

# ***THE FLOATING CITY OF OROSTEAD***

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# WELCOME TO OROSTEAD

The bustling city of Orostead is a twisted maze of wooden docks and bridges that float upon the surface of Lake Ils. Centered around a dizzyingly tall wizards' tower, Orostead serves as a welcome refuge for all who seek peace and protection from persecution—especially mages. It has grown into a shining pillar of what civilization is capable of when constructive ideals are made possible by compassionate leaders and clever magic. Strategically placed at a nexus of several key waterways, Orostead's economy is supported by the never-ending stream of trade vessels bringing and trading their wares from around the region. Benevolent leaders, capable wizards, and a flourishing economy are all defended by the commendable force of the Orostead Pegasus Knights, and made nearly impregnable by a set of powerful magic wards. With magic seemingly commonplace and a steady current of new visitors walking the docks every day, even the impossible becomes probable within the city of Orostead—in fact, stranger things have probably already happened.

## AMBIENT MOOD

Walking the streets of Orostead can take a period of adjustment for many travelers, as its streets are made of floating docks, bridges, and other wood-lined waterways that gently sway with the swells of the lake beneath them. Each floating, wood-planked street runs parallel to a canal, where boats can be seen slowly navigating between the throngs of other vessels. Although each individual Ward of the city has its own unique feel, the overwhelming sense of safety, prosperity, and peace are certainly a comfort for both residents and visitors alike.

Towering above the water at the heart of the city stands the Spire of Aristaeus, Peak of Reason: a renowned wizarding school of magic and central anchor for the floating city. The colorful buildings that face the city's canals are roofed with flourishing gardens that make use of the rich sunlight and abundant fresh water. The sounds of hungry gulls and whinnying pegasi can be heard from above, as the famed Pegasus Knights that defend the city's skies make their stoic patrols.

- Due to the city's distance from shore, almost every building in Orostead has a rooftop garden, growing produce for their and other local households. The city is usually temperate, and balmy breezes keep the air from growing stale.
- The city is busy, but the bustling clatter of feet on the floating sidewalks are softened, the vibrations absorbed by the water beneath them. In each Ward, citizens and travelers walk or row with purpose, while laughter and music ring out from children and magical performers.
- With the exception of the Conjuration Ward, which smells strongly of fish, the city's overwhelming aroma is that of the soil and plants growing upon the rooftops mixed with the fresh breeze and lakewater.
- Although they depend heavily upon fish, Orostead cuisine is known primarily for their bold and daring innovations. Thanks to the abundance of trade and gardens for spices and herbs, the food in the marketplace is always

flavorful, though you never know what each merchant's experimental meal of the day might be.

- Orostead's fashion and architecture are both characterized by a preference for simple, yet bright and clean colors and lines. Especially where buoyancy is vital, many buildings trend toward boat and ship-like designs. Decades of peace and prosperity has led to a thriving artistic culture, and almost every structure, individual, and Ward has their own colorful identity.

## ORIGIN & HISTORY

Orostead began as a meager fishing village on the shores of Lake Ils. Its citizens were simple but exceptionally kind, and collectively decided to provide sanctuary for the wizards seeking refuge before and during the Upheaval, when they would otherwise have been persecuted for their talents and studies. As a result, Orostead was gradually built up into a place of safety and peace. As it grew in size and strength, the now-thriving wizards, led by the first mage refugee Aristaeus, helped migrate the town into the center of Lake Ils to better defend it. Through their aid in conjuring and communicating with Pegasi, the first order of Pegasus Knights was formed: a tradition that has continued to this day.

The first major trial for the reborn Orostead came during the Dragon Wars, when the wizards were forced to use their tower as an anchor as part of a mighty spell to hide the entire city within the Ethereal Plane whenever danger would approach. This spell was enacted at several other notable times in history, such as the reign of Nat'ranguul the Accursed, the Wrath of Ao Hai, and The Conqueror's Hellish Invasion. Now, when confronted with danger, the Spire's mages repeat this process to guarantee that those who stand for peace never fall to the forces of evil.

## THE SPIRE OF ARISTAEUS, PEAK OF REASON

The Spire of Aristaeus is a staggeringly tall tower, extending from the bottom of the lakebed up to nearly fifteen stories above the waterline. Although most of the building focuses on various fundamental aspects of wizardry, the top stories and their distinctive spiral (the Peak of Reason) are dedicated to the few teachers and students that are masters in their respective schools.

The Spire is one of the only institutions renowned for its knowledge and crafting of wands through the study of wand lore. As a result most of the wands found throughout the region, if not the world, were made by Spire alumni.

Instructors at the Spire are well-supplied with magical resources to aid in the education of their students. Most teachers utilize simple magical tools to demonstrate equations and dimensions in a more interactive fashion, including *doodle rings* and *spellwoven robes*.

Below is a list of the most prominent and expert educators, representing each school of magic with one exception. The Enchantment school teacher has recently gone missing (an investigation is currently underway). Of particular note, the school of Necromancy is taught in an extremely limited capacity, with the strict intention for its use to remain within the city's Necromancy Ward and hospital.

