

less-restrained services in a temple of Loviatar. If the characters fail to leave after this warning, Rasquel gives them an ultimatum: they can walk away or face the wrath of the Zhentarim.

A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Insight) check can tell that Rasquel seems unsure about the bite behind his threat. His little operation is off the books, with no sanction from his superiors in the Black Network. The bugbear bodyguards know this fact too, and because of it, they are less than enthusiastic about working for Rasquel.

Tactics. If the characters refuse to back down after the second warning, Rasquel orders the bugbears to attack while he hangs back. They obey reluctantly, but if it becomes clear that their lives are in danger at any point, or if the characters offer 10 gp or more to each of them, they walk away and leave their boss to his fate. Rasquel, who is indebted to bad people, fights to the death. If the situation looks grim for the adventurers, Thetsis enters the fray.

Treasure. The bugbears carry nothing of value, as Rasquel has not paid them in several days. The bandit carries 25 gp in his belt pouch.

Franchise Opportunity. If the characters aid her, Thetsis shares the story of her business arrangement with Rasquel. The bandit originally worked a fair deal with Thetsis and her lizardfolk tribe, whose members grow and harvest a nutrient-rich algae that is also a key ingredient for creating *potions of water breathing*. After earning the tribe's trust, Rasquel altered the terms of the deal in stages, starting by offering less money in a "slow market," then taking the algae with a promise to pay later, saying his cash flow was poor. When the lizardfolk began to balk at this arrangement, Rasquel threatened to send mercenaries to their home deep in the Mere of Dead Men, promising to destroy the tribe unless the lizardfolk worked for free. That threat was the cause of the altercation the characters witnessed.

The characters might easily recognize that this situation is a prime business opportunity. If not, suggest that realization to a character with a merchant-related background, or one who succeeds on a DC 10 Intelligence (Nature) or Wisdom (Survival) check. Thetsis carries algae that she's willing to sell for 50 gp, but which is worth 100 gp in Waterdeep. More importantly, any character with herbalist or alchemist experience realizes

RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

d10 + d10 Encounter

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| 2 | Four bullywugs are looking for easy prey, and are quick to mistake the party for such. |
| 3 | A unicorn approaches the characters, searching for its friends (two satyrs) who became intoxicated and wandered off looking for trouble. |
| 4 | Four elf scouts search for an ogre that has been pillaging the area. The elves have lost the trail, but they warn the characters about the giant. |
| 5 | Four adult myconids hide among a patch of giant mushrooms. They are looking for two myconid sprouts that wandered too close to the trail. |
| 6 | Two satyrs (see above) stalk the party while intoxicated, looking to play pranks on travelers. |
| 7 | A swarm of ravens harasses the party. If offered food, the ravens never let the characters alone. |
| 8 | Six goblins demand a 10 gp toll. If Gorkoh is present, the adventurers might be able to talk the goblins out of a fight. |
| 9–11 | No encounter |
| 12 | Twenty-year-old young lovers Bertice (half-elf commoner) and Grovet (human commoner) are traveling from Phandalin to Waterdeep to start a life together. See Edermath Orchard in "Locations in Phandalin" later in this episode. |
| 13 | Two giant wasps dart from the woods, looking for a little fresh meat. |
| 14 | Four boars cross the path. The largest one has a gold necklace worth 50 gp wedged in its mouth, dangling from one tusk. |
| 15 | Two dire wolves chase eight pilgrims (commoners). If the adventurers drive the wolves off, the pilgrims offer 10 gp as thanks. |

d10 + d10 Encounter

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| 16 | A locked box sits on the side of the road, having fallen off a wagon. A successful DC 10 Dexterity check using thieves' tools unlocks the box, inside which are five vials of holy water and five vials of antitoxin. Smashing the box open works automatically but breaks 1d10 vials. |
| 17 | Two draft horses run free along the road. A character who succeeds on a DC 15 Wisdom (Animal Handling) check can claim them. |
| 18 | A swarm of poisonous snakes has formed in the road. A successful DC 15 group Dexterity (Stealth) check allows the party to avoid the swarm. Otherwise, the swarm attacks. |
| 19 | An archmage named Guthildi gathers spell components in the forest off the road. If the adventurers treat the eccentric spellcaster well, she shares food and drink with them. If they treat her poorly, she teaches them a nonlethal lesson. |
| 20 | Kofutacti, a young green dragon , is touring the Sword Coast looking for trouble (see the "Life in Waterdeep" sidebar in episode 1). Thankfully for the characters, the dragon is a cowardly sort that prefers intimidation to combat, and which backs away from most fights. Kofutacti is the dragon who hunted Dabshabah in episode 1, which could be interesting if the brass wyrm is with the party, or if the green dragon catches her scent on one of the characters if they've been in recent contact with her. |