

LIFE IN WATERDEEP

Before diving headlong into the events of "The Orrery of the Wanderer" campaign, you might wish to spend some time having the characters experience and explore the city of Waterdeep. The adventure *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist* and the "Volo's Waterdeep Enchiridion" section of that book (available at the DMs Guild as a separate download—www.dmsguild.com) provide a ton of information about the City of Splendors.

Additionally, you can make use of the following rumors that characters might hear on the streets or in the taverns of that great metropolis. Some of these rumors tie to the adventure, while the truth of others depends on your wishes for the campaign. Either way, feel free to use these rumors as inspiration for new encounters or side treks.

- Omin Dran is one of the fabled Masked Lords of Waterdeep. His presence on the council is the impetus for beneficial changes sweeping across the city.
- Omin Dran is definitely not one of the Masked Lords of Waterdeep. The addition to the council of such a power-hungry and ruthless individual would spell the end of the rule of law in the City of Splendors.
- The earthquake that hit the city two days ago wasn't natural. Strong magic unleashed underground caused it—maybe even magic from Undermountain.
- Acquisitions Incorporated is making a play for control in the city, and the other power groups of Waterdeep are not going to let that happen without a fight. The recent hostilities between groups such as the Xanathar Guild and the Zhentarim have been made even worse by the increasing sway of the company.
- A noble merchant in the South Ward survived an assassination attempt last night. A female half-elf was seen fleeing the scene, bearing a deep cut on her shoulder from a bodyguard's blade. A 50 gp bounty has been offered for bringing her in alive for questioning.
- A killer is stalking the streets of the North Ward, murdering people in broad daylight. The victims' feet are chopped off, as if by a powerful blow with a sharp blade. Then they're decapitated. The heads are left behind, but the feet are taken!
- The famous Waterdavian actor Tystanya Creed has not been seen since leaving the theatre after her last performance several days ago. Her adoring fans fear she is dead.
- Towering forms in black cloaks have been seen around the City of the Dead at night. A number of witnesses swear that those cloaks and their deep hoods concealed skeletal forms.
- A green dragon was spotted flying over the Sea of Swords just west of the city. The Blackstaff and her team are on high alert in case it ventures closer or harasses ships in the area.
- One of the great walking statues of Waterdeep has been reported to be crying over the last three days. No one is sure about the cause of this watery discharge from the eyes, but some say it means the destruction of the City of Splendors is imminent! Others are certain it's a sign of great fortune on the horizon. Still others say it's just the humidity.
- Members of the Guild of Chandler and Lamplighters are going on strike, leaving the streets of Waterdeep dark and dangerous around the next new moon. The thieves and assassins of the city are already getting prepared for a night of carnage.

Sure, I get it. Your first time meeting Omin Dran can be intimidating. But just remember, under all that armor is a merciless psychopath infused with the power of a god.

—Jim Darkmagic

opened up in Waterdeep after a small earthquake struck the city—the side effect of Caerhan Coalsmith's failed attempt to destroy the *Orrery of the Wanderer*. If the characters can conclude the investigation successfully, Acquisitions Incorporated CEO Omin Dran presents them with a unique chance to rise within the ranks of the organization.

A DISORIENTING ORIENTATION

The adventure begins with the characters seeking franchise opportunities or internships at the Waterdeep offices of Acquisitions Incorporated. All the characters should know the popular tales of that well-known organization and might have ties to Acq Inc (especially characters with one of the backgrounds from chapter 3).

For a nervously long length of time, the characters are kept waiting in a conference room at Head Office. Read or paraphrase the following to begin:

Your inquiries into internships and franchise opportunities at Acquisitions Incorporated have gone even better than you'd hoped. Ridiculous rumors talk about how prospective interns of Acq Inc aren't always treated with respect, dignity, or care. Even more ridiculous tales of interns dying at an alarming rate are told throughout the city. Thankfully, you don't believe a word of any of that.

So far, everyone at Head Office has treated you with kindness, and even a bit of deference. You were shown into this elegant conference room, given fine food and drink, and asked to wait to speak with none other than Omin Dran—founder and CEO of this august organization.

If the characters already know each other, they were ushered into the conference room as a group. If they came to Head Office separately, they were each brought in alone and asked to wait with the others, and have a chance to introduce themselves before Omin appears.

It isn't long before the door to the conference room opens, and an intense-looking half-elf in plate armor enters. He wears a holy symbol of Tymora, the goddess of fortune, around his neck. It's Omin Dran! With no introduction, the CEO of Acquisitions Incorporated speaks.

When visiting Head Office, never approach Omin directly. Use the proper forms and filing procedures. After a brief four-month waiting time, you will be granted a very generous sixty-second meeting. It'll be the best minute of your life.

—Walnut Dankgrass