

## TALK FIRST, FIGHT LATER?

When the characters approach the Peg and Hook, first decide whether their previous investigation has alerted Dran Enterprises. If they allowed Rakeem to eavesdrop and report their conversations, alerted Eriss the broker of their antagonistic intentions, or asked too many strangers how to find the organization, a strike team is already inside the shop and attacking Arla. Go straight to "Dran Strike Team" below and roll for initiative.

If the characters were discreet in their inquiries, Arla is alone in her shop and can be approached in any way they want. Then run the "Dran Strike Team" encounter as the characters prepare to leave the shop.

## TALKING TO ARLA

Arla initially assumes the characters are customers, and points out various arm peg accessories, hook foot options, and other products she has developed. She then whips out a bone saw and asks which of the characters she can help first.

When she realizes the characters aren't customers, Arla is disappointed, but she's open to their questions. She despises Dran Enterprises, and is willing to help anyone who opposes that organization. Conveniently (for her), she's also looking for investors to help her expand her burgeoning business. She initially asks for 1,000 gp for her information, or half as much if the characters bring her a paying customer. She can be talked down to 500 gp, or 250 gp with one customer.

Velos the pirate (from the Fishbone tavern) is a potential customer for Arla, but many others can be found around the city. Talking a stranger into getting a hook for a leg or a peg for an arm is best left to humorous roleplaying, but could also be accomplished with a successful DC 15 Charisma (Persuasion) check. Getting a limb replaced costs 25 gp, and Arla offers no-interest payment plans.

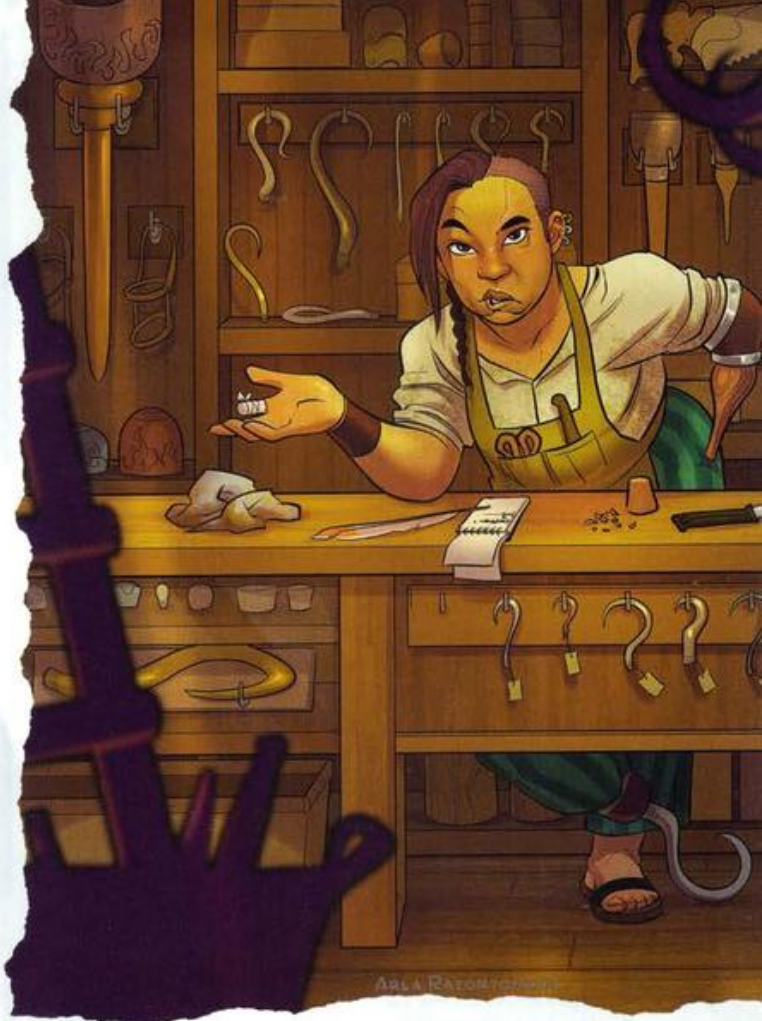
## THE HIDDEN HEADQUARTERS

Arla shares that Dran Enterprises' true headquarters is an expensive and well-appointed flagship called *The Maverick*. The ship sails constantly, rarely putting into port for security reasons. But the organization has a much more subtle and just as secret alternative headquarters that hides in plain sight at the heart of Luskan.

A tiny and unassuming ship named *Dangerous Business* is always moored at the Open Shore docks, and is more than it appears. The ship houses a series

### BEING NOTICED

As the characters rise in level and franchise rank, NPCs will begin to take notice of them, and not just vice versa. Rather than the adventurers constantly thinking about which NPCs might make solid prospective business partners, those NPCs might start showing up later in the adventure to pitch the franchise on commercial deals. Keep note of which NPCs the players have the most fun interacting with, and keep those NPCs in mind for future engagement. Conversely, the NPCs the players most actively dislike could become foes, joining Dran Enterprises or the Six, then appearing later in the campaign to pay the characters back for some real or imagined slight.



of magic portals leading to various Dran Enterprises warehouses, ships, marketplaces—and to *The Maverick* itself. Each of *Dangerous Business*'s magic portals is set with and activated by a differently shaped and colored stone. Employees memorize where each stone leads, but the configuration changes on a regular schedule. Moreover, employees are subject to enchantment magic that prevents them from sharing the information. Arla does not know the current portal configuration.

## DRAN STRIKE TEAM

A Dran Enterprises strike team has been sent to deal with either the characters or Arla, depending on how the characters got here. The team is led by a fixer named Hoffman (LN female human **veteran** with iconic Dran Enterprises employee features; see "Iconic Faction Features" in appendix B). If Dran Enterprises has been alerted to the characters' investigations, the strike team is already inside the shop when the party arrives, preparing to take Arla out. Otherwise, the strike team has been sent coincidentally to shake down Arla, as some of the higher-ups at Dran Enterprises aren't happy with their disgraced employee's success. In that case, the strike team enters the shop just as the characters start to leave.

The team's primary objective is to convince Arla to abandon her business and leave town. If she won't, they have orders to kill her. Hoffman focuses on attacking Arla, castigating her verbally and physically