



# EXPLORE FAIRHAVEN: VILLAINS AND VAGABONDS

By Jeff LaSala

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“Let the Queen and her royal hounds fix their eyes on Galifar’s vacant throne. Let them fret about the future. Long as they’re not looking down here where the real work’s done, we’ll all get along swimmingly. Down here, there’s those who rule the streets . . . and those who think they do.”



Fairhaven is a city of magic and royal intrigue, its glittering spires a symbol of the very heights of Aundairian power. Beneath the shining veneer, criminal lords prey upon the weak, and ancient forces of evil conspire with undying patience. Then there are those without an elaborate agenda, who are merely too self-serving or independent to align with schemes outside of their own. These are the survivalists of Fairhaven, itinerant rogues and knaves—wayward souls, perhaps not so unlike adventurers. See *Dungeon*® #170 for more information on the city.

## DHARVEK, WAR PROFITEER

A recent arrival to the city's smuggler trade and an upstart rival to the gang lord Kreelo, the elf named Dharvek is still sought by the Sentinel Marshals of House Deneith for years of war profiteering. He maintains a hidden storehouse of illegal weapons deep in the Whiteroof Ward, guarded well by deadly traps and animate constructs. Rumors within Fairhaven's underworld hold that Dharvek's vault includes a cache of experimental arms spirited away from the city of Eston before the Day of Mourning.

Too vain to assume an epithet like infamous masterminds, Dharvek is a criminal of unknown scruples and devious stratagems. He amasses wealth but spends it quickly, strengthening his resources and eschewing decadence. The dusky tone of his skin suggests the presence of drow blood in his ancestry, but this rumor only makes his exploits, origins, and motives all the more mysterious. Yet there may be some truth to the tales: Nearly fifty years ago, Dharvek started his criminal career in the gutters of

Stormreach, Xen'drik's outpost of civilization, and left that perilous city behind only when more than one Storm Lord put a bounty on his head.

## DHARVEK IN COMBAT

As a scavenger of the Last War, Dharvek is equally dangerous in alley altercations as on more traditional fields of battle. He is a survivalist, employing an assortment of martial and magical techniques to strike from afar and keep his enemies at bay. If things go south, he uses *scavenger's survival* to slip away—through walls, if necessary.

## DHARVEK'S ROUSTABOUTS

To avoid entrapment, Dharvek retains only a small group of loyal hirelings.

### Level 8 Encounter (XP 1,802)

- ◆ Dharvek (level 10 artillery)
- ◆ 1 half-elf con artist (level 7 controller; *Monster Manual*® 2, page 138)
- ◆ 1 half-elf bandit captain (level 6 skirmisher; *Monster Manual* 2, page 138)
- ◆ 4 half-elf smugglers (level 6 minions, *Dungeon* #155)

## HOOK: INTRODUCING DHARVEK

Dharvek prefers a fluid business. As a purveyor of illicit magic weaponry, he knows that adventurers are the best resource for unloading contraband or acquiring more. Sometimes he funds expeditions into the Mournland in search of more “merchandise” and is willing to hire adventurers for such a purpose. But PCs are just as likely to cross blades with Dharvek as work with him, especially if Fairhaven's elite or the

Royal Eyes wish to investigate him. Sentinel Marshals and Tharashk bounty hunters search for him still; they may be willing to enlist further assistance. Dharvek often makes his deals at the Underquay.

