

# Gemiere, the Mad City



Note : the formatting got shanked when I transitioned from Evernote but I tried to save it as best as I could with the time I had. Also there is likely to be a number of errors, ranging from grammatical to continuity errors, and I simply don't have the courage to go through the whole doc again as it is close to 3 AM.

## 1. Overview

A few points to sum up the city :

### - Free City :

There are no nobles in Gemiere, however its economic inequality is hard to miss. There are no slaves either, yet some have better lives than others...

### - Structure :

Gemiere is a diarchy of two Queens, but the whole system is much more complex than that. There is a council made of the population representatives (mine workers, merchants, art dealers, smith's guild...) that gets to vote on decisions before they are being carried out. There are three different instances who possess the actual power to make change happen once decisions are made :

-Shane Staelsorm, *High Protector of the Thrones* leads the armies.

-The Five High Overseers from each city gate form a council and deliver justice to those who break the law of Gemiere. They are called *The Watchers*.

-A whole slew of scholars inside the Sky Palace attempts to update the laws of the city on a daily basis so they are as consistent as possible for every possible offense or crime. This instance is called *The Chamber of Law* but is most commonly referred to as *The Hole*.

### - To Forge and to Live :

The City main export is of stone, metal and anything that uses metal in its making, including fine

crafts such as jewelry and fine pottery. They have direct access to large quantities of iron, steel, copper, tin, and zinc, with more limited quantities of bronze, brass and silver. (Bronze from copper and tin, Brass from copper and zinc and silver as a byproduct of copper and zinc refining.)

They also export their services, as blacksmiths who are willing are sent to other cities or estates to attach themselves to whoever would need the quality work you'd expect of a Gemiere blacksmith.

The city import is mostly centered around basic necessities such as surplus of food and clothes, but also some luxury items and components they cannot produce themselves such as dyes, spices, cotton...

– **Peace** :

Individuals who enter the city must have their weapons bonded with wire web.

– **Domain of Fire and Light** :

In order to respect the Vow of Light, **Firebringers** keep the city lit using three wick six by six inch candles that can burn for more than a hundred hours which let them relit them all biweekly. As this is a very serious belief for Gemierians, snuffing out a candle or blowing out a light can and will be punished by a beating, prison time, or worse depending on who is witnessing the act. There are a number of notices at the gates as well as most everywhere in the city warning people to NOT tamper with the light.

– **City of Stone** :

Gemiere was rebuilt with the idea that fire would be needed for light everywhere in the city. As such, almost every single building and piece of furniture are made out of stone. You would think that this would make Gemiere a dull city to look upon, but it is quite the contrary. Stones have different colors, different patterns and shapes are used for buildings. The craftsmanship is evident.

– **Hiding in Plain Light** :

As the city is always lit, crime evolved in a different way than in other, more traditional cities. Criminal cannot use shadows to hide, but must instead blend in. This led to a criminal society much more focused on disguise, deception, and trickery than on all out violence.

– **Weekly Community BBQ** :

Every ten days, a large square in the **Copper District** is repurposed to serve as an open tribunal. *The Watchers* review each case as best as they possibly can and make a ruling. Depending on the number of cases, the trials can go on for several days, and if that is the case, the next set of trials will begin ten days after the end of the last case. Criminals are either sent into the **Vaesnar Pits** to finish their lives as entertainment, to the **Underforge** or wherever help is needed to serve as free workforce, or are burned at the stake in the case of magic usage. This last sentence is relatively rare even for mages since they tend to not live long enough to see a trial once they've been caught.

– **Madness** :

Gemiere was dubbed the Mad City for several reasons. The first one is its bureaucracy. Most everything is regulated, first at the city gates where every possible detail about every person or item is written down, then in the city itself, where people pay taxes depending on their seniority, the amount of sun their property gets, how close they are to conveniences... Then comes the actual swamp that is Gemierian Law. So many laws overlap each other it is barely comprehensible, and it actually takes a scholar with years of experience to make sense of it all, be it for trading purposes, welfare, crime, and all the procedures wrapping it all up.