- **Z'ren (Abjuration)** is a jolly dwarven mage who has taught here for 100 years. In that time, they have prevented the tower from catastrophic collapse on numerous occasions, as well as saving the lives of several reckless students each year.
- **Numat (Conjuration)** is an aging, fastidious human, and is fond of sending his graduated students sweets and correspondence. He tends to push his students toward practical usage of conjuration magic, like increasing the speed of communication across the land.
- **Ilra (Divination)** was hired only recently in the wake of the previous teacher's disappearance and specializes in identifying magic items. A middle-aged human who struggles with shyness, Ilra is prone to start rambling when he feels uncomfortable.
- **Yillidarian (Evocation)** is a severe and cold elf. She expects perfection from her students, particularly in their control over the fierce elements. She has few associations with other instructors, and spends most of her free time studying in her chambers with various books loaned from the Archive.
- **Dominic (Illusion)** is an adventurous human who teaches languages and some history of magical beasts. His students greatly enjoy his penchant for interactive lessons in biology, including the occasional dissection.
- **Sybillan (Necromancy)** is a wizened, gnomish mage who warns extensively of Necromancy's dangers. She focuses on the limited healing aspects of that dark school of magic, and is greatly beloved by students for her gentle demeanor and extensive stories of her past escapades.
- **Estra (Transmutation)** the tiefling maintains the school's extensive Archive, but gets lost easily. She typically explains that she has to store so much magical and practical knowledge, it's no surprise that there's no space for geography.
- **Fralligen Alabaster (Wand Lore)** is a very old elf and oversees the school's administration. They were one of the first wizards to come to Orostead and is the main spellcaster responsible for Orostead's transference during times of danger after Aristaeus's passing.

### YILLIDARIAN'S SECRET

The elven Evocation instructor is actually a drow in disguise. If adventurers follow clues and investigate the disappearance of the previous Enchantment school teacher and the Divination teacher that Ilra recently replaced, they will end at the conclusion that Yillidarian was responsible. She sacrificed them to siphon their magic for her experiments. If they choose to confront her or investigate her chambers, they find 4 **animated armors**. They are defending a painting of a giant blue mushroom. The painting is actually a portal to an underground root-based cavern where Yillidarian has been performing experiments on a captured **young blue dragon**. If the party can escape from the cavern, they discover that it's located within the Festerwood. Find out more about the Festerwood at [thegriffonssaddlebag.com/festerwood](http://thegriffonssaddlebag.com/festerwood).

With so many wizards, both practiced and learning, combined with the prevalence of magic within the city, Orostead and Lake Ils are frequently subject to Magical Mishaps, which vary greatly in effect and scope. You can use the following table to help determine random Magical Mishaps while your party is in the region. Most mishaps are resolved quickly, but can occasionally last for days at a time.

### EXAMPLE RANDOM MAGICAL MISHAPS TABLE

1d8	Result
1	A massive whirlpool forms around the town for 1d3 hours, causing mayhem on the docks.
2	The weather shifts ahead by two seasons for the day. For example, a sunny summer day could become frigid and wintery.
3	A 1d20-second time freeze affects the entire city. The only creatures unaffected are those who succeed on a DC 20 Intelligence saving throw.
4	For 1d4 hours, all animals in the city gain the ability to speak, as per the <i>speak with animals</i> spell.
5	Several directly adjacent buildings swap places.
6	All clothing of a certain shade drains of all color to become gray. Roll 1d8 to determine which color is affected. (Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Purple, White, or Black.)
7	Static charge builds up on all cloth and metal surfaces. Touching these surfaces within the next 1d4 hours shocks the individual painfully but without lasting damage.
8	The outside of the Spire itself drastically changes in appearance, such as the walls' general shape, color, material, or height.

### SPIRE QUESTS

Occasionally, the wizards of the Spire will call upon brave adventurers to assist in their various magical endeavors. You can use the following table to help determine random Spire-sponsored Requests for your party.

### EXAMPLE RANDOM SPIRE-SPONSORED REQUESTS TABLE

1d8	Result
1	Track down the hidden library of notorious evil necromancer Ogden Fellweaver, and bring his books back so they can be safely and securely locked away.
2	Acquire some living samples of 3 different rare or magical flora that can be used in an upcoming lecture on alchemy and potion making.
3	Capture 4 live <b>stirges</b> so the students can dissect and study their physiology.
4	Convince Basco, a renowned practitioner of charms, to leave his retirement to come teach at the school as the head of the Enchantment school.

## 1d8 Result

- 5 Capture a live **salamander** for Dominic to add to his research and field guides.
- 6 Find and ask a wizard of repute from a different part of the region to give a lecture on the dangers of necromancy for the next graduating class.
- 7 Archivist Estra keeps getting lost in her Archive demiplane. Assist her in finding a solution, be it magical or mundane.
- 8 A group of 4 students want to go on a field trip in order to obtain some uncommon spell components, but need a competent adventuring group to travel with them and ensure their safety.

## GOVERNANCE

As Orostead's standing as a refuge for the magical grew, so too did its need for a level-headed leader: a Speaker. Rhaj Grintin, a plain and compassionate human fisher, was the first to be given this title. Tasked with the responsibility of leading the town through sweeping cultural and logistical changes, Rhaj was successful in bridging the cultural and fiscal gaps between the village's citizens. Years later, it would be Candace, Rhaj's own daughter, who would be the second to be given such a responsibility. Generation after generation, Rhaj's descendents have continuously been seen as admirable leaders deserving of the Speaker's title. The process for electing a Speaker is well documented in Orostead's history, but has never actually been performed by the city. As a result, while the city is governed by the Speaker and members of a chosen noble council, Orostead is commonly considered to be led a benevolent monarchy.

The current Speaking family of this monarchy are Queen Adelin and King Harold. Harold, a direct descendent of Rhaj, shares the responsibility of Speaker with Adeline, whose infectious charisma and compassion are an ideal compliment to Harold's more quiet and studious demeanor. Known for her passionate speeches and charity efforts, Queen Adeline is a Speaker of the people, while King Harold finds balance and drafts new laws to support both people and prosperity: a Speaker of propriety. Between the two of them, this Speaking family has focused its efforts on ending homelessness and hunger throughout the city: a difficult task given the city's limited space. Within The Pale Palace, Harold and Adeline are aided by several noble families, the Pegasus Knights, and representatives from the city's numerous other agencies.