Dharvek		Level 10 Elite Artillery
Medium fey humanoid, elf		XP 1,000
Initiative +7	Senses Perception +9; low-light vision	
Group Awareness aura 5; non-elf allies in the aura gain a +1 racial bonus to Perception checks.		
HP 164; Bloodied 82		
AC 23; Fortitude 21, Reflex 24, Will 23		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed 7; see also <i>scavenger's survival</i>		
Action Points 1		
⚔ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
+17 vs. AC; 1d6 + 5 damage.		
⚔ Shortbow (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
Ranged 15/30; +17 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage.		
🏹 Burning Arrow (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon, Fire		
Ranged 15/30; +17 vs. AC; 2d8 + 4 damage, and ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends).		
🏹 Twin Arrows (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
Dharvek makes two shortbow attacks.		
⚡ Shocking Dissuasion (standard; recharge ⏳ ⏳ ⏳) ◆ Lightning		
Close burst 2; +15 vs. Reflex; 2d6 + 4 lightning damage, and the target is pushed 2 squares.		
Elven Accuracy (free; encounter)		
Dharvek can reroll an attack roll. He must use the second roll, even if it's lower.		
Scavenger's Survival (move; encounter)		
Dharvek shifts 3 squares and gains phasing during this movement.		
Alignment Evil	Languages Common, Elven, Giant	
Skills Bluff +16, Insight +14, Stealth +15, Thievery +15		
Str 13 (+7)	Dex 15 (+7)	Wis 18 (+9)
Con 16 (+8)	Int 18 (+9)	Cha 14 (+7)
Equipment leather armor, longsword, shortbow, 2 daggers		

## HERINA, PERSISTENT CHRONICLER

An artful chronicler and freelance investigator for the *Korranberg Chronicle*, Fherina Arvindi writes and sells sensationalist stories for a living. Like most gnomes of Zilargo, she craves information and the secrets of those around her. She has chosen Fairhaven for its political intrigue, its obsession with arcane and higher learning, and its centralized commerce among the Five Nations. Assuming the penname Fherina Heartsvale, Investigative Chronicler, she is often found poking around both the University of Wynarn and the Chalice Center, seeking inspiration for the perfect story.

### HERINA IN COMBAT

Fherina loathes combat and will shy away from it at every opportunity, sometimes leaving allies in a lurch. If it's clear that a battle is swinging in her favor, she will linger to bear witness ("Every good story's got to have strife!"), offering her *arcane quip* to speed things along and *muckrake* to erode an enemy's bluster.

## HERINA'S PROTECTION

The best reporting is done solo, but snooping around where one isn't welcome often requires bodyguards. If not encountered alone, Fherina surrounds herself with hired muscle.

### Level 4 Encounter (XP 875)

- ◆ Fherina (level 5 skirmisher)
- ◆ 2 Blademark grunts (level 3 soldier; *EBERRON® Campaign Guide*, page 213)
- ◆ 3 human ruffians (level 2 skirmisher; *Dungeon* #155)

## HOOK: CATCHING HERINA'S ATTENTION

If the PCs are roped into a political, criminal, or otherwise intriguing plot within Fairhaven (the juicier the better!), Fherina catches wind of it. She places herself deftly in their path, offering her services to them as an inquisitive, a guide, or a locksmith mage-wright—whatever might fulfill their need and garner their trust. In truth, Fherina just wants to observe them, learn their secrets and their pasts, write a story about them, and sell it. She may even publish a serial about the PCs as a special edition of the *Korranberg Chronicle* or a national broadsheet like the *Aundairian Scroll*. Such an act might turn an otherwise private party of adventurers into local celebrities—whether they like it or not. Depending on the PCs' needs, this could work in their favor or quite against it.

Fherina		Level 5 Skirmisher
Small fey humanoid, gnome		XP 200
Initiative +5	Senses Perception +9, low-light vision	
HP 63; Bloodied 31		
AC 18; Fortitude 18, Reflex 16, Will 19		
Speed 5		
⚔ Short Sword (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
+8 vs. AC; 1d4 + 2 damage.		
⚡ Arcane Quip (standard; at-will) ◆ Psychic		
Ranged 5; +9 vs. Will; 1d10 + 5 psychic damage, and the target takes a -2 penalty to attack rolls (save ends).		
⚡ Scathing Retort (immediate reaction, when Fherina is hit or missed by an attack; at-will) ◆ Psychic		
Close burst 5; targets the triggering attacker; the attacker gains vulnerable 10 psychic until the end of Fherina's next turn.		
Faint (immediate reaction, when Fherina takes damage; encounter) ◆ Illusion		
Fherina becomes invisible until she attacks or until the end of her next turn.		
Muckrake (free, when Fherina damages an enemy; encounter)		
The target takes a -2 penalty to Will defense (save ends).		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Elven	
Skills Bluff +12, Insight +9, Streetwise +10, Thievery +8		
Str 10 (+2)	Dex 13 (+3)	Wis 14 (+4)
Con 15 (+4)	Int 15 (+4)	Cha 16 (+5)
Equipment leather armor, 2 daggers, blank book, 5 inkpens		