The second reason is that the city never sleeps. It is always lit, either by the sun or candlelight, and its people are always up. Not all at the same time of course, but one could come to the marketplace during day or night, and the difference would simply be that different merchants and market goers would now be present. It is a cultural thing that was nurtured with the Vow of Light. The city must never let its guard down, and its citizens must always be on watch. To respect this, they function in cycles with a part of the population working during the day, and the other at night.

Dayworkers are sometimes called *Sunsiders*, while Nightworkers are often called *Prowlers*.

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– **Never ending party :**

While the lower strata of the Gemierian Society lives a relatively poor life, with more than some literally being destitute, we also have on the other side, rich individuals, usually merchants, famous craftsmen and women as well as religious and government figures hosting lavish parties that literally never stop.

These parties are held in a very 'Masquerade' ambiance where wine flows as readily as music, guests can partake in numerous activities, the most common pertaining to the pleasures of the flesh, but not only. These events are quite obviously a theater for different agents and criminals of different factions within the city, competing for influence, though rarely ever resorting to violence, or at least not public displays of such.

These events do not seem to have an ending, for the thirst for entertainment and scheming is ever present, and so is the wine.

## **2. Insanity Tour**

Gemiere is a Free City, exactly 342 years old, following no laws but its own. The population of the city itself can be numbered at about 500,000 inhabitants, without taking into account the outskirts and travelers.

The government is a Diarchy with very loose hierarchy. Two Queens govern, one from within the Sky Palace, one from within the city. The two meet on a weekly basis and during every weekly city council, where representatives of different strata of the population can voice their ideas or issues and vote on them. In this government and culture, the Queens have power but truly, the station is not one of luxury. Instead, becoming Queen is the most selfless thing a woman can make, surrendering her freedom, her life, in order to serve her people.

Also to note, Gemiere is a racially diverse city in which race scarcely matter as far as social standing goes, unless there is suspicion of magic.

The first element travelers notice when approaching the Mad City at night are the lights. When at night, the city is bathing in the golden light of thousands of candles, chandeliers, sconces, candelabras, lanterns, torches and lamps. This came to happen after Queen Veritas the XXVIIth, following a massive undead attack that left only one quarter of the population to rebuild on the ashes, decreed and vowed that no shadow would

ever loom over Gemiere under her rule. That decree would later be referred to as Queen Veritas' Vow of Light. The reconstruction of the city under the Vow of Light forced the people of the city to rebuild with stone rather than wood, which they had in quantity.

The second element travelers will note when approaching the Mad City are the guard posts and massive gates guarding the way into the city. Almost as high as the ramparts, each gate towers at 300 meters (984 ft), effectively being gigantic portcullis.

The settlement that eventually became the Mad City was started near a mountainside. The original intent was to harvest the ore within the mountain, and this posed several problems later on, most notably in terms of agriculture logistics.

However, the major upside is that invading forces cannot possibly surround the city and attack with an overwhelming amount of troops, because there is only a single entryside to the city, facing south.

As the city grew and because of the mountain blocking the way, Gemiere had to expand lengthwise along the mountainside rather than in a squared formation, while also digging into the mountain a fair amount, both for ore and space.

And so as travelers near the Mad City, they will periodically come across information boards made of steel giving directions to the approaching parties for them to sort themselves before arriving to the gates.

There are five gates, each supervised by both a High Warden and High Overseer, all individually chosen by the Queens. Their task is fourfold.

Firstly, they must maintain their own gate, from polishing the stone to selecting the men and women who man it.

Secondly, they must make sure that no individual entering the city could possibly be any threat to its citizens. To this effect, every single person hoping to pass the gate will be put through a thorough search, and must pay a small fee so that every weapon he or she possesses be bonded with a solid wire web.

Upon exiting through the gate, which must be the same gate as the one of entry, all weapons are checked again, and any signs of tampering will be punished with a fine and a warning in the gate ledger which, after several warnings and depending on circumstances, may result in a lifetime ban from the city.

Visitors also have the choice of leaving their weapons inside the storage space of the guardhouse, reclaiming them upon exiting the city. Citizens must have their weapons bonded as well as anyone else, and so do the guards', although the colors of the wire varies depending on status. Red for outsiders, green for citizens, and blue for the city watch.

Thirdly, they must keep the peace when at peace, and protect the city when at war.

Fourthly, they must keep track of everything and everyone that passes through their respective gate and is of particular interest to that specific gate, copying the logs and relaying them to the palace's Royal Archives for safekeeping.