Though the Spire's wizards are vital to the protection of Orostead, they've never been turned to for its governance. However, they are asked from time to time to aid in the accomplishment of otherwise less feasible endeavors, such as the magical production of food and lodging to support refugees due to war or famine.

## EXPLORATION

The city of Orostead is laid out into 8 Wards, with each one tied to a school of magic. Each Ward has its own dockyard where ships come and go to fit the needs of each distinct area. The streets are interspersed with canals and bridges, to allow foot and naval traffic easy access throughout the

### STORY: THE BENEVOLENT QUEEN

Her Majesty was royal, but in name only. Her compassion for the daily struggles of common folk was made clear by her visits to local markets and fisheries, as well as the unsupervised nights spent in the local taverns. Raised by a single stalwart father, a pegasus knight without a trace of nobility, she was given the perspective of two worlds: one of the mundane dangers of average life, and the real dangers of martial law.

At the age of 15, her father was killed by a rampaging dragon in the line of duty. Wracked with anger and spite for the people who led him to his death, it was only then that she realized the impact he had on the royal family. The sitting king and queen, as well as their son, paid her a visit to offer their sympathy and support: an early act of kindness that would shape her growth from her father's loss.

Moved to noble studies and quarters, she grew to befriend the young prince. Time passed, and as is typical in stories such as this, the two fell in love. Set to become the future queen of Orostead, she spent her days studying the nobility, law, and history of the city. Using her meager upbringing as context for her opinion, she could see that many generations of corruption and ill-practiced law threatened to consume the city and leave it a husk of its former glory.

But the prince grew sick before their coronation. Too sick. One night after reading to him in their bed, she fell asleep. She tossed and turned with nightmares of plague and ruin. Just when she could feel the last of her hope begin to slip away, a light broke through to rid her of the darkness: a shimmering pegasus with the horn of a unicorn.

It was there that she bargained with the spirit. In exchange for some of its divine power, she would ward off the darkness that threatened to consume them. When she awoke, she found a feather and horn clutched in her hands.

From then on, the would-be queen nursed her prince back to health, learning the extent of her magic as she went. The prince survived, although his legs would no longer serve him. The two were crowned king and queen, and while the king could often be found in his study or poring over new laws or the grievances of his people, the queen became the voice of the city and its people.

city. Throughout the web of floating docks, buildings, and bridges, every path ultimately leads back to the Spire at the city's center.

**The Abjuration Ward** is where the Orostead Police force is based, as well as its prison and Owlbear Adventuring Guild headquarters. Most of the trade through the Abjuration dockyard pertains to these organizations, although it assists the Conjunction dockyard with food importation when necessary.

**The Conjunction Ward** is Orostead's busiest dockyard, where numerous fishing vessels launch from and unload their cargo. It's also home to some of the most fertile garden

rooftops thanks to the fish-based fertilizer they use, as well as a number of inns and taverns well-suited for socializing sailors and travelers.

**The Divination Ward** contains Orostead's public schools and libraries covering a wide range of topics. Funded primarily by the Monarchy and the Spire, this Ward ensures that the populace of Orostead is well trained in language, mathematics, finance, and science. This Ward is also home to the few churches and temples of the city that provide ceremonies for the living.

**The Enchantment Ward** is home to The Pale Palace as well as the majority of other noble houses and embassies. Most of the rooftop gardens within this Ward are dedicated to growing various herbs and flowers instead of heartier produce. In conjunction with the architecture, the fauna make this Ward the most gorgeous section of the city.

**The Evocation Ward** houses the Pegasus Garrison and their extensive stables, as well as a large number of government-built houses to ensure that any and all refugees or struggling individuals have a roof over their heads, in exchange for assistance maintaining the Ward's rooftop gardens and other community support.

**The Illusion Ward** is the center of Orostead's artistic expression. A number of open-air and enclosed theaters allow various performing arts, and the air always carries some melody on the wind. One particular amphitheater is specifically for children, featuring puppeteers, storytellers, and other delightful amusements.

**The Necromancy Ward** is an unusual portion of the city. This Ward assists primarily in the healing of the sick and injured, ensuring the comfort of the dying, and handling the cremation of remains. Due to Orostead's floating nature, there are a few crypts for greatly-beloved monarchs and nobility, but their construction is quite elaborate in order to prevent water damage.

**The Transmutation Ward** is the busiest part of the city, and the Ward that changes the most as days and seasons pass. Home to the various necessary artisans and merchants needed to fuel a city, these crowded streets are filled with pop-up stalls for vendors of all kinds, as only the most financially secure merchants can afford a permanent spot within the bazaar.

### **TALYARD THE GREAT**

No one is quite certain where Talyard came from, but for years now he has been an icon of the Conjunction Ward, frequenting the various taverns. He has a knack for finding or crafting bizarre wands that only appear and act magically when the wielder is drunk.

Adventuring groups have a 10 percent chance of running into Talyard whenever they frequent a tavern in Orostead. If none of the party members are properly drunk, he appears to spout nonsense, while drunk individuals can see that the wand he brandishes is magical. His wand does nothing unless you roll a 10 or higher on a d20, in which case they witness strange magic from him and his unique wands of power.

## **SPECIFIC LOCATIONS**

**The Pale Palace** is a beautiful but architecturally simple white stone building in the Enchantment Ward. It is the home of the Speaking family and the central legislative structure of Orostead. The most beautiful gardens of the city are found upon its rooftop, and the Queen can often be seen walking amongst the flowers, hearing the trials of and advising her citizens.

**The Frayed Bowline** is a popular way stop in the Conjunction Ward for travelers, run by Lester and Robert Moor. Known for honest but blunt service and a surprisingly large variety of drinks, most visitors leave with a shanty in their heart and wobbling land-legs.

