

INTRODUCTION

Waterdeep: Cloak & Dagger is a supplementary piece to *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist* and *Waterdeep: Dungeon of the Mad Mage*. It offers twelve new factions that can be joined or opposed. Some factions may serve as recurring allies or enemies. While this supplement focuses on Waterdeep, many of these factions can take characters on adventures far beyond the walls of the City of Splendours.

The new factions are: the Dark Dagger, the Iron Throne, the Knights of the Shield, the Kraken Society, the Legion of the Chimera, the Moonstars, the Murkstalkers, the Night Parade, the Red Sashes, the Reforged Ring, the Sons of Xvim, and the Unseen Servants.

The **Dark Dagger** is a drow faction that seeks to covertly take over other criminal organisations to fund their war against the Church of Lolth.

The **Iron Throne** is a group of arms-dealers who will stop at nothing to gain a complete stranglehold on the arms trade.

The **Knights of the Shield** are a secret society of like-minded nobles and merchants, pooling their knowledge to gain an advantage over their competition.

The **Kraken Society** is a group of pirates, slavers and thugs that make up a vast intelligence network. They are secretly led by a kraken seeking to obtain godhood.

The **Legion of the Chimera** is a group of outcasts in Undermountain. They trade favours and work together to achieve their common goals.

The **Moonstars** are a splinter group from the Harpers. Little is known about them other than that they'll do everything that is necessary to defeat evil.

The **Murkstalkers** are a group of necromancers that have been lurking around Skullport. They are secretly part of a plot to bring down the Blackstaff.

The **Night Parade** is a gang of mutated humanoids. They recruit from the lowest dregs of society to sustain their numbers.

The **Red Sashes** are a vigilante organisation. They hunt the guilty and work to free the innocent, all while doing their best to keep their own hands clean.

The **Reforged Ring** is a group of slavers that has recently made a bid to take over the Xanathar Guild. They are led by a power-hungry vampire beholder.

The **Sons of Xvim** are a criminal gang that believes that might makes right. Little do most of them realise that they are pawns in a much larger scheme.

The **Unseen Servants** are a gang of spies, assassins, illusionists and shapechangers. Their motives are a mystery even to themselves.

DARK DAGGER

HISTORY & MOTIVATIONS

Drow society is dominated by worship of Lolth. Lolth encourages her followers to be scheming, ambitious, sadistic, and ruthless. Her worshippers have, in turn, shaped drow society to be strictly matriarchal one, with many male drow being little more than slaves.

Long ago, a group of male drow who worshipped Vhaeraun (drow god of thieves) sought to change drow society for the better. However, they knew that any attempt to change it from within would be a futile task. As such, they decided to gather power outside of drow society and outside the Underdark, so that they might one day have the power to challenge Lolth's worshippers.

They formed an organisation known as the Dark Dagger. They began to ingrain themselves in the criminal underworld of various cities across central and western Faerûn. They began to amass power, forming alliances, and taking over pre-existing criminal organisations from within. In time, they even opened their ranks to humans and half-drow, accepting anyone who was willing to aid their struggle against the Church of Lolth.

However, disaster struck during the time of the Spellplague. Vhaeraun, their patron deity, was killed. This caused a schism within the Dark Dagger, as each group had their own idea of what should be done. Some thought they should give up on their war against Lolth and embrace their new life as criminal overlords. Others felt that they should turn to worshipping a different deity (be it a drow deity or a deity of the Faerûnian pantheon). Then there were those who felt they shouldn't change anything and should carry on as normal.

After the Dark Dagger had mostly recovered, it was thrown into chaos yet again a century later, when Vhaeraun miraculously returned from the dead. This caused more confusion, as those who had stayed true to Vhaeraun (the so-called Skulkers of Vhaeraun) sought to spread his faith back through the Dark Dagger. Others felt that they had gotten by well enough without Vhaeraun for a century; claimed they didn't need him any more.

The Dark Dagger is presently still trying to find its feet. Whilst its main foe is still the Church of Lolth, its second greatest is itself. Communication between the different cells of the Dark Dagger is less reliable than before. Even within each cell, there is a covert power struggle going on to determine what the future face of the Dark Dagger will be.

ORGANISATION & MEMBERS

The Dark Dagger is separated into multiple cells spread out across numerous cities. Each cell often has between twenty and a hundred members. Most of these members have little interest in fighting the Church of Lolth (most aren't even drow), but serve the Dark Dagger for the wealth and power it brings.