## RALSOR: SCION, PILOT, SCOUNDREL

House Lyrandar, bearer of the Mark of Storm, is well known for producing a host of celebrated navigators and upstanding scions. Ralsor d'Lyrandar, airship pilot and dragonmarked heir, isn't one of them. His relationship with his house is in a state of constant flux, marked by frequent embarrassments and ongoing, if empty, threats of excoriation. Yet his family is highly esteemed and well established, its coffers heavy with gold. Ralsor even owns the ship he pilots, assuming the role of both helmsman and captain though his crew is usually quite scarce. In truth, he is a masterful steersman who merely plays the part of an irresponsible and lousy pilot to avoid entanglement in the commercial obligations of the house. His membership in the Windwrights Guild was last revoked when he damaged *yet another* docking tower platform with the hull of his ship. Fairhaven's Sky Knights, who ride the winds above the city on their dragonhawks, all know of Ralsor and despise him for his antics.

Ralsor considers himself an aerial vagabond, tethered to nothing but his ship—the *Thunderhead*, which has certainly seen better days—and the friends he takes. His closest approximation to home is Fairhaven, and he docks frequently at the Third Tower to visit with his longtime friend, Phorif Mirador of the Cellar Council. He avoids his kinsmen at the Chalice Center.

## RALSOR IN COMBAT

Ralsor is a swaggering combatant, using hit-and-run maneuvers. A swashbuckler at heart, he uses *point-blank skewer* to impress allies and surprise enemies. Ralsor summons both wind and thunder with the power of his dragonmark to *throw caution to the storm* when his enemies get too close.

## RALSOR'S MOTLEY CREW

Ralsor likes a good scuffle to keep life interesting, but he relies on the heavy lifting of his threadbare crew when pressed into a real fight.

### Level 6 Encounter (XP 1,375)

- ◆ Ralsor (level 7 elite skirmisher)
- ◆ 2 human guards (level 3 soldier; *Monster Manual*, page 162)
- ◆ 3 human lackeys (level 7 minion; *Monster Manual*, page 162)
- ◆ 1 warforged resounder (level 6 artillery; *Monster Manual 2*, page 206)

## HOOK: RIDING WITH RALSOR

Ralsor and the *Thunderhead* are the perfect means for shuttling the characters to and from Fairhaven, especially if the characters haven't got a stellar reputation themselves. Ralsor will fly from the city to just about anywhere and won't ask too many questions unless his passengers become friends or if he suspects real evil is afoot. Alternatively, he can be encountered somewhere else altogether; although he often goes abroad, Ralsor inevitably returns to the city for frequent ship repairs . . . and mischief. The *Thunderhead* has seen more than one quest to protect the relic hidden beneath the Third Tower, and Ralsor expects to see more. He might even enlist the PCs' help, in exchange for free airship travel time.