**The Lossless Library** in the Divination Ward does not contain wizard spellbooks, but is otherwise a font of publicly accessible knowledge about history, religion, and all forms of natural science. It earned its name after a donation of numerous continual flame torches from the Spire, a symbol of their mutually beneficial relationship.

**Justice's Bounds** is Orostead's prison, located in the Abjuration Ward and operated by the city's police force. While thoroughly secure, the prison's focus has shifted more towards rehabilitation, rather than traditional imprisonment, under order of the King and Queen.

**Celestial Heart Hospital** is a modern marvel, and the beating heart of the Necromancy Ward. Open to all members of the public, the hospital operates on the cutting edge of medical science and technology due to the Spire's crafts. Many wizard-made contraptions and prosthetics that facilitate healing and protection against disease are utilized, giving Celestial Heart uncommonly high recovery rates.

**Aristaeus's Apothecary** is the Spire's official provider for their students' spell components, and is found in the Conjunction Ward. Operated by Samson the Squint-eye, the apothecary makes use of the potent fertilizer of the ward and various atmospheric magics to grow an abundance of herbs that would otherwise be difficult to find in the region.

**Simple Smithcraft**, run by the tiefling Ruminant in the Transmutation Ward, is one of the very few smiths in the region with the training and experience necessary to work with unusual magical and mundane materials. As such, his time and craft are highly sought after and highly priced, and he has never had a dissatisfied customer.

**Rebekah's Workbench** in the Transmutation Ward is widely regarded as the most talented artisan woodcarving business in the city, perhaps the region. Skilled in working with all sorts of uncommon woods as well as all natural hardwoods and softwoods, Rebekah is a remarkably humble crafter, dedicated to the art and her apprentices, not the money.

**Traveling Goods and Wares** is a general store that can provide adventurers with most necessary tools and equipment for a dangerous and thrilling adventure. Found near the Owlbear Adventuring Guild headquarters in the Abjuration Ward, the dragonborn proprietor Dex Clawthorne is well employed by the Guild's members. As such, he is entirely firm on his prices, refusing to haggle but offering a fair price.

**Prismatic Comfort** is a lavish inn located in the Enchantment Ward and is frequented by traveling ambassadors and nobility. For safety and as a display of their success, the owner Charleston Quillstone has purchased a number of continual flame torches from the Spire, although they feature an added enchantment that allows him to change the flame's color on command.

## LAKE ILS

A surprisingly deep body of water, Lake Ils is home to a vast number of aquatic lifeforms, many of them territorial. Especially in the lower depths where light fails to penetrate, danger lurks in every current. The lake is home to a unique, magical, bioluminescent coral which grows on the tower, helping to heat and insulate the tower against the dark and frigid depths.

You can use the following table to help determine random encounters while your adventurers are delving into the depths of Lake Ils.

### EXAMPLE LAKE ILS RANDOM ENCOUNTER TABLE

4d6	Result
4	An empty sunken ship (50%) or a sunken ship with treasure (50%)
5	1d3 <b>giant octopuses</b> (50%) or 1d4 <b>giant seahorses</b> (50%)
6–8	2d4 – 1 <b>merrow</b> (60%) or 1d4 + 1 <b>sahuagin</b> (40%)
9–11	The <b>aqualisk</b> , which can be made friendly with a sizeable offering of food.
12–14	1d3 <b>water elementals</b> , hostile (30%), neutral (40%), friendly (30%)
15	A rune-carved monument hovering below the water, shedding bright light in a 60-foot radius and dim light for an additional 90 feet.
16	A juvenile (Huge size, 200 hit points) <b>dragon turtle</b> , sleeping (75%) or hunting (25%)

## OWLBEAR ADVENTURING GUILD

Due to Orostead's placement on Lake Ils, which rests at the convergence of several notable waterways, it houses a thriving Adventuring Guild. The guild is currently run by Solace, a retired mage, in the Abjuration Ward. Only the most trustworthy adventurers are accepted into its hallowed halls and carry their symbol, which has helped the Guild thrive on repeat customers over the decades. Many contracts ranging across the land and into neighboring regions begin here, and its guild members are well compensated for their service.

Consider using the following table to assist you in filling out the halls of the Guild with potential allies and rivals for your group.

### EXAMPLE RANDOM ADVENTURING GUILD MEMBERS

1d4	Group Name	
1	The Jolly Spelunkers	Kenai the goliath warrior, Alba the human knight, Madresh the dragonborn mage, and Lilisandra the dragonborn bard.
2	The Sailing Badgers	Branwin Lutgehr the dwarven barbarian, Vulthrook Durthane the dwarven mage, Julian Ashfoot the human ranger, and Sarvoril the half-elf cleric.

### 1d4 Group Name

3	Fleet Fellows	Clint Wandersail the human druid, Blue Roark the dwarven mage, Owen Grizzlyroar the human barbarian, and Wilford Cadogan the human cleric.
4	Adventurous Alumni	Krisella Glimmergaunt the half-elf wizard, Gamura Huffle the gnomish wizard, Thulgrem Smeltjaw the dwarven wizard, and Magnus Murdock the dragonborn wizard.

## GUILD ADVENTURE HOOKS

Consider including the following scenarios if you wish to begin adventures from contracts with Owlbear Adventuring Guild in your campaign.