The five gates, beyond their obvious protecting quality, are here to manage the influx and outpour of citizens and travelers alike. From West to East :

The **Lead Gate** is the one used by citizens and citizens' relatives. A relative must produce a proof of kinship, such as a written letter or an item that the citizen in question would think one of his relative possesses. A gate Seeker will then search for the citizen and will bring him in for confirmation before letting his or her relative enter. Failing all of these, the visiting relative must pay a daily fee in order to acquire lodgings in an annex building.

It is moderately busy and almost never a source of trouble, thus usually less manned.

It leads directly to the residential district of the city.

The **Alchemy Gate** is the one used for merchants and their caravans full of goods, hired protection included. A merchant travelling without the minimum amount of goods would not pass through this gate and would be sent elsewhere.

This is not the most used gate, yet it is often the most busy and guarded, simply because of the merchant's trade nature. Goods are controlled, weighted, measured, stockpiled, annotated, and kept track of in the High Overseer's ledger.

The exit leads into the **Alchemy District** where most merchants do not tarry, preferring to go directly to the **Copper District** to sell their goods.

The **Copper Gate**, also known as the **Queens' Gate** is the central and largest one, and was built to honor the Queens as well as other possible monarchs and other ambassadors circulating in and out of the city. The gate was also meant to let a large number of troops come in and out of the city if it were ever to wage war, which it never did.. It is the most guarded gate, though not by conventional means.

There is very little coming and going when comparing it to the other gates, yet every passage is important and any ambassador, messenger, king, or queen could be a spy or impostor. Alternatively, anyone willing to pay a majored entry fee can enter the city through this gate without having to wait in a queue, though the weapon bonding and regular checks will still occur.

It exits into the main street of the city where the most prominent merchants and services have their establishments set up, also leading up to the **Queensway**.

Adventurers, mercenaries and other globetrotters must go through the **Steel Gate**. This gate's processing is rather fast. Each traveler will be needed to offer three pieces of information and answer a question:

"State your name."

"State your purpose."

"State the duration of your stay."

"Do you accept to pay a nominal fee- with a rate of 10 silver/item- to have your carried weapons bonded , vow to respect the laws of Gemiere, and to not tamper with your bonded weapons in any way shape or form unless under threat of death or grievous bodily harm?"

Upon refusal, the individual will be asked to vacate the premises exactly twice before the gate's soldiers are permitted to use physical force.

This gate is well guarded even though adventurers usually already know about the procedure, and few ever refuse it.

The exit let travelers right into the **Steel District** in which they can find any number of commodities for their craft, ranging from guild halls to craftsmen shops.

Finally, the **Golden Gate** is used as a trading outpost between merchants succesful enough to be recognized by the thrones inside the city and suppliers from the outside. Contracts can be signed between both parties, and it lets them have special treatment in regards to taxes and processing.

This is the most well guarded gate and outpost, as it is where high-end deals occur on a daily basis.

The third and final element that travelers will note when approaching the city is actually the closest one. The city's gigantic ramparts weren't built with the idea of future expansion in mind, and the poorer inhabitants of Gemiere were eventually pushed out of the city due to lack of space.

The **Outer City** is by no means an uncontrolled space, yet when comparing it with the **Inner City**, the quality of life is lower; crime is, if not lower, more blatant and violent in how it is perpetrated; and most importantly, they have no access to what makes Gemiere actually attractive on an economical and geopolitical level : its mines and forges.

The **Inner City** has five districts which all offer different focus. This is a guideline rather than a rule, as you can find houses outside of the **Lead District** and shops outside of the **Queensway**.

**Lead**, or **Residential District**: mostly citizens' houses arranged in neat rows. Conveniences can be found all around, be it small marketplaces selling food and clothes. For adventuring purposes, it is very likely that one could find an herbalist or alchemist shop, as well as a few leatherworkers and cobblers. A few blacksmiths are also present, but they would specialize in forging items usable in constructions and civilian life rather than adventuring.

**Alchemy District** : every city has its underside, and Gemiere is no exception. The **Alchemy District** is

where most mine workers, apprentices and other city rejects end up at the end of the day. This in turn, formed an almost second society within Gemiere. This district is not the most guarded, even though it should. The unspoken rule is that this district's inhabitants can do as they wish, so long as it doesn't disrupt the rest of the city's activity.