Ralsor d'Lyrandar		Level 7 Elite Skirmisher
Medium natural humanoid, half-elf		XP 600
Initiative +9	Senses Perception +5; low-light vision	
HP 152; Bloodied 76		
AC 19; Fortitude 18, Reflex 20, Will 19		
Saving Throws +2		
Speed 6		
Action Points 1		
⚔ Flourishing Rapier (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
+12 vs. AC; 1d8 + 6 damage, and Ralsor shifts 1 square.		
⚔ Hand Crossbow (standard; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
Ranged 6/12; +12 vs. AC; 2d6 + 4 damage.		
⚔ Bladed Comeback (immediate reaction, when Ralsor takes damage; at-will) ◆ Weapon		
+10 vs. Reflex; 1d8 + 6 damage.		
⚔ Point-Blank Skewer (standard; recharge ☹ ☹ ☹) ◆ Weapon		
Ralsor makes one <i>rapier</i> attack and one <i>hand crossbow</i> attack against the same target without provoking opportunity attacks. He can shift 1 square before, after, or between the attacks.		
⚔ Throw Caution to the Storm (standard; encounter) ◆ Thunder		
Close burst 1; +10 vs. Fortitude; 4d10 + 4 thunder damage, and the target is pushed 1. If Ralsor misses all targets with this attack, he grants combat advantage until the end of his next turn.		
Windy Retreat (free, when Ralsor hits with a melee attack; at-will)		
If Ralsor is dazed or immobilized, that condition ends. In addition, Ralsor shifts 1 square.		
Alignment Unaligned	Languages Common, Elven	
Str 14 (+5)	Dex 18 (+7)	Wis 12 (+4)
Con 12 (+4)	Int 15 (+5)	Cha 16 (+6)
Equipment cloth armor, hand crossbow, rapier, case with 20 bolts		

## STAUNCH, WARFORGED MERCENARY

Not all criminals in Fairhaven employ theft, blackmail, or trickery. Some simply seize what they want with brute force—or with the aid of a blazing crossbow. Staunch, a crippled warforged artificer and former artillerist of the Aundairian Army, is just such an individual. Embittered by his injuries and less than appreciative for what he considers “inadequate compensation,” he now hires himself out to anyone with a bone to pick with the Aundairian crown. Staunch usually serves as his employers’ armorer or sometimes as a head of operations for whatever thugs or grunts they retain. Recently, he’s been in contact with the Emerald Claw cell that hides within the ir’Uvanto family estate.

Staunch’s lower left leg was destroyed by some eldritch device of Cyran design during the Last War. No artificer, wizard, or magewright has ever been able to repair or replace it, so he’s built a harness around the stump with an enchanted wheel attached. This repurposing has given Staunch a slow, distinctive gait—and a surprising edge in combat. But for this unforgivable slight, he is delighted by the destruction of Cyre and openly mocks its survivors; he applauds Queen Aurala’s rejection of Cyran refugees. Staunch’s nihilist worldview has made him resistant to intimidation and unafraid of death.

## STAUNCH IN COMBAT

Staunch shies from no fight. He was forged for war and fully expects to meet oblivion in one. He uses his customized *armbow* to launch fiery bolts or blast opponents with *incendiary spray*. Although he moves slowly, his wheel-foot allows him to pivot quickly and keep his opponents at bay. Staunch uses *grinding wheel* to knock his foes down.

## STAUNCH’S ALLIES

When not surrounded by his employers’ goons, Staunch shares the company of likeminded warforged unsatisfied with sovereign authority. Many have even defected from the organized service of the Lord of Blades.

### Level 10 Encounter (XP 2,975)

- ◆ Staunch (level 12 elite controller)
- ◆ 5 human lackeys (level 7 minion; *Monster Manual*, page 162)
- ◆ 2 human slavers (level 8 brute; *Monster Manual 2*, page 149)
- ◆ 2 warforged captains (level 6 soldier; *Monster Manual*, page 261)

## HOOK: CONTENDING WITH STAUNCH

Parties willing to treat with criminals might be able to hire Staunch, though his price is exorbitant. Employing this belligerent warforged is an ordeal in itself. He is not content to take casual orders from anyone, especially not breathers. As a construct and a nihilist, he respects only power, magic, and material wealth; spiritualism or higher ideals mean nothing to him. Most characters will encounter Staunch in their enemy’s service, overseeing the heavy lifting of some deadly operation, and will probably exchange arrow-fire before words. But . . . he can *always* be bought.

