

# Daemon Retch

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## Backstory

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### Before the Hunt

Daemon's father, [Ander](#), was a traveling merchant. His route brought him up and down the [Sword Coast](#) and occasionally through less traveled lands. Ander traveled with his son Daemon, daughter [Elaine](#), and a vardo pulled by a mule named Mearl. The children were acclimated to life on the road and had seen more of the world before age six than most Faerûnians do their entire lives.

Daemon's younger sister, Elaine, showed signs of being unusual at an early age. She rarely spoke, and yet seemed uncannily aware of the world around her. On one occasion in Kathlatla, for example, Elaine stopped in the middle of a game of Tressym Hunters to stare into a nearby window. Nothing notable appeared in the window at first, but after a few moments two cloaked figures appeared and huddled together to exchange what appeared to be a small glowing sphere. After the figures disappeared Elaine went back to the game as though nothing happened, offering Daemon no explanation.

On another occasion, as Daemon and Elaine were grooming Mearle as their father set up camp, Elaine gently glanced toward the woods and whispered, "Poor little rabbit". Daemon followed her gaze to see an Almiraj sitting at the edge of the wood and eating the low grass. A moment later a large bird of prey swept in and snatched the horned rabbit. Daemon watched as the winged predator flew away with its meal, his jaw agape, then turned to Elaine who again seemed utterly unperturbed.

Elaine also had an aptitude for the arcane; at least according to a seer of Mystra, Lady Ohgmoth, who Ander frequented for counsel. Daemon had to admit, that unusual things tended to happen in Elaine's company, though nothing like the spectacle of fire jugglers and magicians he'd seen at festivals. Lady Ohgmoth urged Ander to seek out an arcane mentor for Elaine who could ensure her abilities were safely nurtured. Ander appeared to take Ohgmoth's advice seriously, though seemed reluctant to act.

When Daemon was six, [Ander's](#) work brought he and his family to the [The Cloakwood](#). [Ander](#) was notably quiet on the journey there and grew tenser on each day of their approach. Deep in the [The Cloakwood](#), their destination was a medium sized camp occupied by an exotic group of travelers of an ethnicity, fashion, and tongue Daemon and Elaine had never met prior. Daemon felt uneasy around the bejeweled foreigners. Elaine, however, seemed more at ease with these strangers than their normal Faerûnian patronage.

As the evening drew in they shared food, drink, and stories. [Ander](#) talked solemnly with a scarred and weathered man, about business Daemon assumed. [Elaine](#) delighted in the trinkets and jewels adorning the matrons of the encampment. Daemon sat quietly by the fire, taking it all in with wide eyes.

In the middle of the night, Daemon awoke, stirred by a primal sense of dread. Outside the vardo he heard the deep bellowing of

an unearthly horn. Soon after were the cries of men and wailing of horses. He rushed to wake Elaine, but her bunk lay empty. Daemon emerged from the wagon to smoke and fire. His father was suddenly beside him, pulling him away with urgency.

When rounding the backside of the vardo they were cut off by a terrifying figure who seemed to be part man, part specter, and part beast, adorned in black armor and riding a fearsome dark horse. "RUN!" Ander yelled to his son, pushing him away toward the darkened woods. Daemon heeded his father's cries, stopping only at the edge of the woods to glance back. He watched as the dark rider bashed in his father's skull and then turned toward Daemon, kicking his horse to a gallop. Daemon ran, fueled by adrenaline and instinct. He didn't see the low branch that knocked him out cold.

He awoke to an eerie silence, the sun on his face through the trees. When he sat up, he was overcome with nausea. His head spun and ached. He waited for the sickness to subside, then, slowly, he pulled himself up. Somehow the foul rider had not taken Daemon's life. Confused, Daemon made his way toward their camp.

No one was left alive. There was only ash, ruin, and bloodshed. Mearle had run off, been taken or killed. Ander's body still lay where Daemon had last seen him. Daemon couldn't muster the strength to approach Ander's body. After wandering the camp, looking for something, *anything* that could salvage the night's horrors in even the smallest way, Daemon collapsed defeated. A surge of emotion washed through him; loss, fear, fury, then numbness.

Daemon wandered through the [The Cloakwood](#) for weeks that he couldn't keep track of. He lived as an animal would, surviving on the barest of means. By luck, his path eventually intersected with a road (a tributary of [Trader's Way](#)) where he was picked up by a family traveling by horse and cart. The family was of meager standing, but kind. They fed and nursed Daemon as best they could on the road North and never asked questions he did not want to answer. However, the numbness in Daemon could not accommodate any developing feelings of fondness, and so when they camped on the Southern side of [Wyrms Crossing](#), Daemon slipped away in the night.

## The Streets of Baldur's Gate

Daemon was approaching age seven when he arrived in the outer city of [Baldur's Gate](#). It was here that he would spend the most formative years of his life, first as an urchin, then a beggar, and finally a pickpocket of the Guild. The numbness and anger he'd felt for so long slowly formed into motivation, a will to live, and a strong desire for retribution.

When Daemon was close to fifteen, [the Flaming Fist mercenary company](#) started a clever campaign to recruit from the streets of the Outer City in a preemptive strike against crime. Daemon joined their ranks and began to fight the crime in which he once partook. Unsurprisingly, this made Daemon many enemies in the Underground. But it also gave him insight into the strategies employed by the criminal underground.

Daemon's time in the streets proved valuable to the Flaming Fist. By the time he was 19 he had been raised to the rank of captain and had even been acknowledged as 'a promising young officer' by the Fist's highest in command, the Grand Duke Ulder Ravengard. Daemon now commanded a small platoon of seven mercenaries, and for the first time in several years felt he had something akin to a family.