### EXAMPLE ADVENTURE HOOK TABLE

1d8	Result
1	A number of citizens have been reported missing lately, last seen in the Transmutation Ward. The monster responsible (a <b>doppelganger</b> ) must be stopped.
2	Turbulent weather in the eastern waterways has been far more frequent of late, believed to be the result of a newly-formed <b>sea hag</b> coven stirring up trouble.
3	Research the disappearance of Januran, a haughty but respected mage who was last seen sailing near the western shoreline of Lake Ils to negotiate with the <b>merfolk</b> who reside there.
4	Duchess Anastasia Liadonna (a <b>lycanthrope</b> ) has disappeared from prison. Find her, and return her to Orostead for trial.
5	Hunt down <b>Hawkren Bloodstone</b> , the cultist follower of a powerful necromancer, before he can accomplish his nefarious agenda.
6	A greatly beloved winery located several miles upriver has ceased shipments, bringing concerns of a pirate infestation.
7	Help the Pegasus Knights go on a hunt as a training exercise for their newest foals.
8	Alba, a prominent Adventuring Guild member, has gone missing. Their remaining party members (Lilisandra, Madresh, and Kenai) ask for assistance finding them.

## EXAMPLE TREASURE

Adventurers in and around Orostead can be rewarded with arcane items like the *abjurer's gilder*, *spellwriter's brace*, *storyteller's stein*, or *Talyard the Great's wand of power*, water-based fighting items like the *dragon turtle barding* or *torpedo arrow*, or pegasi-based items such as the *pegasus quill* and *wand of the*

*alicorn*. Further, *Arista, wand of the spire* (detailed at the end of this document) is an artifact that's been wielded by some of the most powerful wizards throughout Orostead's history. Of course, any other wand items could be a perfect fit for adventurers working with the Spire of Aristaeus, Peak of Reason.

## OROSTEAD STAT BLOCKS

### AQUALISK

Believed by many to be mere legend, the aqualisk is in fact the apex predator of Lake IIs. It has attained this mysterious status largely due to its ability to travel between the Material and Ethereal Planes at will. Though sightings are rare, it fiercely protects its territory from pirates, dragon turtles, and other threats. The Spire wizards are the only ones who are aware of its factual existence, and they offer it Beer-Battered Fish Sticks in exchange for its protection of Orostead. If something invades its underwater territory, it's quick to retaliate with full force.

### HAWKREN BLOODSTONE

A follower of the long-dead Necromancer Dendallen, Hawkren is a clumsy but powerful wizard who was expelled from the Spire for studying forbidden Necromantic spells shortly after being granted a teaching position. Although they are uncertain, rumors have spread that Hawkren is attempting to return the spirit of Dendallen to power by collecting the items Dendallen left with his previous servants.

### OGDEN FELLWEAVER

Ogden was once a student at the Spire, and studied directly under Aristaeus before age claimed him. Unfortunately, his appetite for learning was not satisfied due to the constraints placed by the school on Necromancy, and he fled the Spire to plumb the depths of the world for darker, secret knowledge.

Eventually successful, Fellweaver has now risen to power on a throne of viciousness and cruelty. His reign of terror and usage of heinous and long-forgotten Necromancy has spread across the land, and many in Orostead fear that he may seek to claim the Spire and revenge one day.

## AQUALISK

*Gargantuan monstrosity, unaligned*

**Armor Class** 19 (natural armor)

**Hit Points** 333 (23d20 + 92)

**Speed** 20 ft., swim 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)	5 (-3)	21 (+5)	14 (+2)

**Saves** Dex +9, Int +3, Cha +8

**Skills** Perception +11, Stealth +9

**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., truesight 60 ft., passive Perception 21

**Languages** Aquan, Draconic

**Challenge** 18 (20,000 XP)

**Amphibious.** The aqualisk can breathe air and water.

**Magic Resistance.** The aqualisk has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

**Magic Weapons.** The aqualisk's weapon attacks are magical.

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The aqualisk makes two attacks: one with its bite and one to constrict. If it is grappling a creature, it can also use its Fling.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 29 (4d10 + 7) piercing damage plus 11 (2d10) force damage.

**Constrict.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 33 (4d12 + 7) bludgeoning damage plus 11 (2d10) force damage, and if the target is a Huge or smaller creature, that creature is grappled (escape DC 17). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and the aqualisk can't constrict another target.

**Ethereal Strike (1/Turn).** While on the Ethereal Plane, the aqualisk momentarily shifts to the Material Plane and makes a bite attack against a creature before returning to the Ethereal Plane. Unless the target can see into the Ethereal Plane, the aqualisk has advantage on the attack roll.

**Etherealness.** The aqualisk magically enters the Ethereal Plane from the Material Plane. If a creature is grappled by the aqualisk when it uses this action, the target must succeed on a DC 16 Charisma saving throw or be pulled into the Ethereal Plane with it. The aqualisk and target remain there as long as the aqualisk maintains concentration (as if concentrating on a spell). If its concentration is broken or it chooses to end its concentration, the aqualisk and the target both return to the Material Plane.

**Fling.** One object held or creature grappled by the aqualisk is thrown up to 60 feet in a direction it chooses and knocked prone. If a thrown creature strikes a solid surface, the target takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 10 feet it was thrown. If the target is thrown at another creature, that creature must succeed on a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw or take the same damage and be knocked prone.

PEGASUS QUILL

## HAWKREN BLOODSTONE

Medium humanoid (dwarf), neutral evil

**Armor Class** 11 (14 with *mage armor*)

**Hit Points** 105 (14d8 + 42)

**Speed** 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	12 (+1)	17 (+3)	18 (+4)	15 (+2)	11 (+0)

**Skills** Arcana +7, History +7, Investigation +7, Perception +5

**Damage Resistances** necrotic

**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Dwarvish

**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)

**Arcane Siphon.** Once per turn, when Hawkren deals damage to a creature with a spell, he regains 9 (2d8) hit points.

**Deathly Resilience.** When Hawkren takes damage that would reduce him to 0 hit points, he is reduced to 1 hit point instead and can immediately use his reaction to cast a spell with a casting time of 1 action.