Staunch		Level 12 Elite Controller
Medium natural humanoid (living construct), warforged		XP 1,400
<b>Initiative</b> +7		<b>Senses Perception</b> +10
<b>HP</b> 246; <b>Bloodied</b> 123		
<b>AC</b> 26; <b>Fortitude</b> 26, <b>Reflex</b> 23, <b>Will</b> 25		
<b>Saving Throws</b> +2		
<b>Speed</b> 4		
<b>Action Points</b> 1		
⊕ <b>Icy Warhammer</b> (standard; at-will) ◆ <b>Cold, Weapon</b> +17 vs. AC; 1d10 + 5 damage plus 1d6 cold damage, and the target is slowed until the end of Staunch’s next turn.		
⊕ <b>Fiery Armbow</b> (standard; at-will) ◆ <b>Fire, Weapon</b> Ranged 10; +17 vs. AC; 1d8 + 4 damage plus 1d6 fire damage.		
⊕ <b>Incendiary Spray</b> (standard; recharge ☹ ☹ ☹) ◆ <b>Fire, Zone</b> Close blast 3; +16 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 5 fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends). The burst becomes an incendiary zone that lasts until the end of Staunch’s next turn. Creatures that end their turns within the zone take 10 fire damage.		
✱ <b>Alchemical Blast</b> (standard; encounter) ◆ <b>Acid, Thunder</b> Area burst 2 within 10; +16 vs. Reflex; 2d8 + 8 acid and thunder damage, and the target is dazed (save ends). <i>Miss:</i> Half damage.		
⊕ <b>Grinding Wheel</b> (move; at-will) Staunch shifts up to 4 squares, making the following attack against each creature he moves adjacent to during the shift. Staunch can only target a given creature once during each use of <i>grinding wheel</i> . +16 vs. Fortitude; the target falls prone.		
<b>Uncanny Pivot</b> (move; at-will) Staunch gains a +2 bonus to AC, Fortitude, and Reflex until he moves.		
<b>Warforged Resolve</b> (minor, usable only while bloodied; encounter) Staunch gains 14 temporary hit points.		
<b>Alignment</b> Evil	<b>Languages</b> Common	
<b>Str</b> 14 (+0)	<b>Dex</b> 12 (+7)	<b>Wis</b> 19 (+11)
<b>Con</b> 19 (+11)	<b>Int</b> 19 (+11)	<b>Cha</b> 12 (+7)
<b>Equipment</b> chainmail, warhammer		

## LURKS AND LAIRS

Fairhaven is well known for its universities and libraries, its temples, and its beautiful white towers. But what of some of its lesser known sites, the sorts of places a newcomer only finds by ill repute or mere happenstance?

## 8. THE THIRD TOWER

When a massive fire destroyed the upscale inn known as the Peryton's Pride only a few years ago, the proprietor, a retired soldier named Phorif Mirador, rented the surface of the estate to House Lyrandar for a surprisingly low sum. His only condition: build around the intact foundations of the inn, what had once been a vast wine cellar. Soon after, Fairhaven's third and smallest airship docking tower was erected on the site. Situated in the southwestern corner of the city in the residential Laurelbough District, the Third

Tower, as it has come to be known, is the newest and least trafficked of House Lyrandar's docking towers in Fairhaven and sees more private than commercial use. A door just inside the ground floor is marked "Cellar Council," and leads to what used to be the basement of the previous establishment.

**Cellar Council:** More a watering hole than a proper tavern, this basement bar has become a haunt for anarchists, malcontents, and outspoken critics of the crown. The worst of their rebellious claims—usually just liquor-driven rants—are surreptitiously steered away from talk of revolution by Phorif himself, proprietor and barkeep. The veteran uses the Cellar Council and the presence of House Lyrandar activity above to divert attention from what he has sworn to protect: a powerful relic that he and other soldiers of his unit discovered in a Dhakaani ruin just inside the Cyran border several years before the Day of Mourning. The mystic object, now hidden in a vault below the cellar, has bound Phorif to its fate. Only one other knows this secret: his friend Ralsor d'Lyrandor, an airship pilot who frequently docks his ship at the Third Tower.

