

Monster Town!

Beneath the ruins of **Blackrock Castle** lies the independent city-state of **Midian**, home to monsters, criminals, and outcasts. All are welcome in Midian, regardless of species or alignment. But beware: your neighbors are monsters, and the highest law of the land is “Do as thou wilt.”

CAMPAIGN FEATURES

It’s a city full of monsters. What’s not to love?

Weird Characters. Interact with all kinds of strange creatures — and maybe even play one!

Factional Intrigue. The inhabitants of Midian don’t all get along, and are engaged in constant, covert power struggles. The PCs are valued as **deniable assets** in these conflicts. Build a headquarters, and over time you may grow into a force to be reckoned with!

Dungeons. Traps, curses, and fantastic magical treasure await! And you don’t have to travel far, because you’re basically ransacking your neighbors.

CHARACTER CREATION

Use the standard array or point-buy for ability scores and the starting equipment packages for your class and background.

Race and Class. Anything goes! Any race or class or background published by Wizards of the Coast is fair game. If you want to use any third-party material or *Unearthed Arcana* articles, please check with the DM first.

Alignment. Any. But, some disclaimers:

If you play a good character, don’t commit suicide by trying to attack Midian or its rulers head-on. It will be funny for about 5 minutes, and then the disruption to the game will get tiresome.

If you play an evil character, *don’t screw with other PCs* without the other player’s explicit permission. This means not attacking another PC; not *threatening* to attack another PC; not stealing from them, or deceiving them, or slandering them, or undermining their efforts. If any of this is confusing to you, avoid playing an evil character.



The City of Midian

Midian is located in the **Kocytus River Valley**, in the sprawling dungeons below Blackrock Castle. The population is largely monstrous, with goblins, kobolds, and orcs being the most numerous, but there are plenty of exiled or outcast humans and demi-humans as well. Midian's economy is based on contraband, arcane items, and mercenary services. The government is an oligarchy, with a poor record of human rights, but a strong record of monster rights.

HISTORY

The dungeon complex presently known as Midian wasn't always the domain of evil. In ancient times, fey monarchs ruled over elves and dwarves, who built great cities and temples. Later human empires have left their mark on the land as well, eventually retreating from the valley after the fall of the yuan-ti.

For a time, the valley was a forgotten wilderness, the hunting grounds of the great dragon **Shardron**. But as civilization returned to nearby lands, creatures of darkness were forced to retreat deeper into the valley. In an unusual move for a dragon, Shardron invited these monsters to take refuge in the dungeons beneath Blackrock Castle, proclaiming the founding of the City of Midian.

Midian today has a contentious relationship with neighboring realms. Officially, Midian is a domain of evil and an enemy of everyone. In practice, none of the nearby kingdoms have the strength or political will to invade a rugged frontier filled with orc hordes, mind flayers, and worse. Instead, many rulers covertly hire monsters to strike against their rivals. Midian is also the greatest black market in the world, as lycanthrope smugglers transport dangerous and forbidden items between interested parties.

PLACES OF NOTE

The Arena. Blood-sports and beat-downs! Good times! Not all of the "contestants" are willing participants. Lycanthropes (who can't actually hurt each other) sometimes put on great comedy fights!



Castle Blackrock. On the surface above Midian is an old human settlement, which now serves as the city's main entry point, and as the headquarters of the orc horde.

Forgestriker General Goods. A brother and sister duergar, **Fornus Forgestriker** and **Fendra Forgestriker**, run this smithy and supply shop. They'll also buy used equipment, no questions asked.

Gowser's Meat Market. A fat, gregarious goblin named **Gowser** runs this grocery, specializing in topsider liquor and meat that you'd rather not know too much about.

Horny's Bar. The laid-back satyr **Horny** runs a dingy, low-key tavern where fighting is not allowed. Well, unless you pay a special fee.

The House of Secrets. A beautiful harpy named **Madam Indigo** runs this special "hotel" where guests can rent rooms and pay for "services" from "service providers."

The Kocytus River. An old, winding river flows past Castle Blackrock and out to the sea.

The Pit of Annihilation. In Midian's circular central square, below a locked adamantium trap door, is a deep, dark pit used

for public executions. Creatures thrown inside can't be raised.

Shardron's Lair. Deep beneath Midian, in lightless caverns suffused with evil, slumbers the great shadow dragon **Shardron**. Nominally the true ruler of Midian, Shardron rarely stirs, and few dare to seek an audience.

Topsider Ghetto. Elves, dwarves, gnomes, and their ilk crowd into a slum in the upper part of Midian. In the center, sunlight shines down during the day onto a scrappy bean tree. The tree is home to an older, chain-smoking dryad named **Cocoa** who runs a nearby chocolate shop, and acts as the unofficial neighborhood coordinator.

Varduul's Magicke Shoppe. A genial rakshasa named **Varduul** runs the premier magic item shop in Midian.

RELIGION

Many gods are worshipped in Midian, but these are the most well-known.

