

The interior of the Fishbone Tavern is cramped and shadowy. Only two of the eight tables are occupied, one by two fishers and another by a lone figure in a dark, leather-patched cloak. One wall holds a small, smoky fireplace, while a long bar of dark-stained wood stands along the opposite wall. Standing behind the bar under oval plaques set with yellowing fish skeletons is a heavy-set human bartender. She pours ale for a half-elf seated at the bar, quietly engaging him in conversation.

### FRIENDS OF DRAN ENTERPRISES

Fryer (N female human **commoner**) is the owner of the Fishbone Tavern. Any character with a passive Wisdom (Perception) score of 12 or higher might hear her refer to the half-elf as Rakeem as she talks to him. She is in the service of Dran Enterprises, receiving payment for keeping an eye on the organization's employees and reporting any lack of loyalty to their management.

Although Fryer is tight with Dran Enterprises, she carries a certain amount of guilt over an incident from a few months ago. She reported a former friend and Dran Enterprises operative named Arla Razortongue to her bosses for speaking out about the organization's unethical practices. (See "The Peg and Hook" below for more on Arla.) Recent word on the street is that Arla continues to be a thorn in Dran Enterprises' side—and that she's been marked for exile or elimination. A character might sense Fryer's remorse over having sold Arla out with a successful DC 12 Wisdom (Insight) check, and could encourage her to share what took place and where to find Arla with appropriate roleplaying.

Rakeem (N male half-elf **spy**) is a regular drinker at the Fishbone, a friend to Fryer, and a professional snitch. Though not in the employ of Dran Enterprises, Rakeem tries to sell any information he overhears regarding the organization. If the characters talk openly about Dran Enterprises while Rakeem is anywhere in the tavern, he overhears them and alerts company operatives as to the characters' intentions.

A character notices Rakeem spying on the group with a successful DC 13 Wisdom (Insight or Perception) check. Rakeem is not eager to fight, though, and once confronted, he can be persuaded or intimidated into keeping anything he heard to himself—at least until the party leaves town. He might also be convinced to share what he knows with appropriate bribes or well-worded threats.

Word on the street is that Dran Enterprises has "turtled up," retreating into wherever they hide due to some trouble known to the company's higher-ups. Rakeem doesn't know what that trouble is, but one person who keeps her ear to the ground about Dran Enterprises is Arla at the Peg and Hook (see below). He can share Arla's story and provide directions to her shop.

### WORKING-CLASS RUMORS

The two fishers drinking at a central table are Milo and Tortuk (both N male human **commoners**). Both are deep into their cups, lamenting their inability to find

employment on the better fishing boats owned by Ship Baram. Even inebriated, they know enough to be wary at the idea of talking about Dran Enterprises to strangers. They do offer up, though, that they haven't seen any Dran Enterprises employees in going on a tenday now. It's an easy guess that there's a big operation in progress, but neither fisher knows what that might be.

The lone figure sitting at a corner table is Velos (N male human **bandit**), nursing a glass of rum and rubbing his hand. A pirate by trade, Velos tries to conceal that his hand is turning black with infection after an injury during a recent raid. Without treatment such as a *lesser restoration* spell, he will lose the hand, and he can't afford treatment. Velos knows Arla and her story, and knows that he and his hand will be bound for the Peg and Hook shop before long.

If the characters help Velos and mention their interest in Dran Enterprises, he shares that he recently overheard a melancholy employee talking about how a friend "got invited to headquarters but accidentally took a wrong door. They managed to scoop up what was left of him." His gratitude also makes him a solid potential hire, especially if the franchise has future business in Luskan.

### MOVING THINGS ALONG

If the characters need help connecting the dots, Rakeem could make an obvious mistake such as tipping his stool over from trying to strain to hear the party. Or Velos could fall unconscious from his wound, allowing the characters to see his predicament and win Fryer over to their cause with some beneficial healing. Alternatively, an NPC the characters have previously confided in might appear (perhaps Noriel or Dabahl), asking loudly whether the characters have found Dran Enterprises yet, and provoking a noticeable reaction from Fryer and Rakeem.

Once the characters have learned about Arla from any of the possible sources at the Fishbone, they can travel to her shop.

### THE PEG AND HOOK

Arla Razortongue (CG female human **spy** with iconic Dran Enterprises employee features; see "Iconic Faction Features" in appendix B) had a good thing going as an employee of Dran Enterprises. So when she was fired from that organization, the need to start over again in the cutthroat environs of Luskan inspired her to think outside the box. Way, way outside. Given the number of seedy sailors that call the City of Sails their home port, she knew that a shop helping pirates with limb replacements would always make money. However, she felt that a hook was more useful as a replacement for a leg (instead of the traditional peg leg), and that a peg was more useful to replace a lost hand.

Dran Enterprises ignored Arla at first, convinced that she would be a failure. Surprisingly, though, the plucky entrepreneur managed to convince enough pirates to try out her unconventional system that her business thrived. She has since developed a number of unique attachments (hook shoes, peg arm accessories) that provide surprising functionality—and even replaced one of her own hands and a leg to prove her point.