

FOOD FIGHT

The characters appear behind the bar, with every patron in the inn shouting furiously at them regarding poor service. The patrons begin to hurl food at the characters: +4 to hit, 4 (1d8) bludgeoning damage. The patrons are immune to damage from any of the characters' normal attacks and spells. However, each patron is vulnerable to one type of food currently being hurled around the inn. If that type of food hits a patron, they immediately vanish. When all the patrons have been vanquished in this way, the stage ends.

CONFRONTING THE KEYMASTER

Whether as a result of information gathered during stages of the Test Market, magic brought to bear while talking to "Propha," or simply adventurers' instinct, the characters eventually become aware of the Keymaster's identity. If this happens before the characters have triggered all the presented stages of the Test Market, that's fine. You can have the Keymaster flee through an interior door to generate a new stage (see below). Or you can ignore the later stages and let the characters capture the doppelganger (especially if the players are anxious to get to the ritual site as quickly as possible).

When the Keymaster's true nature is discovered, it shifts to its natural form and engages the characters in combat. The Keymaster uses the **doppelganger** stat block with the iconic affiliate of the Six features (see "Iconic Faction Features" in appendix B).

The doppelganger leads with Multiattack if it has surprise, to make the most of its Surprise Attack trait. It otherwise uses its Glimpse of the Beyond feature to blind as many foes as possible. It then attempts to drink a *potion of invisibility* and flee.

If you want it to, the Keymaster opening one of the inn's interior doors triggers the next stage of the Test Market. The doppelganger can vanish in that next stage to leave the characters to their own devices, or it can remain in the next stage, engaging the party in combat and attempting to help the threats of that stage finish them off.

The Keymaster bargains for its life if reduced to 35 hit points or fewer, revealing the following if the characters agree to spare it:

- All the versions of the Dran & Courtier—even the "normal" version—are part of the Test Market. Jim Darkmagic foolishly created the Test Market as a way to test (or, you know, torture) applicants to Acquisitions Incorporated. This established the Dran & Courtier as a crossroads between demiplanes, and its planar instability makes it perfect for opening portals to additional dimensions.
- Splugoth the Returned does not lead the Six, but he oversees this operation. He hates Acquisitions Incorporated, as does everyone in the Six.
- The components of the *Orrery of the Wanderer* are being used to anchor a complex ritual that will open a portal to the Far Realm. When the portal opens completely, an otherworldly army will emerge to destroy Red Larch, sweep across the Sword Coast, and wipe out Acquisitions Incorporated in the process.

Of course, all members of the Six have been promised safe harbor and cushy desk jobs under this new regime.

- The Keymaster's job is to oversee the different Test Market dimensions. It has been allowing servants of the Six into the various Test Markets and the ritual site, while trapping and eliminating anyone coming in to cause trouble—especially meddlesome and pesky adventurers.
- The people within the default version of the inn are ordinary mortals trapped by magic, and must remain in the inn until the ritual is shut down. The real Propha likewise remains trapped in stage 3 of the Test Market until the ritual ends.
- The amulet the doppelganger wears controls which Test Market appears when a door is opened. The amulet can also open the door to the basement, which leads to the dimensional caverns (see below), which in turn lead to the ritual site.
- The Keymaster can use the amulet without needing to make an ability check, and will do so at the characters' request if its life is spared. Anyone else who uses an action to activate the amulet and succeeds on a DC 15 Intelligence (Arcana) check can open the basement door.

If the characters control the amulet, they can access any versions of the Test Market, but planar energy continues to course through the Dran & Courtier as a result of Splugoth's ritual. Opening the inn's main doors or contacting NPCs moving through other versions of the Test Market (including the "C" Team) is impossible until the ritual is ended. But once the basement door is opened from within any stage of the Test Market, the characters are ready to enter the dimensional caverns—and to save Faerûn.

DIMENSIONAL CAVERNS

When the basement door is opened, read:

Instead of a basement stairway, a rough stone tunnel stretches away from the Dran & Courtier, quickly widening to a cavernous space studded with purple crystals. The tunnel echoes with strange voices and far-off sounds, as if originating from distant places ... or perhaps even distant worlds.

The tunnel is unlit. A successful DC 12 Intelligence (Arcana) check made while investigating the tunnel confirms that it is wholly contained within a pocket dimension. Because the characters have been in possession of the orrery housing and some of its components, they feel the presence of whichever components Splugoth now possesses at some great distance straight ahead.

To provide context for the background noise, tell the players that the characters are hearing snippets from the adventures of the "C" Team and Acquisitions Incorporated. You might even use dialogue from an Acquisitions Incorporated live play session as background sound while the characters traverse the tunnel.