Elder Elemental Eye. Aberrant god of elements, destruction, and evil. Its shrines provide divinations and planar contact. Many magical creatures worship this hideous deity.

Gruumsh. Orc god of rage, might, and evil. His shrines provide combat training and healing. Warriors of all sorts pray to Gruumsh.

Lolth. Drow goddess of madness, traditional family values, and evil. Her shrines provide healing, curse removal and *potions of healing*. At the **Cathedral of Lolth**, her high priestess, **Argiope**, can even raise the dead — for a steep price.

Mershaulk. Yuan-ti god of magic, secrets, and evil. His shrines provide low-level divine *spell scrolls*. Spellcasters, alchemists, and scholars pray to Mershaulk.

Orcus. Demon prince of death, undeath, and evil. His shrines provide funeral services, exorcisms, and reanimation. Everyone prays to Orcus, eventually.

Tiamat. Dragon goddess of wealth, power, and evil. Her shrines provide banking and legal services. Merchants and bosses pray to Tiamat.

Inhabitants

The creatures that dwell in Midian have organized into factions, rallying around the five most powerful monsters. An uneasy and unstable truce exists between these five rulers, as they work together to establish “laws” while secretly gathering influence and control for themselves.

BRIGHTFIRE

Brightfire is a young red dragon who is also a paladin, championing justice and protecting the weak. She believes the people of Midian need her help, especially those few kind-hearted souls who find themselves in this pit of monsters. Brightfire takes all manner of misfits and outcasts under her wing and tries to direct their violent energies towards noble ends, but so far has had mixed results. The other rulers often turn to her as an independent arbiter of disputes. Many are suspicious that her “righteous paladin” persona is just an act.

Kobolds. These reptilian runts are united in their awe and worship of Brightfire. They often work as messengers or lookouts.

Topsiders. Humans, elves, dwarves, halflings — members of topside races who find themselves in Midian must band together for safety, whether they like it or not.

KLUTHORG

A fomorian aesthete who craves fine food, high-class entertainment, and objects of true beauty, **King Kluthorg** is quite mercantile, and would much rather trade goods or services than engage in outright conflict. He also runs the Arena, enjoying both the spectacle of battle and his role as host. He claims lineage from the fey kings of old, and many appreciate his knowledge of history and lore.

Dark Halflings. Exiled halflings who practice blood sacrifice, the so-called “dark halflings” are insular, xenophobic and inbred. Still, their farms produce much of the food eaten in Midian, including many exotic weeds and mushrooms that can't grow anywhere else.

Drow. A religious matriarchy that operates as thieves and assassins, the drow supply much of the divine magic and healing in Midian.



The Goblin Court. This assemblage of goblin and hobgoblin tribes presents a twisted mirror of human feudal hierarchy, with dukes, barons, and knights ruling over serfs.

NIGHTFANG

A vampire medusa who seeks to dominate Midian as its one true ruler, **Lady Nightfang** can be a cruel and capricious tyrant, but she has a sense of fair play that affords her some trust amongst the populace. She prefers to use the carrot rather than the stick, and takes a much more active hand in maintaining peace and order within Midian than any other ruler.

Clank. This hulking iron golem is under orders to break up fights using knockout gas.

Skeleton Crew. Ghouls supervise this motley group of skeletons and zombies, who clean refuse and sewage from the streets, and happily dispose of bodies.

Vampires. The small number of vampires in Midian all swear allegiance to Nightfang, and are prohibited from creating spawn without her permission.

Yuan-Ti. These ancient snake-people greatly respect Nightfang. They follow her lead in keeping peace and order.

OHRIMAN

Ohriman is an eye tyrant who worships an obscure deity known as the Elder Elemental Eye. It is uniquely devout among eye tyrants, and spends most of its time in worship and contemplation, deep in its lair. The other rulers

sometimes turn to Ohriman for divine magic or divination.

Elemental Cultists. The cult of the Elder Elemental Eye is a bunch of whackjobs who want to bring about the end of the world.

Gargoyles. These silent watchers protect the city itself — its walls, structures, and passages. You must get their permission for any construction or renovation projects.

Mind Flayers. Brain-eating abominations who tend to keep to themselves, mind flayers sometimes help other factions with information gathering, for a price.

THE RAVAGER

A half-fiend minotaur sorcerer who lives only to kill, destroy, and despoil, **the Ravager** is completely mad, consumed with rage and hungering for death. Still, he is quite intelligent and not at all suicidal. He directs his followers' wrath outward, preying upon the surface world, providing a layer of defense to Midian below. The other rulers tolerate the Ravager only as long as he continues to supply this cannon fodder.

Lycanthropes. Wererats, wereboars and werewolves act as spies and smugglers, moving in and out of human lands.

Orc Horde. These fearsome warriors are sell-swords, engaging in border raids in exchange for weapons and supplies.

Troglodytes. Savage thugs who stink up Midian, troglodytes are eager to work as hired muscle.