The poor often turn to crime, and again, Gemiere is no exception. This district is the place to be if one wishes to work around the Mad City's bureaucracy, or simply need help in regards to some... less savory activities.

**Copper District** and **Queensway** : this district is home to the most prominent establishment the city has to offer. Away from the bustle of the **Queensway**, you can find wineries, tailors, jewelers, libraries, painters, sculptors, guild halls for craftsmen of all kind, scholars, adventurers... And once you are done shopping, you could go watch a play at the theater, or perhaps visit one of many 'houses of joy'.

The Queensway is a single wide street that goes from the **Queens' Gate**, joins the central marketplace and continues towards the mountainside Palace.

Anything and everything that can be bought can be found in the **Queensway**. Day or night, this avenue is always bustling with life, and that is one of the reason Gemiere is also known as the Mad City : it never sleeps.

**Steel District** : the **Steel District** is entirely tailored for adventurers. Here they can find alchemists, blacksmiths, food vendors, even merchants specialized in supplying large companies or mercenary groups, without forgetting a good amount of notice boards, taverns and warehouses. This is also the area where most guilds would at least have an alternate guild meeting hall dedicated to recruitment and expending their presence and renown to those who may not venture out of the **Steel District**.

**Golden Lane** : on the east side of the city, a single lane is separated from both the outside and the rest of the city by high walls and stretches from the **Golden Gate's** trading outpost to the palace in the mountain. This lane is primarily used to supply the palace, but who knows what else goes on...

**The Sky Palace** : [https://www.ihdimages.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/fantasy\\_mountain\\_castles\\_wallpapers.jpg](https://www.ihdimages.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/fantasy_mountain_castles_wallpapers.jpg)

The Palace itself was built against the mountain. The facade is visible from the city, but most of the interior was actually constructed within the mountain. As such, no sunlight can be found once deep enough inside it. The palace's interiors are always brightly lit however, thanks in part to Queen Veritas' vow of light.

Beneath the Palace is a forge. The **Underforge** is Gemiere's most prized possession and is operational at every hour of the day and night. Always heated, always being used to smelt one thing or the other, the massive forge is what lets Gemiere be relevant, both economically and militarily.

### **3. Locations & Organizations**

#### **The Twin Hammers :**

A blacksmithing shop in the **Copper District** owned by a Genasi couple, Rush and Sear. Rush, a female water genasi does the blacksmithing while Sear, a male fire genasi does the bargaining.

Rush is a blue-haired, middle-aged, smaller than average yet rather stocky water genasi. Most people think her mute, but that is not the case. She learned long ago that the words she speaks tend to own her rather than the opposite. A lifetime of misadventures has tempered her impulsiveness, and she know only speaks when she has to, and with great care.

Sear, on the other hand has a rather average build, not displaying any of the bulkiness you'd expect of a blacksmith. Easy to talk to and soft-spoken, he will put clients at ease before trying to find out what it is that he can do for them.

The Twin Hammers is a well established shop in which citizens and adventurers alike come and make purchases. Their craftsmanship is considered by most in the city to be on a superior level. To achieve this, they use their genasi powers to control the fire and water temperature in order to obtain optimal result. Needless to say this is a closely guarded secret and though some blacksmiths are envious of their success, most are simply genuinely amazed, for in Gemiere, forging is more art than craft.

### **The Vaesnar Pits :**

The Pits are quite possibly the main attraction of the Mad City. The idea of the Pits was introduced long ago by Queen Vaesnar the Just -not an accurate depiction of her character-, who judged that criminals should not pay the ultimate price right away, but instead be made to fight one another for sport.

The pits are situated in the Steel District and separated in two. One arena is for criminals to fight and die in -the actual Pits-, while the other is a classical arena -the Garden- in which challengers can fight for glory, fame and riches. Because all life is precious for the fight against the unliving, blunted weapons of all kind are provided to the fighters and casualties rarely ever happen.

Spectators can bet on fights from both the Pits and the Garden. The Pits are always open to those who wish to fight, and there is almost always an ongoing fight, day or night.

