# CHARACTER STORY:
# BRAWLER



I hurt people. Always have. It's the only damn thing I'm good at. Wouldn't want to do anything else for coin.

Far as I can recall I've been always hanging around the tavern anyways. Ever since I was a young idiot – all bulk and not a thought in my head - I'd work there hauling bags of horse feed or water buckets, chopping firewood – you name it. Easy jobs for someone with muscle. People around the tavern liked me – I mostly kept my temper in check, which was all that was needed to guarantee frequent hay romps with servant girls.

Was sure I'd get picked for the Greyguard – had everything going for me – big, strong, not squeamish about following orders. Got rejected. Think it's that sergeant prick, had it in for me after I roughed up that buddy of his over a lost bet he refused to pay up. How the hell was I to know the bastard had important friends?

I don't give it a second thought. The morons can spin tales about how brave they are trudging through swamps to chop up a gnoll or two – all they are really good for is passing out from drink or picking fights with the locals. How did their motto go? "We keep the darkness at bay, so the light shines pure". Maybe an eternity ago. What a load of crap. I mean, I did get a little upset – had a couple of rough nights where I had a bit too much swill, started a fight or two to get the tension out. Inn furniture is cheap crap anyways – not that hard to get a couple of new tables.

That's when the tavern keeper was smart enough to hire me as the man who throws out others who'd want to break tables. Great move now that I think about it. Keeps me sober, lets me break some teeth now and again and lets others drink in peace. Just what our world needs – peace and drink. And an occasional teeth-smashing of course.

Guess my reputation got around because one night this thin berk comes in, all wrapped up in a cloak and hood. Stayed at the inn looking for me, "mighty warrior of this fine village". Wants to venture into some sort of a dungeon from what I get of his ramblings. Needs someone strong in case things get dicey. Of course, I told him to get bent – no need to ruin the good arrangement I got here. He doesn't need to know that I'm not that good with a sword – more of a fist to the nose kind of a "warrior". Oh, and I prefer drunkards to actual monsters if we're picking who it is that we're hurting.

Now the next night an old friend comes by the inn. Haven't seen the bastard in years. Guess I'm taking a night off. Drinks pour one after another and I lose track of his stories – no longer sure whether he's fighting the bandits on the roads or he's the one doing the banditry. There is definitely robbery happening in the stories somewhere. We smash the mugs and keep at it - it's good to see him again.

We stagger out into the night barely standing, screaming the foulest drinking songs we manage to half-remember. The jumbled talk turns to the ladies as we spot his old flame out on the street. He never got over this one he tells me, but she'd probably never speak to him again. And it's not just that – it looks like she's with someone new! The nerve, passing up on a perfectly suitable gentleman like my friend here just because he vanished for a few years! Our eyes narrow and fists clench. We follow them. The stars spin, and the memories get hazy.

I wake up in a pigsty, my head feels wooden and my fists are covered in dried blood. No sign of my friend as I sit up, the world slowly drifting into focus. A fat hog is chewing at my boot. I spit in disgust, looking around for a stick to throw at the pig. An arm sticking out of a hay bale catches my attention. There's my buddy! How much DID we drink last night? I pull to get him out and fall on my ass as the dim morning light reveals a corpse of a man with his face smashed in.

The new suitor of my friend's lady. I look again at my bloodied fists, my thoughts racing like blind, confused mice in the fog filling my mind. Did anyone see us follow him? Is anyone going to miss him? Then I remember where I know him from. I thought he seemed familiar. It's the sergeant's buddy, the one with lots of friends in the Greyguard...

I stumble away from the pigsty wiping away mud from my face and blood from my fists, legs still unsteady. I need to get out of town before someone finds out and decides to return the favour for this one. I need to go find that hooded berk, the one who wanted the muscle for his plan and to do it quickly.

It seemed whether I wanted it or not, I was going for an adventure.