



# THIEVES OF THE SILVER SPIKE

## NPCs FOR THE BLACK COMPANY CAMPAIGN SETTING

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### INTRODUCTION

Some of the most popular characters in the series were not even in the Black Company, though they are important enough to be mentioned. These characters are the thieves who plucked the *silver spike* from the son of Old Father Tree. Among them are Old Man Fish, a clever ranger with lots of experience; Timmy Locan, a funny young ex-soldier; Tully Stahl, the morally bankrupt cutthroat and opportunist who organized the group; and finally, Smeds Stahl, a cut-rate criminal, alcoholic, and pedophile, who is somehow better than all the rest. What makes this motley crew so interesting is that they were no different from anyone else in this world; they had no practice with sorcery, knew very little of magic in general (except Old Man Fish who knew enough to stay away), and were no great warriors themselves. They were ordinary fools driven by greed, who stumbled into a deadly adventure, much like the PCs in your own Black Company games.



murderous joy shown by the Limper, Toadkiller Dog, and their savage followers. At first, Fish never said much, only speaking up to sneer at his city-boy companions made miserable in the forest. But, after a while, he became the voice of reason in the group, and, because of his sly and clever mind, they managed to avoid the worst.

As a younger man, he was a Rebel, involved in the movement in Oar around that time. He had been trained in ways to attack wizards, and was skilled at striking quickly and with deadly force. He fought at the Battle of Charm. It was the only battle he was in, and from that, he could still recognize his foes, remembering Silent 15 years later.

He was white-haired with bushy white eyebrows, but straight-backed, and he could move silently in the woods. He darkened his hair to join the Oar Home Defense Force Brigade.

Old Man Fish died of cholera not long after he and Smeds escaped Oar with the ransom they got for turning the *silver spike* over to Exile.

### OLD MAN FISH

Old Man Fish, Forto Reibas, was a resident of Oar's north side. A trapper and ranger by trade, he was intimately familiar with the Great Forest. In addition to his skills as a woodsman, he also knew something of the healing trade, and was able to find materials in the wild to make poultices and balms to aid the healing of blistered feet and chaffed skin.

A complicated character, he had a core of decency that allowed him to bond with Smeds, while dodging the authorities and warlocks who hunted for their prize. Still, he was not above killing innocent people to cover his tracks. The wholesale death left by the Limper's massacre of the Eternal Guards did not seem to bother him, although he disliked the sadistic,

### OLD MAN FISH

**Male ranger 5, thief 1, night stalker 1;** CR 7; Medium humanoid; HD 5d8+5 plus 1d6+1 plus 1d8+1; hp 41; Mdt 19; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +5; Grap +6; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1/19-20, short sword) or +8 melee (1d4+1/19-20, accurate dagger); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+1/19-20, short sword) or +8 melee (1d4+1/19-20, accurate dagger); SA ambush +1d4. combat style (light), death attack (melee), sneak attack +2d6; SQ knave, natural trapfinding, nature sense, terrain mastery (forest), trapfinding, trap sense +1, woodland stride; AL wealth, the thieves; Ap 8; SV Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +6; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 10.

# THE BLACK COMPANY: THIEVES OF THE SILVER SPIKE

*Background:* Hunter; Knowledge (nature), Listen, Spot, and Survival.

*Skills and Feats:* Climb +3, Escape Artist +3, Heal +11, Hide +18, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (local) +5, Knowledge (nature) +15, Listen +13, Move Silently +14, Search +9, Spot +11, Survival +17 (+19 in aboveground natural environments, following tracks); Alertness<sup>B</sup>, Dodge, Endurance<sup>B</sup>, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (rumel/garrote), Stealthy, Track<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Finesse<sup>B</sup>.

*Languages:* Forsberg (spoken-good, written-poor)

*Possessions:* studded leather armor, short sword, accurate dagger.

## SMEDS STAHL

A layabout from Oar's north side, Smeds lived in squalor, from one jar of wine to the next, until his cousin, Tully, came up with the idea of stealing the *silver spike*. Believed none too bright, he favored young, even prepubescent girls, had a cool head, endurance, and was capable of ruthless action when necessary. Instead of an education, he had low, animal cunning. Like his cousin, at first he had little conscience and planned to murder his accomplices in stealing the *silver spike*. But, after spending weeks with them when they contributed more to the job than Tully did, he didn't think he could do it. He found himself weeping with sadness and guilt after being psychically buffeted by the tree's pain, disappointment, and sorrow, and was filled with rage at the Limper's murder of babies in Forsberg.

In a crisis, he was cool and moved more fluidly and confidently than usual. He had sharp hearing and fast reflexes, and was a stronger runner than Old Man Fish. He learned from Old Man Fish how to use a knife to murder quietly, and was alert enough to use Timmy Locan's screams to mask the sound of his footsteps when sneaking up on Timmy's torturers.

