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Session 0-3, Mercredi 12 Harvest 882 (Lucernarim)

A quiet drink. Good company. Clear view of all exits. As trouble-free an evening as Varosh could hope for in a troubled age. The hubbub of sheep- and cattle- and vole-folk all around having a cheerful time... it soothes the soul. You have to be a little careful not to drowse.

But then, in an instant, the hubbub quiets. With his vantages all lined up, Varosh instantly spots what the rest of the room has: an enormous figure stepping through the main door, so tall as to need to duck in so doing. It's the biggest wolf you've ever seen, no contest; he'd be hands above your antlers even were you standing. He sports an equally huge two-handed sword in a canvas sling across his back, and his canines are unusually long, protruding down from his mouth like inverted tusks. Some kind of Atavist? And yet for all his physical presence, he seems ill at ease: his ears keep flattening sideways, and his tail droops.

The collected company stares. The wolf looks, with that peculiar nervousness, around the room... and his eyes fix on you. He starts to head in your direction.

Grey Wolf in a Herbivore Tavern, Not suspicious at all..... Varosh keeps his back to the wall and (if possible) a clear path to the door. He watches the wolf do whatever the wolf is doing and keeps drinking his tankard of mulled oat-beer.

The wolf draws up in front of you, the path to the door starting to require a wider and wider angle around the oversized fellow's space. He rumbles out, "You are Varosh?"

"I might be"

His nose twitches and a moment's uncertainty flickers in his eyes. But it passes. He looks around nearby; a squirrel cringes and immediately vacates her chair, which the wolf takes and squats awkwardly down on. "You are ranger? And have friends, good in a fight. Want to hire you."

<Sips beer> "Someone lied when they said I had friends. I am a ranger, I'm looking for work."

He scratches behind an ear, once again apparently thrown off for a moment by your words. But as before, he collects himself; then he nods and clasps a hand to his chest. "Name is Hargrave. I hunt monsters. Hunting an Atavist, a slaver, in north mountains. But don't know these lands. Keep getting lost. Need guides and maybe guns."

"North Mountains? ... Rothos?"

Hargrave gives a vigorous nod. "Yes, Rothos. Rothos... rrr... Chev-er-nase. Near there." That clarifies things considerably. The Chevernaise are tribes of goat-folk who live in the Rothos mountains, surrounding the road into the northern port of Epinian. It's a hike for sure, not without its dangers, but it's a route you're familiar enough with.

"I'll come. I'll hunt a few helpers to come with me. Where shall I meet you, and when?"

He claps his hands together, causing a moment's startlement for the closest pair of sheep. "Good,

good! Have camp, just north of town. Near river.” He pats a pouch on his waist, which clinks convincingly. “You need food, tents, kit, for road... I pay. Come, tell me what, done.”

Not used to having patrons offer to pay in advance, Varosh became a little more cautious. “I come to your camp in the morning. I bring companions. We all shop together.”

He breathes out a sigh of relief and stands very quickly. The chair falls over; he doesn't seem to notice. “Yes, yes! Thank you, Ranger, Maybe Varosh. See you then.” He turns and looks around at the bar patrons who are by this point studiously ignoring him, then heads out—ears still a little flat maybe, but his tail not tucked in retreat, at least.

Once Hargrave leaves, Varosh chugs his mug and pays. He goes out into the night in search of Quentin, thinking that of all his acquaintances, the Weasel will have more insight into the offer, and know more gossip about Hargrave or the Atavist in the Chevernase than the rest.

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