During this time, Daemon took it upon himself to garner a basic education. In the beginning, he simply sought to learn the basics of history, geography, and commerce, but something always tugged at the back of his mind. *The dark riders that had changed the course of his life... were they an anomaly? Agents of an enemy empire? A force of evil?* These questions burned at him, and so his studies inevitably steered in their direction.

Many late nights in the stacks and talkative scholars from [Candle Keep](#) led Daemon to a group called [The Wild Hunt](#). Stories of the Hunt were inconsistent and bordering on fantastical; they were meant to be terrible winged creatures who preyed on weak travelers; no, they were snakes with the faces of men; or they were men themselves, turned rotten from the inside out by the neglect of the world. Daemon dismissed much of it as the jabbering of frightened spinsters. Even his own memories he didn't trust --- he had been, after all, just a frightened boy. The Hunt, Daemon began to suspect, were merely a particularly barbaric band of bandits.

A few years after Daemon learned the name of the Wild Hunt, he heard rumors of a band of dark horsemen menacing the inhabitants of The Storm Horns. The influence of the Flaming Fist did not reach as far as the Storm Horns, so, single-minded in his aim, Daemon forged the papers, purportedly from Ulder Ravengard, that granted Daemon's platoon permission to travel outside their legal territory.

For months they tracked what his men believed was a group of ordinary bandits. The going was rough; resources were scarce and the mountains were perilous and bitterly cold. But Daemon's leadership kept his men from losing heart. Eventually, they sensed that they were closing in on their target.

But eight mortal men --- even heavily armed and combat-readied --- are barely more than an inconvenience to the dark powers of the [Wild Hunt](#). Perceiving that they were being followed, the [Wild Hunt](#) paused to let their pursuers catch them. And like a cat toying with a mouse, the Hunt killed each of Daemon's men. Yet they left Daemon himself only a breath away from death. Inexplicably, the Hunt had now spared Daemon from death twice.

## Isolation

Daemon's forged documents were soon discovered by the Flaming Fist. Daemon had anticipated this, but expected to come back victorious, thereby justifying his deceit. However, Daemon learned from a friend in Triel that the Fist had stripped Daemon of his position and placed a bounty on his head. Having made enemies with both the law and underground of Baldur's gate, there was no going back.

Daemon wandered aimlessly for a time, reflecting on his situation. The aim of his entire adult life, the only thing he had lived for, now seemed unobtainable. An ordinary mortal could not take on the [Wild Hunt](#). For a time Daemon felt hollow, wandering from place to place like the walking dead.

Somewhere in the High Moor, in the dead of night, Daemon awoke, sitting up on his bedroll by a waning fire, with absolute clarity about what he needed to do. He had read about cursed items that gave their owners supernatural abilities. The price paid was great --- servitude to another being --- but Daemon had nothing left to hold on to. No mortal could take the [Wild Hunt](#), true, but Daemon could become more than mortal.

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## Additional Info

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### Ander : Daemon's Father

Ander was a wandering merchant who specialized in rare and magical items. He would bring his family up and down [Trader's Way](#) exchanging goods and news with towns and cities along the road.

Daemon remembers his father as kind, gentle, reflective, and burdened with a deep sadness of an origin Daemon never knew.

**Appearance:** Ander was slender, as though he were frequently underfed, though he was not frail. His clothes were shabby. His hair was a messy brown that had begun to grey around the edges. His eyes were a pale blue.

### Elaine : Daemon's Sister

Daemon's younger sister Elaine was two years younger than Daemon and was four when the [Wild Hunt](#) came. She showed a natural affinity for magic and Ander was seeking a mentor for her to train under. Daemon has always presumed that Elaine died along with their father at the hands of the [Wild Hunt](#). However, unlike [Ander](#), Daemon did not witness Elaine's death.

Daemon remembers Elaine as strong willed, independent, and capable beyond her years.

**Appearance:** Elaine had jet black hair and porcelain skin. She had large green eyes that felt as though they could pierce through any pretension or deception.

### Daemon's Mother

Nothing is known by Daemon of his mother. She was not around at any point in his memory. [Ander](#) was known to grow quiet and wander off at any mention of her.

## Daemon's Surname

"Retch" is not Daemon's actual surname. In the years after the [Wild Hunt](#) killed Daemon's family, Daemon forgot many details about his past, including his surname, which he rarely had use for as a child. The name "Retch" was an insult coined by older street urchins (possibly they meant Wretch) during Daemon's time in the streets of Baldur's Gate. When he grew older, Daemon decided to embrace the name as an act of defiance.

## The Wild Hunt

"The Wild hunt is a horde of spectral riders that roam the sky like a thunderous storm and is an omen of disaster. Those who witness The Riders scarcely live to tell the tale, as their souls are dragged to the land of the dead"

Feared across the known world, The Wild Hunt are believed to be the souls of the dead, mystical hunters on horseback who shift through planes of existence hunting and causing chaos in their wake. Riding with bloodthirsty hounds above the clouds, they are a fearsome sight. Little is known of their motives or their background, because most who have seen them are dead or insane. ([For more detail.](#))

## Daemon's Platoon

- Jacob
- Robert
- Trevan
- Dylan
- Gregory
- Dominic
- Ryan

## Meta

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### The Name 'Daemon'

The character is named after the computing term, 'daemon', which refers to a type of background process. The term originates from the thought experiment; [Maxwell's demon](#).

## Influence

Daemon's backstory was conceived as a slightly darker version of the upbringing of Kvothe from [The Kingkiller Chronicle](#). The Wild Hunt is ripped straight out of the game [The Witcher](#).