**Spellcasting.** Hawkren is an 11th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, light, mage hand*

1st level (4 slots): *detect magic, false life, mage armor, magic missile*

2nd level (3 slots): *detect thoughts, knock, invisibility*

3rd level (3 slots): *dispel magic, nondetection, vampiric touch*

4th level (3 slots): *arcane eye, blight*

5th level (2 slots): *legend lore, scrying*

6th level (1 slot): *circle of death*

### ACTIONS

**Dagger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

### HAWKREN AND OGDEN

Hawkren Bloodstone and Ogden Fellweaver are both followers of Dendallen, a body-possessing necromancer turned quasi-lich and leader of power-hungry cultist fanatics. For more information on Dendallen and the kinds of stories you can tell using him and his followers, as well as his unique array of undead magic items, visit [thegriffonsaddlebag.com/dendallen](http://thegriffonsaddlebag.com/dendallen).

You can also download an NPC card and order a custom 3D-printed miniature of Hawkren Bloodstone from the Eldritch Foundry online at [thegriffonsaddlebag.com/orostead](http://thegriffonsaddlebag.com/orostead).

## OGDEN FELLWEAVER

Medium humanoid (dwarf), lawful evil

**Armor Class** 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

**Hit Points** 153 (18d8 + 72)

**Speed** 25 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)	20 (+5)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

**Saves** Int +9, Wis +5

**Skills** Arcana +9, History +9, Intimidation +6, Persuasion +6

**Senses** darkvision 90 ft., passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Dwarvish, Undercommon

**Challenge** 12 (8,400 XP)

**Empowered Undead.** Any undead that is under Ogden's control has advantage on saving throws against any effect that turns undead. In addition, it gains a +5 bonus to its attack and damage rolls, and its hit point maximum increases by 20.

**Grave Sacrifice.** As a bonus action, Ogden can cause one undead under his control to drop to 0 hit points. When he does so, he gains 14 (4d6) temporary hit points.

**Leech (5/Day).** When Ogden hits a creature with his quarterstaff that isn't a construct or undead, he can choose to deal an extra 3 (1d6) necrotic damage and regain hit points equal to the number rolled.

**Spellcasting.** Ogden is a 15th-level spellcaster. His spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 17, +9 to hit with spell attacks). He has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *chill touch, dancing lights, mage hand, minor illusion*

1st level (4 slots): *mage armor, magic missile, shield, unseen servant*

2nd level (3 slots): *blindness/deafness, mirror image, misty step*

3rd level (3 slots): *animate dead, counterspell, fireball*

4th level (3 slots): *blight, dimension door, greater invisibility*

5th level (2 slots): *arcane hand, dominate person, wall of force*

6th level (1 slot): *create undead, disintegrate*

7th level (1 slot): *finger of death*

8th level (1 slot): *dominate monster*

### ACTIONS

**Leeching Quarterstaff.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage, or 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands.

### REACTIONS

**Grim Revival (3/Day).** Immediately after Ogden kills a humanoid, he causes it to rise as a zombie under his control, as if by the *animate dead* spell.



## PEGASUS KNIGHT

Medium humanoid (any race), lawful good

**Armor Class** 18 (plate armor)

**Hit Points** 76 (9d8 + 36)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
19 (+4)	11 (+0)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)

**Skills** Animal Handling +4, Athletics +6, Intimidation +5, Perception +4

**Senses** passive Perception 14

**Languages** Celestial, Common

**Challenge** 3 (700 XP)

**Militaristic Resolve.** The knight has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

**Pegasus Training.** The knight has advantage on ability checks and saving throws it makes to remain mounted on a pegasus. In addition, while mounted, the knight's normal and long ranges of thrown weapons are doubled (included in the attack).

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The knight makes two attacks.

**Javelin.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft. (60/240 ft. while mounted), one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) piercing damage.

**Lance.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit (with disadvantage if the target is within 5 ft.), reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (1d12 + 4) piercing damage.

## PEGASUS KNIGHT, EXALTED

Medium humanoid (any race), lawful good

**Armor Class** 18 (plate armor)

**Hit Points** 119 (14d8 + 56)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	13 (+1)	15 (+2)	18 (+4)

**Saves** Wis +5, Cha +7

**Skills** Animal Handling +5, Athletics +8, Intimidation +7, Perception +5

**Senses** passive Perception 15

**Languages** Celestial, Common

**Challenge** 7 (2,900 XP)

**Bonded Mount.** The knight is magically bonded to its pegasus mount, which obeys the knight's commands. If the knight isn't mounted, it can use a bonus action to magically teleport onto its pegasus, provided the two are on the same plane of existence. When it teleports, the knight appears astride its mount, along with any equipment it is wearing or carrying. While mounted, the knight can force an attack or spell targeting the pegasus to target the knight instead, and both the knight and its pegasus have advantage on Dexterity saving throws. If its mount dies, the knight can train a new pegasus to serve as its bonded mount over the course of one month.

**Celestial Favor.** When the knight or its mount hit with an attack, the target takes an extra 7 (2d6) radiant damage (included in the attacks below).

**Militaristic Resolve.** The knight has advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

**Pegasus Training.** The knight has advantage on ability checks and saving throws it makes to remain mounted on a pegasus. In addition, while mounted, the knight's normal and long ranges of thrown weapons are doubled (included in the attack).

**Spellcasting.** The knight is a 5th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15). It has the following paladin spells prepared:

1st level (4 slots): *bless, command, protection from evil and good, shield of faith*

2nd level (2 slots): *branding smite, lesser restoration*

### ACTIONS

**Multiattack.** The knight makes two attacks and uses its Strike Order.

**Javelin.** *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 30/120 ft. (60/240 ft. while mounted), one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d6 + 5) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) radiant damage.

**Lance.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit (with disadvantage if the target is within 5 ft.), reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (1d12 + 5) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) radiant damage.