Once he found his self-confidence, he had a temper and a big chip on his shoulder against bullies. He murdered Tully in broad daylight, lured the two imperial soldiers escorting Tully into an alley and murdered them, and later he savaged two press-gang recruiters who disturbed his lunch. As a conscript, he went by the name Kenton Anitya.

Smeds escaped with an enormous ransom after turning the *silver spike's* location over to Exile. He set up a struggling brewery in Roses, became an upstanding member of the community, and never told anybody about the spike.

## SMEDS STAHL

**Male jack-of-all-trades 1/fighter 1;** CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+2 plus 1d10+2; hp 15; Mdt 16; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +1; Grap +3; Atk +4 melee (1d4+2/19-20, dagger); Full Atk +4 melee (1d4+2/19-20, dagger); SQ commander; AL the thieves, wealth, vice; Ap 8; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 15, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 12, Cha 11.

*Background:* Criminal; Hide, Intimidate, Move Silently, and Sleight of Hand.

*Skills and Feats:* Bluff +4, Climb +4, Command +1, Diplomacy +4, Disguise +4, Escape Artist +4, Hide +8, Intimidate +4, Jump +5, Listen +7, Move Silently +8, Search +2, Spot +7, Swim +1; Alertness<sup>B</sup>, Stealthy<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Focus (dagger).

*Languages:* Forsberg (spoken-fair)

*Possessions:* Padded armor, dagger.

## TIMMY LOCAN

A young, incurably happy and optimistic ex-soldier from Oar's North Side, he was an acquaintance of Tully and Smeds Stahl. Both men knew Timmy was just dishonest enough to go in for stealing the *silver spike*, but naïve enough to easily betray. He was caught in a lightning blast that the Son of Old Father Tree sent against Toadkiller Dog, but he recovered. He was

short with bright red hair, had a good eye for measurements, and was good at divvying up treasure.

His parents, though poor, were not tenants like most in the North Side; they owned their home. There was a rumor that the government gave it to them for being good informants when there was active Rebel activity in the city. His father and two brothers died fighting the fires after the Limper attacked Oar. The Limper's men mauled his mother and sister; his mother died and his sister killed herself after being mutilated.

Although he was taught to use a spear in his soldiering days, Timmy preferred the dagger. He constantly told jokes and never complained. Timmy was murdered by torture when people found out he knew something about the spike.

## TIMMY LOCAN

**Male fighter 1, scout 1;** CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d10+1 plus 1d6+1; hp 15; Mdt 15; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +1; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d4+2/19-20, dagger); Full Atk +3 melee (1d4+2/19-20, dagger); SA ambush +1d4, sniper shot +1d6; SQ commander; AL family, the thieves; Ap 8; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will -1; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 15.

*Background:* Soldier; Command, Intimidate, Profession (soldier), and Survival.

*Skills and Feats:* Balance +2, Climb +7, Command +4, Handle Animal +6, Hide +3, Intimidate +5, Jump +6, Move Silently +3, Profession (soldier) +1, Spot +0, Survival +1; Dodge, Weapon Focus (spear)<sup>B</sup>.

*Languages:* Forsberg-fair

*Possessions:* leather armor, two daggers.

## TULLY STAHL

Tully Stahl was a hustler from Oar's north side who made his way in the world with the favors of wealthy widows and married women whose husbands were away. He was the first to think of stealing the *silver spike* and had no conscience. He was so callous that even the scene of a massacre by the Limper and Toadkiller Dog only bored him.

Smeds at first thought Tully was the smarter of them, but Tully was too stubborn, never thought things through, and was ultimately too lazy and shortsighted for such an ambitious plot. He was also something of a coward, readily abandoning Smeds when trouble threatened. When he did become dangerous, his voice became soft and even.

Smeds murdered Tully after Tully was caught by imperials while trying to cut a deal and sell out Smeds and Fish.

## TULLY STAHL

**Male jack-of-all-trades 2;** CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 2d6+4; hp 13; Mdt 16; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12, touch 11, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +1; Grap +2; Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, club) or +2 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+1, club) or +2 melee (1d4+1/19-20, dagger); AL wealth; Ap 6; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 9, Cha 13.

*Background:* Con Artist; Bluff, Disguise, Sense Motive, and Sleight of Hand.

*Skills and Feats:* Appraise +5, Bluff +10, Command +2, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +0 (+2 acting), Gather Information +7, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (local) +5, Search +5, Sense Motive +8, Sleight of Hand +7, Spot +5; Improved Initiative, Negotiator<sup>B</sup>, Persuasive<sup>B</sup>, Run<sup>B</sup>.

*Languages:* Forsberger (Fair)

*Possessions:* padded armor, club, dagger.

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