

VARTAN NAZARIAN: DENIZEN OF FREEPORT

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- VARTAN NAZARIAN - RUG MERCHANT AND ANTIQUARIAN -

Halfling male Exp6: CR 5; Small humanoid; HD 6d6+6; hp 30; Init +0; Speed 20 ft.; AC 14 (touch 12, flat-footed 14); Atk +3 melee (1d4-2, dagger) or +6 ranged (1d4-2, dagger); SA halfling racial traits; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +6 (+2 racial bonus vs. fear); Str 7, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 16, Wis 11, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +12, Bluff +13, Climb +0, Decipher Script +12, Diplomacy +16, Forgery +12, Gather Information +10, Hide +4, Jump +0, Knowledge (history) +12, Listen +2, Move Silently +2, Profession (merchant) +8, Search +3, Sense Motive +9, Spot +0, Use Magic Device +9 (+11 with scrolls); Leadership, Point Blank Shot, Expertise.

Languages: Halfling, Common, Dwarven, Elven, Merfolk.

Possessions: *ring of protection* +1, *bracers of armor* +2, *helms of comprehending languages and reading magic* (2) [one is dented and doesn't function perfectly].

BACKGROUND

Vartan is a prosperous merchant whose family has lived in Freeport for three generations. *Nazarian and Sons* is in the northwestern corner of the Old City, and occupies a three story row house. His family — his wife Hripsima, daughter, and son — lives on the top floor. Everyone helps with the business.

Vartan's specialty is tapestries and carpets, but he also carries many antique furnishings. The first floor is piled high with carpets and tapestries. His selection is broad enough that he can always find something at least close to what the customer wants. The second floor is full of antiques. In the back, several cabinets are stuffed with old books and scrolls. Vartan is fascinated by ancient civilizations, and often trades with Ichibando and Maralei (see *Freeport: The City of Adventure*, pages 41-42) for items they recover.

Vartan contributes to the Halfling Benevolent Association. Vartan knows what the Syndicate is, and tries to stay clear of their activities. However, because of his skill with documents, he has a fair sense of how to make good fakes. Thus, the Syndicate occasionally imposes upon him for favors of that kind.

PERSONALITY

Vartan is extroverted and personable. He pays close attention to customers. He has a knack for determining what they really want. Customers are offered sweetened

mint tea and nuts while items are shown to them. If Vartan doesn't speak the customer's language, he puts on one of his *helms of comprehending languages*, and offers one to the customer. The customer's helm does not properly resize itself, and just perches on the customer's head, but it works well otherwise.

Vartan has a genuine interest in people, and asks lots of questions so he can develop relationships with customers. He is a smooth conversationalist, so talks are more like catching up with old friends than interrogations. He usually recognizes repeat customers, especially if they purchased something before. All of his prices are negotiable. Skilled bargainers might get him down to near half his initial asking price, but he starts high, so he never loses money.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Vartan is fifty years old, with a dark olive complexion, a narrow face, and a large nose. His eyes and hair are dark, and he is beginning to bald at the temples and crown. His long-sleeved robes are trimmed with fine cloth and colored with vivid dyes and conceal his *bracers of armor*. A dagger sits on his belt.

HOOKS:

- Vartan does not usually deal in magic, but he will be interested in anything old, especially if it is attributable to lost Valossa.
- Vartan can verify the authenticity of a written work, or identify the provenance of unknown tomes and scholarly scrolls. He can also provide forgeries, especially of older documents.
- Vartan is currently unaware of the Church of Yig (see *F:CoA*, page 37), but he may own tomes that could help unravel those mysteries, or others. Of course, the PCs accidentally lead others there. The PCs could also be asked to help, if some of Vartan's collection is stolen.
- Nazarian has heard of an intriguing item and needs trustworthy agents to hold his payment, buy the item, and return with it. Naturally, things will go wrong. It might even be a fake, but Vartan will not blame his agents unless he suspects they might be conning him.

Vartan can act as a template for any quality merchant. Substitute whatever goods are needed in place of the rugs and tapestries, and change the names.

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