**Strike Order.** The knight chooses one friendly creature within 60 feet of it. If the target can see or hear the knight, the target can immediately use its reaction to make one weapon attack.

**Heroic Rally (Recharges after a Short or Long Rest).** The knight bellows a command, emboldening each creature it chooses within 60 feet of it that can hear it. Each target gains 15 (2d10 + 4) temporary hit points and becomes immune to being charmed or frightened for 1 minute.

## SPIRE SCHOLAR

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

**Hit Points** 78 (12d8 + 24)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	16 (+3)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)

**Skills** Arcana +6, History +6

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common plus two other languages

**Challenge** 5 (1,800 XP)

**Spellcasting.** The scholar is an 8th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 14, +6 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *light*, *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, *ray of frost*

1st level (4 slots): *comprehend languages*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*

2nd level (3 slots): *hold person*, *misty step*, *mirror image*

3rd level (3 slots): *blink*, *dispel magic*, *lightning bolt*

4th level (2 slots): *control water*

### ACTIONS

**Dagger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

## SPIRE STUDENT

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

**Armor Class** 11 (14 with *mage armor*)

**Hit Points** 52 (8d8 + 16)

**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
9 (-1)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

**Skills** Arcana +4, History +4

**Senses** passive Perception 11

**Languages** Common plus one other language

**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

**Spellcasting.** The student is a 4th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +4 to hit with spell attacks). It has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *mage hand*, *mending*

1st level (4 slots): *comprehend languages*, *detect magic*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*

2nd level (3 slots): *invisibility*, *scorching ray*

### ACTIONS

**Dagger.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4 + 1) piercing damage.

## PEGASUS KNIGHT

The Pegasus Knights are the foremost guardians of Orostead by land, sea, and air. With a tight bond between rider and mount fostered over years of service, they are greatly admired by the youth of the city.

### PEGASUS KNIGHT, EXALTED

The most renowned pegasus knights have developed a supernatural connection with their mounts, granting them a degree of celestial power. Such a knight's pegasus is equipped with *dragon turtle barding*, which allows them to ensure the safety of Orostead below the water.

#### MOUNTED COMBAT

The Pegasus Knights of Orostead ride pegasi to patrol the city and surrounding city waters. Using these intelligent creatures as a mount involves its own set of rules, which can be read in the basic rules and other source books under "Mounted Combat."

## SPIRE STUDENT

Students of the Spire are easily identifiable, perhaps on purpose, by their *spellwoven robes* and *doodle rings*. Although each individual has their own destiny and goals, they all share a voracious love of learning and magic, which has led them here. Education at the Spire places great importance on practical aspects of magic, and the importance of learning to create, rather than just destroy, with their powers.

## SPIRE SCHOLAR

Powerful mages in their own right, the teachers at the Spire are very different in personality but united in their dedication to education. The teachers make frequent use of their *Borbos's joyous wands of color* to demonstrate equations and formulae without wasting precious ink and paper.

DOODLE RING





WAND LORE WIZARD

## NEW CHARACTER OPTION: WIZARD

Wizards are often considered to be founts of knowledge, a reputation rightfully earned after generations and lives spent poring over forgotten texts and ancient manuscripts. These knowledge-seeking mages ultimately pursue the school of magic that interests them the most, becoming true masters of their craft and labor. Some find satisfaction in studying mystical arts, while others focus their efforts on more practical or even explosive forms of magic. As a result, wizards around the world can be found on the councils of nobles as quickly they can in the service of carnivals.

### WAND LORE

Some children grow up sword-fighting with sticks and become soldiers, but you've learned how to turn a simple stick into something more powerful than a blade. The study of wand lore delves deeper into old magic, beyond the normal lists of components and incantations, and into the rich

history and tradition of wandcraft. As a wizard of wand lore, you know that a mage's true power can be amplified with the right tool: for you, that tool is a wand of your own creation.

### CORE WAND

When you choose this tradition at 2nd level, you create a special wand called a core wand, which you can use as a spellcasting focus for your wizard spells. You determine the wand's appearance, and only you are capable of using it. You can use a bonus action to summon the wand to your hand, regardless of physical or planar distances. If this wand is destroyed, you can create a new one over the course of 8 hours of work.

Your core wand gains power each time you use it to cast a spell. This power is represented by core charges. The wand can have up to 7 core charges at a time, and whenever you finish a long rest, the number of core charges in the wand resets to 1. Whenever you expend a spell slot to cast a spell of 1st level or higher while holding your wand, it gains up to a number of core charges equal to half the spell's level (minimum of 1). You can expend these core charges in the following ways:

- Whenever you make an attack roll or saving throw, you can expend any number of core charges to gain a bonus to the roll equal to the number of core charges spent. You can wait until after you roll the d20, but must decide before the GM says whether the roll succeeds or fails.
- Whenever you are hit by an attack, you can expend any number of core charges from your wand as a reaction to gain a bonus to AC against that attack equal to the number of core charges spent.

### WAND SAVANT

Starting at 2nd level, you can interpret staves and wands the way other wizards read scrolls and spellbooks. If a staff or wand in your possession can cast a spell that's on the wizard spell list, you can copy the spell into your spellbook as if you were copying a spell from a scroll. In addition, when you cast a wizard spell with a range of touch while holding your core wand, you can choose a target that you can see and isn't behind cover up to 10 feet away from you instead. At 14th level, this range increases to 30 feet.


### ARCANE BATTERY

Beginning at 6th level, when you use your Arcane Recovery feature, your core wand regains 3 expended core charges.

In addition, you gain a new option to use your wand's core charges. When you cast a spell that targets only one creature and forces it to make a saving throw while you're holding your core wand, you can expend up to 3 core charges to gain a bonus to that spell's save DC equal to the number of core charges spent.