### **Gemiere Palace :**

The palace's entry is not on ground level, but actually on a higher level than even the rampart walls (Which are 320 meters high(1050 ft)).

To access the Palace, one must go through the Ivory Tower situated north of the central marketplace, climb it, and then cross a massive stone bridge connecting the top of the tower to the palace entry against the mountainside.

The other option is traditionally reserved to merchants supplying the Palace : the Golden Lane. It has a rather steep but steady incline all along the way from the Golden Gate to the side Palace entry which permits the passage of carts and other transportation vehicles.

Of course, not anyone is given access, and to be granted an audience with the Queens, one must have a viable reason. Any High Overseer's or High Warden's written approval would be enough to grant an audience, yet it would be wise to at least have three for the matter to be regarded with import by the Queens.

### **Scourge's Witness :**

The Witnesses are an independent branch of the **Queensguard**. The order was founded 36 years ago, just after the undead attack on the city, when the High Protector of the thrones vowed to bring justice on every abomination threatening Gemiere, including all mages. This later came to be known as the Vow of Retribution and is the most sacred vow a Gemiere knight can make.

The Witnesses's end goal is to rid the world of abominations, be it undead, fiends, demons or mages. They are not picky, however, and smashing a lizard or two will do. Likewise, if out on a demon hunt, killing tieflings would be considered a success.

Their hatred for all that is foreign can blind them at times, but they make the most loyal of allies. In order to complete their goal, they will not use the tools that they themselves abhor, which means they will not ally with lesser evil to fight a greater one or use magic. Their headquarters can be found in the **Copper District**, but they have a presence in the **Steel District** as well. They sell weapons and offer training, but not to outsiders.

### **Firebringers :**

The **Firebringers** were formed by Queen Veritas on the very day she made her Vow of Light, to not allow shadows to loom over Gemiere ever again. The **Firebringers** aim is to see their dead queen's vow completed.

Their name more impressive than their task in the city, they are considered by most to simply be glorified candlemakers and candlelighters. It is much more than this however, as they are being

trained to fight against the **Scourge**, notably through the use of fire, to purify. Much more mystical than the Witnesses in their approach, some of their numbers may decide to dabble into magic in order to see their task be complete, resolute to take their own lives once this is through. While all members must learn how to fight, the less gifted ones are relegated to candlemaking as the others are taught how to fight in truth and sent into the world to fight the **Scourge**.

**Firebringers** outposts can be found all over the city and out, as light must be provided for all, though their actual headquarters are in the Outer City, where they help keep the peace. Anyone is free to join the **Firebringers** as long as he or she vows to respect the **Oath of Purification**, to complete their dead Queen's solemn vow and purify every last abomination on this world.

Additionally, as the wick and wax needed to make the candles is taking its toll on the city's resources, they have been working on candles that bring light for much longer before running out, possibly days or weeks.

## **The Accidental Stop Tavern :**

This **Alchemy District** Tavern is actually the main hall of what you would normally consider a thieves' guild. Its front as an actual tavern is rather well maintained, as it would run on its own without the external funding that the guild provides. It is a large, three story stone building, yet the interesting part is hidden underneath. The guild's rise in power was mostly due to the guidance of two individuals who seized leadership sometime during the last decade. Under said leadership, the guild grew bolder, somehow gained access to places thought of as impenetrable, and made off with their gains, unknown and unseen. It is during this period of rise in prominence that investigators and other bounty hunters looking for a big fish discovered that the members of this group were using several sequences of humming sounds to communicate with one another without giving anything away, thus naming them the *Hummingblades*. The name stuck, and that is how the whole city has been referring to them ever since.

## **4. NPCs**

### **Queen Elarin, First of the Sky :**

The Palace Queen, also known as the *First of the Sky*, *Skyborn*, or in more formal exchanges, *Saenelvertresi* is the one overseeing foreign policies, trade exchanges, military deployments as well as the day-to-day upkeep and use of the **Underforge**, this last duty often being delegated to the *Keeper of the Forge*.

Elarin Viltris is a young elf who was secluded within the Palace most of her life. Following the death of the last First of the Sky less than a year ago, she is only now getting accustomed to her role. At present, she is considered too young by most and is Skyborn only by name. People test her, try to sway her, or most often simply dismiss her.

