move and shake. The statues are careful to avoid collateral damage though, a weakness which might be used against them.

If the PCs are able to get the ruler of the city to proclaim their virtue, then the statues stop their attack. Otherwise, the PCs may have to destroy the city’s strongest defense.