## 9. IR'UVANTO FAMILY ANTIQUITIES

On the edge of the Sovereign Ward, and in view of the city's largest temples, is a stately manor belonging to the noble ir'Uvanto family. This old Aundairian family lost most of its fortunes, its holdings, and its children during the Last War, and has struggled ever since to maintain both reputation and a high standard of living. The nobles make their living now by selling a vast collection of gems, jewelry, and *objets d'art*, many of which have been looted from the family's own mausoleums. The gallery itself, known as ir'Uvanto Family Antiquities, occupies the ground floor of the manor and is open to the public.



**Claws in the Dark:** Bitterness and desperation drove the family's patriarch, Arvos ir'Uvanto, to betray his country by accepting an offer he couldn't refuse: His estate has now become a safe house for the Order of the Emerald Claw. With a hidden cell operating in the very shadow of Fairhold, agents of the Order work to insinuate themselves in the city's more esteemed institutions and network with its criminals. Not all members of the ir'Uvanto family approve of the Order's presence, but the most reluctant have been silenced by savage threats. Still, if any of these sent out a servant to find help, they might be willing to talk if they could be guaranteed protection.

## 10. VORENN'S WALK

In 967 YK, a favored member of Fairhaven's aristocracy—and a sorcerer of no small power—set to betray the city to the Thranes by selling them royal secrets. Although the crown was none the wiser at the time, word of this act reached the ears of Fairhaven's criminal element. On the night the nobleman intended to flee the city, he walked calmly from his manse to where a ship waited to bear him safely away. But as he passed through a corner alley in the Whiteroof Ward, more than twenty Aundairian outlaws descended on him with daggers. He did not emerge—but neither did his killers. Today, the alley that bears his name is believed to be haunted with his ghost and those of twenty criminals. Though many stories are told of this event, most claim that both betrayal and sorcery cursed the place of his death.

**Street Judgement:** Local superstition holds that anyone who enters the alley and bears ill intent against the city will face the spirits of betrayal. Real or not, even the most intrepid of Fairhaven's criminals choose to go the long way around this part of the district. Characters with knowledge of the undead might be asked to investigate the haunting, especially if the spirits of the legend have been seen leaving Vorren's Walk. But how does one find suitable bait?

## 11. THE UNDERQUAY

While most legitimate river trade operates through the dockhouses of the Whiteroof Ward, a select number of Fairhaven's underworld elite have a resource of their own. Flushed to the northeast edge of the wharf is a quay of cracked stone seemingly used for damaged ships. An unassuming dockhouse is perched on one corner and is accessed only by a single door inscribed with invisible runes of warding. Within lies the Underquay, a surprisingly large extradimensional space that serves as tavern, canteen, and customs house to the powerful and lawless. Those who try to report the Underquay find that some of the authorities have been paid off, and that their days are now numbered.

**Deadly Discretion:** Characters who learn the watchword of entry into the Underquay find themselves rubbing elbows with the worst of Fairhaven's criminal element. Here the gang lord Kreele (in one of his many faces) might meet with corrupt officials, disreputable visitors, or greedy merchants wishing to scare off their rivals. The war profiteer known as Dharvek often comes for business or to trade insults with Dark Dagger rogues. Those who come looking for trouble—or for a smuggler unafraid to break some bones—will find it in the Quay.

### *About the Author*

**Jeff LaSala** is a writer of speculative fiction and an artificer of RPGs. His *EBERRON* novel, *The Darkwood Mask*, was nominated for the Scribe Award and showcases his love for all things dark, monstrous, and masked. Many of his ideas are drawn from the cthonic depths of New York City, where he (roll 1d4)... (1) Dwells with an Argentine mermaid—and even married her. (2) Masequeras as a normal person. (3) Imagines a world splintered into sorry hemispheres. (4) Lurks like a gargoyle over his website: [ashlock.org](http://ashlock.org).