In the end, what Elarin wants is not to rule the city, but to explore it. To be a servant of the people was never what she wished to become, but was instead forced upon her. She knows that what she wants will be disregarded unless she proves herself to be capable, and so she accomplishes her duty as diligently as possible, gaining little parcels of freedom here and there, with the hope that eventually, she will be able to get away from it all, and start over.

### **Queen Astrid, First of the Earth :**

The City Queen, also known as *First of the Earth*, *Earthborn*, or sometimes *Vaenelsertresi*, is the one governing from the **Copper District**, overseeing the day-to-day activities of the city. Welfare, Justice,

overall making sure that everyone in the city is well fed, has access to work and medical care, and is treated fairly. This state of affairs is not nearly the case of course, but that is the chosen *Earthborn's* intent and duty.

Astrid Talce, is the current City Queen. Older than her Palace counterpart, she is a human in her late 40's. She is respected by most, both for her knowledge and wisdom, but also for her stalwart attitude.

Much like Queen Elarin, she did not choose this path, but found that it was one that she enjoyed despite the hardships. Astrid is much more of an administrator than she is a queen, and she accepts deference from no one. Indeed, time spent curtsying or bowing is time spent not doing anything of substance. Some see this as a sign of weakness, a sign that she does not accept her position as *First of the Earth*, yet that is not the truth. Astrid's aim is for her people to get better and stronger, and idle chatter does not lead to either of those goal.

Astrid possesses her own Palace, the **Earth Palace**, though it is rarely ever called by that name, as the actual Palace dwarfs it by a large margin. In truth, it is simply a large structure serving both as a house and a meeting hall.

### *Shane Staelsorm, High Protector of the Thrones* :

Shane is an old dwarf with a missing eye and half a beard who is all but ready to retire.

Coming from a long line of miners, he worked his way up the military ladder through the only way that he knew : killing his enemies so decisively that some would later question the sanity of his opponents. Shane and his greataxe, Vasela, built themselves quite a reputation in the Pits before joining up the City's militia. After a few excursions out of the city and more than a few close calls, it became apparent that Shane had a flair for leadership and quickly earned the loyalty of his comrades.

Fast forward a few years, and Shane was leading his own company. Fast forward another year, and he was leading two. Fast forward another ten, and after earning both the councilmen and the Queens' trust, he achieved the rank of High Protector of the Thrones when Galivene Oeitir, the High Protector at the time, passed away.

Essentially, the High Protector is the commander of the armies. He oversees everything that is army related so that the council's directive are executed as smoothly as possible : patrol scheduling, supply lines, resource management, battle plans... Most of these tasks are delegated to trusted men but they are ultimately his responsibility.

Shane is a relentless dwarf, even going by dwarven standards. Kind to his allies and those he must protect, he is without any mercy to those he deems his enemies. He has been working for decades on his anger issues, and even when knowing that the sound strategy is to retreat, he will still struggle to do so. This relentlessness is what let him become High Protector, let him lead all these men. It is the one characteristic he is acclaimed for by his allies and feared for by his enemies, the one thing he will be reminded of every day of his life, his greatest trait.

And yet, to him, this legendary relentlessness is just lack of self-control.

Deep down, Shane knows. One day, the beast will be unleashed, and he certainly hopes someone will be here to stop him.

Shane is easily recognized by his missing left eye and the fact that the left side of his beard is missing, revealing burn scars on the skin. Despite these, he manages to be a decent looking old dwarf.

### Jaena Ulderyk : (Still very WIP)

An information broker whose identity is secret to most. She can be contacted through an opera house, (**The Firefly**, WIP) where messages can be relayed to her, asking for pieces of information in regards to a topic in exchange for something of her choosing, usually information.

Information is a powerful resource, and so are secrets. Her existence is tolerated in the city by the different criminal and non-criminal factions because she does not take sides and does not give away people's secrets, but is instead a reliable source of knowledge, a living library more than a spy, though the cost of doing business with her is often very high.

