

Korick Maltin

You have been on the city council for the past 15 years, and have been watching the politics for far longer. Since the establishment of the council, a place has always been held for the leader of the mages guild. The leader is always one of the most powerful mages in the city, and very often THE most powerful mage in the city. Those who established the council were well aware of the advantage of keeping the power in the city on the board, plus it has the added advantage of providing the best maintained set of wards outside of a wizard's tower.

When you became the guildmage, you almost turned down the post. You hated the politics involved in the city council, and you hated the way the council runs the city. When you were a child, before the empire took the city over, the rulers kept the city in much better order. Everything was run very neatly, and without nearly the politicking and nastiness that every city council decision seems to require. My god, the meetings the city council sits through. Today, for example, is an "open meeting." This is a brilliant idea of the council's in which every farmer who thinks that his neighbor's cow is eating his grass will come in and complain, gripe and generally keep the council from actually accomplishing anything. Not that a council of six can ever really accomplish anything anyway. They spend half their time openly screaming at and insulting each other, and the other half smiling sweetly in order to weasel out whatever they want.

You took the post with the vague hope that you could keep some sort of leash on the council. So far you don't feel like you have been terribly successful, but, at the same time, you're terrified to think what would have happened if you weren't there. Meanwhile, you push for anything that lends more structure and stability to the city, and keep up wards that make sure no one can use magic in the council room. Otherwise you know that every minor telepath would come in trying to con whatever they could out of the idiots who run things. While the guards mostly keep control on the physical aspects, you have wards that prevent anyone from dying of wounds while in the chambers, just in case.

You could, if you wanted use your power and that of some people on your side to reinstate the monarchy. The only problem is that Serian, the current heir to the throne, is an idiot. Even a strong king couldn't overthrow the empire. However, a good king, with your help could convince the empire that Hound's Teeth would not be worth the damage they would take in fighting to bring it back into the fold. You are not a king, and wouldn't want to add even more bureaucracy onto your shoulders, so you wouldn't do it alone. In addition, you need the legitimacy of the old line to get the people's support. Without the people's support you would spend all your time suppressing them, not ruling or fighting the empire.

You've thought about using your magic to wipe his mind and build a new one up, but Serian is too well known throughout the city as a drunkard and a lech. He's generally liked, but he's liked as a kind and amusing clown, not respected as a king. His older brother died at birth, and his younger sister is out of the line of succession as long as he's alive. You may yet consider removing him and using her: she seems fairly intelligent and somewhat ambitious, but you have too many concerns about where her loyalties lie. She seems to be connected in a few places to underground movements that you don't trust at all. Those are the sort of movements that only spring up in the absence of a strong king, when people think they can get away with anything.

Of course, in the old days a woman would never have been in line for succession at all, but some things have to be sacrificed. You have to admit that the introduction of

women in power seems to be the one valuable introduction of the empire. You have yet to see any evidence that women are actually better leaders, but they don't seem to be any worse, and the more people to choose from, the better chance that one of them will be tolerable, at least so you hope.

At this point, you have long given up making any serious change, but if some wonderful opportunity offers itself, you'll jump on it. You've heard about all sorts of nasty things that are springing up: demon cults, thieves and assassins that are dissociated from their guilds, and adventurers constantly coming in to claim some new bounty with no regard to proper form. There is even talk of a group that wants to build a temple of some sort to a god of chaos and disorder. Your main concern is to keep anything too untoward from happening, since you know you won't actually be able to make things better.

People You Know:

The Council:

Lerin Lopel: The mayor is a complete and total idiot and a disgrace to the town. He got in because he was the only person whom no one on the council hated enough to veto. He has absolutely no interests except pretty women and drinking himself into a stupor. While you hate seeing him on the council, he will occasionally stumble into fool's luck and come up with an idea no one else would have thought of. Plus, at least he doesn't cause any real problems, which is certainly better than you could say of the last two mayors. If you could find someone more acceptable you would love to see him out, but, as it is, you've learned to live with the humiliation of working under him.

Serian Winter: The decrepit heir to the degenerate line that at one point ran the city. Not that they were ever the best kings, but they at least kept the city somewhat under control. Now Serian can't even keep the louse who is supposedly in charge of this city under control. His main concerns seem to be sleeping with every attractive person he can get his hands on, and keeping what remains of his face amongst the people of the city, especially his fellow nobles.

Stani Bowin: The high priest of the god Poral. Poral is a god the empire brought, but he is a god of order. He is not your particular choice of gods, but he has a lot of good points, at least for a god of the empire. Luckily the empire does not try to stamp out the cults of local gods, they know that nothing inspires rebellion more than pissing off local priests. Stani, however, is an arrogant bastard of the worst sort: the type that really does have things to be arrogant about. He will give a poor man a job, food, the shirt off his back, but do it with such a condescending "goodness" that you might rather starve. He understands that not everyone can live up to his standards, and seems to feel genuinely sorry for the other 99.99% of the population. He works for every standard good cause out there, and will spend hours telling you about them, especially if you express no interest. He pushes for his god, but he is not overly evangelical. There are other good gods out there, and if you are working for one of them and are happy, he won't try to sway you, even though he is quite sure that his path is better.

Mortak Vonis: The head of the guards, and, in general, a good one. Perhaps a bit more drawn to drink and gambling than you would like, but you've never seen him drunk on the job, and he maintains decent order in the town. It's by no means his fault that the laws are so lax, he just enforces them as they are. You've heard rumours that he has taken bribes to

exonerate minor crimes, but you've never heard of a guard that didn't, and so far they only seem to be minor violations. If you could get a proper set of laws in this town, you think he would be capable of enforcing those too. His great-grandfather worked under the king, and that man's father was at one point the head of the king's guards, so he has his place by rights.

Tofen Sarish: Tofen is exactly what you would expect for the head of the merchants guild. She is very intelligent, very charismatic and greedy as the emperor himself. Merchants have never been any different for all time, and you don't expect a change now. The world could come crashing around your head, and her type would be trying to find the best market price for rubble.

Powers:

Wizard: You are a very powerful wizard. You maintain the wards in the council chambers, and would never drop them because you have no idea who else might be around to take advantage of them, especially at an open meeting. These wards prevent anyone from dying in council, and prevent anyone from using any magic but physical healing within the council chamber. They also break any compulsions that anyone who enters might be under. The wards took days of work to put up, and require constant maintenance. Which is yet another good reason to never ever take them down. If you are not in the warded area, you can do all sorts of things, but honestly, at this point, you mostly do research, provide food and drink for yourself, and occasionally amuse your grandchildren. You haven't been adventuring in decades, and keeping up on all those attack spells is just a hassle.