

SEARCHING THE GROUNDS

With the jackalwere and her pack defeated or driven off, the characters can search the grounds. If they search in the area where the jackals were digging, see “Survivor” below. If they explore the remains of the buildings on the grounds, a successful DC 10 Intelligence (Investigation) check reveals the following:

- Newly built wooden structures were struck by fire. Two of those still stand, but most have been burned or smashed to the ground.
- The older masonry of the manor walls had been crumbling for some time. New stonework was replacing the old, but everything has been smashed to pieces.
- Older humanoid remains were the source of the jackals’ meal. However, no intact corpses can be found among the rubble.

Additionally, the walls of the still-standing structures bear a mark in chalk—a double-“D” insignia. This is the sigil of Dran Enterprises. As adventurers familiar with the operations of Acquisitions Incorporated, all the characters recognize the mark of Acq Inc’s greatest rival organization. (The marks have been scribed by the archmage Hoobur Gran’Shoop, who is charged by the Six with ensuring that Dran Enterprises takes the blame for the attack on the Acq Inc franchise at Phandalin. More on Hoobur will be revealed in episode 3.)

Treasure. The two intact wooden buildings hold seven tendays’ worth of rations, two explorer’s packs, and a dungeoneer’s pack, along with other adventuring equipment that has been smashed, burned, or melted.

SURVIVOR

As the characters search the area where the jackals were digging, a low, pained moaning rises from beneath the rubble. Carefully pulling away the rocks reveals a half-orc buried under smashed and still-smoldering masonry. This is Gildha Duhn, majordomo of the Company of the Golden Mongoose franchise. She is starving, dehydrated, and addled. Gildha uses the **acolyte** stat block with these racial traits:

- When reduced to 0 hit points, she drops to 1 hit point instead (but can’t do this again until she finishes a long rest).
- She has darkvision out to a range of 60 feet.
- She speaks Common and Orc.

Gildha repeatedly mutters something in a low voice, but she has something in her mouth that makes it impossible to understand her. Oddly, that something is a complex clockwork device, which Gildha stuck in her mouth to keep out of enemy hands during the attack. If the device is removed, the characters hear her repeatedly say, “They came for it ... they came for the timepiece ...”

If given magical healing or allowed to sleep for an hour after being given food and water, Gildha regains her senses. She tells the characters that she worked for the Acquisitions Incorporated franchise in Phandalin, and that while working on their ongoing renovation of Tresendar Manor, the franchisees were attacked at night by unknown assailants. Gildha knows few details of the attack and heard little of the aftermath. Though



GILDHA DUHN

she saw one of her group escape by teleporting away, she isn’t sure what happened to the others. Falling rubble knocked her down, then buried her. Surviving on nothing but rainwater and her half-orc endurance, Gildha has been in and out of consciousness since the attack.

THE TIMEPIECE OF TRAVEL

When the characters examine the somewhat sodden device that was in Gildha’s mouth, they can see that its design and etched glyphs clearly mark it as part of the *Orrery of the Wanderer*.

Gildha knows a little about the device, which she calls the *timepiece of travel*. The Fellowship of the Golden Mongoose found the relic six months ago in the possession of an evil adventuring band, who claimed to have taken it not long before from a tomb haunted by undead. After careful scrutineering and research, the Golden Mongoose adventurers learned that the timepiece had magical powers dedicated to navigation and teleportation, and speculated that it was just one piece of a larger and more potent magic device.

During the attack, Gildha saw one of the Golden Mongoose adventurers—a female tiefling paladin occultant named Talanatha Three-Coins—activate the *timepiece of travel* and teleport away. For reasons unknown, the timepiece stayed behind (see the “Level Inappropriate” sidebar). Gildha grabbed the relic, but has no idea where Talanatha went.

Gildha also tells the characters that she saw some of the attackers heading into a small cellar beneath the