The Dark Dagger has the following notable members:

- Veldrin (LE male drow priest of Vhaeraun), the leader of the Dark Dagger in Skullport.

He is incredibly pious. He believes that the only way they can hope to defeat Lolth is through worship of Vhaeraun, and that straying from Vhaeraun's guidance can only bring disaster. He has the statistics of a **drow priestess of Lolth**.

- Velkyn (NE male half-elf **assassin**), a half-drow who serves as Veldrin's second-in-command. Whilst he respects Veldrin, he believes him to be misguided. He believes the Dark Dagger is slowly collapsing from within and they need to jump ship to survive. He thinks they should ally themselves with Bregan D'aerthe. If necessary, he is willing to allow the Dark Dagger to be completely subsumed by Bregan D'aerthe if it means their people will survive.
- Faern (CE female **drow mage**), a cunning and manipulative drow. She secretly believes they should give up on their war with Lolth and focus on expanding their criminal empire. She plays at being supportive of other's views while subtly furthering her own goals. She tells Veldrin to focus on building a community that Vhaeraun-worshippers can seek shelter, knowing that will cause him to focus on building a stable criminal empire. She also encourages Velkyn to make an alliance with Bregan D'aerthe, hoping it will give the Dark Dagger the opportunity to take them over from within.
- Abban (N male **drow elite warrior**), a member of the Dark Dagger's ruling council in Skullport. Until several months ago, he was a quiet and hard-working member of the Dark Dagger. That changed after a fateful journey deep into Undermountain. There, he found the *Starym moonblade* (see Appendix A). He attuned to the sword, which took immediate control of him. The sword now uses his body to further its own twisted ambitions.

The Dark Dagger's less noteworthy members include: Wael (CN male **drow**), Dobluth (CE female **drow elite warrior**), Orbelg (CG female half-elf **spy**), Cestys (LE female Calishite human **martial arts adept**; see Appendix B of *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist*) Lance (CE male Tethyrian human **gladiator**), and Zhang (NE female Shou human **bandit captain**).

JOINING THE DARK DAGGER

The Dark Dagger is always on the lookout for new recruits. While they are typically led by male drow, they are open to all sorts of followers. If the characters seem competent and aren't open worshippers of Lolth, they may be sent an invitation to have a meeting with Velkyn.

Velkyn is cordial and polite. He invites the characters to do a straightforward mission for him, offers them a reward if they prove themselves. Should they successfully complete the mission, he offers them more missions. Initially, these missions are relatively straightforward but, as the characters rise in rank, they are trusted with more taxing tasks.

The Dark Dagger's ranks (and renown needed to reach them) are as follows: Pommel (1), Handle (3), Point (10), Blade (25), and Venom (50).

Missions relating to the Dark Dagger often involves helping with their smuggling operations, helping settle turf disputes, and helping with their attempts to take over other criminal organisations from within.

Possible faction missions include the following:

- Dark Dagger smuggling routes are being disrupted by a **revenant** who seems to have a

grudge against them. The characters are sent to find a way to deal with this revenant permanently.

- The Dark Dagger is unsettled by the presence of House Auvryndar (see Level 3 of *Waterdeep: Dungeon of the Mad Mage*) so close to Skullport. The Dark Dagger sends the characters to kill them or somehow drive them away.
- The Dark Dagger have multiple agents within the Xanathar Guild. However, one of them has attracted the suspicion of a Xanathar Guild **mind flayer**. The characters are sent to eliminate the mind flayer before it can act on its suspicions.
- Long ago, a group of dwarves in Undermountain amassed a cache of weapons, which was lost when the dwarves were wiped out. The cache is said to contain *Drow Cleaver* (a +3 battleaxe that deals its maximum slashing damage against drow), *Evithyan's Blade* (a +3 longsword that also functions as a *sword of wounding* against drow), *One Thousand Broken Dreams* (a *sun blade* that deals extra damage against drow instead of undead), and many other weapons designed to fight drow. The Dark Dagger believe they've found a map that leads to the cache. The characters are given the map and sent to retrieve the weapons.

The Dark Dagger seek to covertly take over all criminal organisations in Skullport. While they try to portray themselves as simple Underdark smugglers, characters who join the Dark Dagger will eventually find themselves drawn into conflict with the other major organisations in Skullport. These organisations include the Kraken Society, the Reforged Ring, the Unseen Servants, and the Xanathar Guild.