### IMBUE MINOR WAND

Starting at 10th level, whenever you finish a long rest, you can imbue a number of wizard spells from your spellbook up to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of one) into a non-magical stick, dowel, or similar Tiny object, transforming the object into a magic wand. Each spell must be a cantrip or



a 1st- or 2nd-level spell and have a casting time of 1 action or bonus action. In addition, the spells can't require concentration or require any material components that indicate a cost or are consumed as part of casting the spell, and if the spell is a cantrip, it mustn't be able to damage a target.

The wand has a number of charges equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of 1) with which to cast the imbued cantrips (∞ charges), 1st-level spells (1 charge), or 2nd-level spells (2 charges). A creature holding the wand can use an action to cast one of the spells from it using your spell save DC, spell attack bonus, and spellcasting ability. The wand ceases to be magical the next time you finish a long rest.

## MANIFEST CHARGES

When you reach 14th level, you can convert the core charges within your wand into raw, arcane energy. By manipulating this energy, you can use the wand's core charges in the following new ways:

- As a bonus action, you can expend 1 or more of the wand's core charges to create a number of motes of magical force equal to the core charges spent. Each mote streaks toward a different target that you can see within 60 feet of you, dealing force damage to each target equal to 1d4 + your Intelligence modifier.
- When you or another creature that you can see within 30 feet of you takes damage, you can use your reaction to expend 1 or more of the wand's core charges to create a magical barrier, reducing the damage taken by an amount equal to three times the number of core charges spent.

In addition, you have gained a supreme mastery and understanding of wands. If you expend the last charge of a staff or wand, you needn't roll a d20, even if it says to. Further, the gold and time you must spend to craft a magic wand is halved.

### OROSTEAD MAPS

Maps are available for free, courtesy of Cze & Peku, at [thegriffonsaddlebag.com/orostead](http://thegriffonsaddlebag.com/orostead).



ARISTA, WAND  
OF THE SPIRE

### ARISTA, WAND OF THE SPIRE

Wand, artifact (requires attunement by a spellcaster)

This elegant silver and gold wand was crafted by the archmages that first arrived in Orostead centuries ago, well before the magical fallout of the Upheaval. It has been carefully used by only the extremely powerful or clever for generations. The wand has 7 charges for some of the following properties. It regains all expended charges daily at dawn. If you expend the wand's last charge and are not a wizard, roll a d20. On a 1, the wand vanishes and returns to a secret vault within The Spire of Aristaeus, the legendary wizarding tower in Orostead.

**Variant Properties.** Some properties of this artifact are locked behind layers of dormant magic. As you grow stronger and reach certain milestones, these properties may become available to you. This wand can have up to 3 of the following properties active at a time. When you attune to *Arista*, you can choose to activate up to 3 of its variant properties whose prerequisites you meet. Whenever you finish a long rest, you can replace any of the activated properties with another one.

- While holding the wand, you can use an action to cast one of the following spells from it, using your spell save DC: *create or destroy water*, *floating disk*, *fog cloud*, *gaseous form*, *identify*, or *sanctuary*. Once the wand has been used to cast a spell, it can't be used to cast that spell again until the next dawn.
- While holding the wand, you can use an action to expend 1 of its charges to cast the *magic missile* spell. When you reach 9th level, this spell is cast at 2nd level instead, and is cast at 3rd level once you reach 13th.
- (Prerequisite: 5th level) You gain a +1 bonus to spell attack rolls and spell save DC. This bonus increases to +2 when you reach 9th level, and +3 when you reach 17th.
- (Prerequisite: 5th-level wizard) While holding the wand, you can use an action to cast the *unseen servant* spell.

- (Prerequisite: 9th level) While holding the wand, you can use an action to expend 2 of its charges to create one of the following effects, using your spell save DC:

**Drilling Gust.** You harness the ever-present winds of Lake Ils and tighten them into a magic, twisting spear. The spear flies from the wand and forms a line 60 feet long and 5 feet wide, piercing through any creature in the area. Each creature in the line must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 3d6 piercing damage and 3d6 cold damage and is pushed 15 feet away from you. If a creature fails the saving throw by 5 or more, it is also knocked prone. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage from the effect and isn't pushed.

**Siphoning Vortex.** You conjure the strange undercurrents of Lake Ils and create a magical whirlpool in a 15-foot-radius circle at a point on the ground you can see within 60 feet of you. Each creature in the area must succeed on a Strength saving throw. On a failed save, a creature takes 4d6 bludgeoning damage and is pulled up to 10 feet toward the point. If a creature fails the saving throw by 5 or more, it is also knocked prone and spends its action on its next turn coughing and sputtering water. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much bludgeoning damage and isn't pulled. The water spreads out across the ground, extinguishing unprotected flames in its area, and then it vanishes.

- (Prerequisite: 9th-level wizard) While holding the wand, you can expend 3 of its charges to cast the *banishment* spell, using your spell save DC. In addition, you are always under the effects of the *see invisibility* spell.
- (Prerequisite: 13th level) While holding the wand, you gain truesight out to a range of 10 feet.
- (Prerequisite: 13th-level wizard) While holding the wand, you can use an action to expend 1 or more of its charges to cast one of the following spells, using your spell save DC: *arcanist's magic aura* (1 charge), *dimension door* (2 charges), *etherealness* (5 charges), *fog cloud* (4 charges; 1 mile-radius sphere that remains for the duration of the spell), *guards and wards* (4 charges), *private sanctum* (2 charges), *teleport* (5 charges).
- (Prerequisite: 20th-level wizard) You gain the benefits of all of this wand's variant properties.

**Destroying Arista.** The only way to destroy *Arista, Wand of the Spire* is to leave it in an antimagic field on the Ethereal Plane for 100 years, at which point it finally succumbs and becomes nonmagical, allowing it to be easily snapped in two.