### Hummingblades (Emblem/Symbol is WIP)

#### Valcer :

Valcer is the supposed leader of the very loose organization known as the *Hummingblades*, an elusive group of outlaws that uses hit and run, daring tactics to target seemingly random parts of the city. In reality, the deeds that are attributed to Valcer belong to two different individuals, and so Valcer can be considered to be two people belonging to the *Hummingblades* :

Varric Holafina, an half-elf most commonly named 'Olaf' by those who befriend him. As a young apprentice blacksmith who was good enough at the craft to earn his way to the **Underforge**, Varric witnessed first hand the treatment reserved to the city's cheap workforce. Luckily, he was one of those who could *potentially* become invaluable, and was not mistreated as the others were, but it was still straining to him. After a few years earning his pay, he met Sanne [SA-NÉ], a middle-aged female half-orc who was to be his supervisor.

Sanne defies the orc stereotype on several levels, but the most obvious of them is that she has both the brains and the brawn. She made her way in the world by selling her spear and eventually find herself in Gemiere where she hoped to compete in the Pits. Instead, she was offered what she thought would be an easy job supervising a few blacksmith in a workshop.

**After a few weeks of working in the Underforge, mutual acknowledgment and a leap of faith from both of them, they came to an agreement and quit without looking back, a very specific idea in mind : to bring it all down. They are freedom**

fighters at heart and for now, they are willing to compromise and become thieves in the night. Through Varric's connections, they managed to worm their way to the underside of Gemiere, and following quite a few successful heists, established themselves as competent thieves.

With a growing amount of members and more opportunities at every turn, the *Hummingblades* are only getting started.

(I had this idea for The Hummingblades to be a very 'heist crew' type team that could lead to some cool quests for the PCs. It's still mostly WIP, but I have 4 more important NPCs for that group that I have outlined roughly and I just don't have the time to finish and write them right now, but that's what I have for now :

#### Roland 'Vision' Vasnehl :

An outsider, adventurer who came to Gemiere to look for his sister and instead found himself accused of a crime he did not commit. Sent to the Vasnear Pits to die for the populace's entertainment, he was instead intercepted by the Hummingblades and recruited in exchange for information on his sister. (Still working on it)

### *Braledyl 'Collapse' Naever :*

A middle-aged/older female dwarf, ex-overseer in the mines. She used to do actual mine work but was promoted thanks to her knowledge of tunnel digging and maintenance, making her more valuable than common workers. After an incident that ended with her direct superior ordering her to collapse a tunnel and condemning at least a hundred to die and her actually complying, she went into a downward spiral of alcohol and despair that ended when 'Valcer' got in touch and offered her a chance at redemption. She took it and has been helping the *Hummingblades* to set an actual underground clandestine network beneath the city in order to move about unseen. (Still roughing up the edges)

### *Gondyl 'Blade' Janskelem :*

A 27 years old human male who grew up in the upper strata of Gemiere's society. His father and mother are wealthy dye merchants who host parties from time to time, with a fondness for fighting pits and hunting non-humans for fun. They taught Gondyl how to track a wide range of creature, as well as how to duel. Gondyl's hope is that he will one day get the opportunity to use this knowledge to track these two beasts that made him and gut them. Gondyl's dueling prowess was not exemplary, but the *Hummingblades* would never accept someone too famous to be a part of their operations, and settled on him. Gondyl accepted the offer under the condition that he would be the one to deal with his own parents. (I'm not sure I like this one, I'll probably scrap him or put him somewhere else.)

#### -4th one :

Very rough outline. Most likely a clock tinkerer who repurposed her knowledge to pick locks and crack strongboxes.

Motivation would not be to bring the city's governing elite down, but to find some specific piece of information for her to use. (Still working on it.)

### **TEMPORARY END NOTE (19<sup>th</sup> December 2017)**

This is still very WIP, as I have at the very least outlined 3 other criminal organizations : one based around the idea of being the 'middle man', the fence of the city, one sprouting from torn families coming together to take a stand against the city's rich individuals, and one centered around a man with the end goal being the total control of the city, a rather 'Godfather' figure involved in distributing drugs, prostitution and 'protection'.

I'll also keep on expending on whatever people may have questions about and what I come up with, whether my city is implemented in the world or not. That means more things, more NPCs, shops, factions, locations, city gimmicks, relation between factions and so on...

I'll probably also have to do a 'Foreign relations' section once I know more about other places in the world, but that's for later.

I also don't have a map cause I just can't draw!

Hope you liked what you've read so far.

I DEMAND FEEDBACK!