

Hey guys,

I'm excited to get started on this adventure. I think it is going to be really fun. I originally stated I thought this would take between 8-10 sessions, however I am going to revise that to 10-12. The primary reason for this is that this is my first time running an adventure and I'm sure I'll have to figure out pacing.

One stylistic difference I will have from <previous DM> is that I will be awarding XP to the group in an email following the session.

As with anything, as we make our way through this, I expect anyone who has recommendations or suggestions to reach out. I'm looking forward to this being a learning experience and would love tips and thoughts.

Now... on to Waterdeep....

Session 0

As this is our first Session 0 I wanted to lay out what this will look like and its reasoning.

During this session

- I'll be providing you with some additional context as to what is currently happening at the start of our adventure
- We will review what is in this email and handle any questions
- We will spend time tailoring characters, back-stories and connections to make them super relevant to the campaign. This will take the bulk of the time. And is important because I want to be able to tie those backgrounds and motivations into the story
- Run a quick session the back-half of our time. Expect 1, maybe 2, encounters (not necessarily battles). I do have a hard line I will be stopping at for story reasons and so we may very well end early next week.

Adventure Expectations

- **General**
 - Even though it is called a "heist". This is much more of an investigatory and mystery adventure. Think "Sherlock" instead of "Oceans 11"
 - There is combat but the focus is on exploration and roleplaying.
 - Having said that, each character should have something to do in those scenes. **I will be rewarding extra XP for participating in roleplaying.**

- Key skills in this adventure include **Deception, Insight, Intimidation, Investigation, Perception, Persuasion,** and **Stealth** (sound like anyone you might know?)
- Do expect this to be a one-shot campaign. There are numerous ways that this adventure could end up and some of them make it almost impossible to carry over a character. While there is a chance you could, I would just expect not to and then be pleasantly surprised later.
- **Characters**
 - Each character should have a solid motivation to investigate the mysteries with their companions.
 - In addition to personal motivations, each character should have ties to at least one other character.
 - Some Examples:
 - A family member of ours served in the Grey Hands
 - We broke out of a small thieves guild together when we were children
 - We traveled from from Neverwinter after Lord Nevermember was removed as the Open Lord
 - Avoid making any of the Factions we have encountered so far (ie. Harpers, Lords Alliance, Emerald Enclave, etc.) part of your backstory.
- **Setting**
 - This is an urban adventure and very different than Phandelvar.
 - You are very, VERY unlikely to leave the city.
 - The beauty of this adventure is that you aren't traipsing around in order to save the world. This is a small and focused story involving a missing treasure and the factions who seek it.
 - Since this is a major city, expect crime to be punished. It is therefore advised that if you must commit a crime, have a way to cover your tracks.

Important Facts About The Situation

- It's been five years since the end of the War of the Dragon Queen. Numerous villages, towns, and cities lost tremendous amounts of coin when raided by the Cult of the Dragon. Much of it has never been recovered.
- Due to his negligence and preferential treatment for Neverwinter, Lord Degault Neverember lost his seat as the Open Lord of Waterdeep to Lariel Silverhand, the current Open Lord of Waterdeep.
- Crime is on the rise. Numerous criminal factions in Waterdeep appear more active, going so far as to fight one another in the streets. In response, the High Wizard of Waterdeep,

Vajra "Blackstaff" Safahr, has activated her independent enforcers, Force Gray and the Gray Hands.

Homework

- While you don't necessarily need to bring a fully fleshed out character to Session 0 (you certainly can) I would appreciate it if you could let me know the race and class you are thinking about being. You can always change it through the start, this just gives me a good idea of where your head is at so I can start thinking about ways of weaving things together