

Special Constable Ugruk Grathnars-son

Goblin man; 19 years old.

Enthusiastic engineering consultant to the Snakesford Constabulary.

Like most goblins, you are shorter by a head than even the shortest humans. You have neatly trimmed black hair and greenish skin. You are wearing an immaculately pressed constabulary uniform.

Traits

- Average **strength** (d12)
- Above-average **agility** (d10)
- Below-average **health** (d20)
- Above-average **knowledge of the world** (d10)
- High **perception** (d8)

Skills

- An expert in **engineering** (d8)
- Pays **attention to detail** (d8)
- Comfortable in the company of **goblins** (d10)
- Familiar with **police procedure** (d10)
- Knows the basics of **applied magic** (d12)
- A student of **the city's history** (d12)
- Bad at **explaining things to laymen** (d30)

Important equipment

- A **slide rule**
- A Grungasdottir multi-function folding **pocket knife**

When you were a young goblin you lived in your father's workshop just down the street from the offices of the Snakesford Constabulary. Every day you saw the policemen coming and going in their shiny uniforms. They were mostly humans, but you did see a few goblins, so you always assumed that someday you would be able to join them.

You collected newspaper articles about murders and robberies and plastered them all over your room—when you read about the detectives and constables assigned to the cases you dreamed of being able to assist them in their investigations. You built up an elaborate fantasy of your future life, planning where you would live, what you would wear and how you would speak when you were a detective famed throughout the city.

When you were twelve, and all your siblings were choosing their workshops, you made the grave error of telling your father that you wanted to join the constabulary. He was livid. Policing and lawyering, he said, was for clumsy, stupid goblins who had no talent for any other profession—and no son of his was going to shame the workshop. Against your impassioned protests, he burned your newspaper collection and sent you away to be apprenticed to your uncle, who repaired ship engines down at the docks.

You were despondent for months. You hated the damp and the smell of fish, your uncle didn't read newspapers, and

all your cousins had found out about your interests and kept making fun of you. You thought that your life was over.

You became interested in your assigned work in spite of yourself. You had a natural knack for understanding how the complex machine parts of an engine were supposed to interoperate—and how a single defective part had a detrimental effect on the whole. You became your uncle's best student, and when you were sixteen he sent you on to a larger engineering workshop in the city. There you broadened your knowledge to a wider range of mechanical devices, and learned that the most complex machinery was often controlled by enchantments. Although you were found to have no magical aptitude whatsoever when you took the Guild's standardised tests, you still made an effort to learn something about how the enchantments worked—you didn't want there to be any part of a machine that you didn't understand.

Then, a year ago, something happened which would change your life forever. In the midst of an acrimonious dispute between two merchant houses, with accusations of industrial espionage and sabotage flying in both directions, the Snakesford Gazette printed an advertisement from the constabulary seeking an engineer to act as a technical consultant on a case.

You knew that you had to get the job. You rushed to the constabulary offices straight away, and when you were told that the recruitment officer had gone home for the night you camped in the lobby until he returned in the early hours of the morning. You earnestly explained to him how much this opportunity meant to you, and after a brief consultation with his superiors he agreed to hire you on a provisional basis. Much later you learned that you probably shouldn't have bothered to go to that much effort—you were the only respondent.

Later that morning, in spite of your severe sleep deprivation, you quickly determined that an entire batch of novelty clocks in the warehouse of one of the feuding merchants had been deprived of a vital brass spring. Your new colleagues were able to follow this lead to a local fence, and from the fence to a thief, and from the thief to some incautious gentlemen in the rival merchant's employ. The case was solved by dinnertime, and that was enough to upgrade your provisional status to permanent employment.

You have a badge, a uniform and the title of "Special Constable"—technically, you have the authority to arrest people, but you have not yet had occasion to do so. You have assisted the constabulary with many more sabotage cases—given how popular this crime is becoming it amazes you that so few of your colleagues take an interest in engineering. You have tried, at times, to explain some of the more relevant parts of your field, but have had little success in persuading anyone to engage in further study of the subject. You get the distinct impression that your superiors don't read your detailed reports very thoroughly.

You have gone to visit your father a few times, but he reacted predictably coldly to the news about your new job. You have gradually won over the rest of your family, but he remains unmoved. It doesn't matter to him that you are using your engineering skills—he doesn't consider what you do to be proper goblin work, and it's clear that he is disappointed in you.

You had been following the railway project with great professional interest, so Lord Carpenter's murder was shocking news. More shocking still is the disappearance of Eric Hill, another project engineer—you had heard of him before; you know that he was trained in a goblin workshop. Apart from Carpenter and the Guild mage working on the enchantments, he was probably the most important person there. This can't

be good for the project at all—Old Thargsson himself has come out of retirement to pick up the pieces.

This morning you were told that Commander Rose was assembling a hand-picked team of experts to work the case, and you were on it. Instructions had come in from the council that the underground drow and the yuan-ti kingdom were sending their own representatives, and that you were to include them fully in your investigation.

You were thrilled to see that Commander Rose's other choice was none other than Detective Alma Ostler—a legendary policewoman whose career you followed obsessively when you were little. She was the best of the best, and put away more criminals than any of her contemporaries—but she resigned abruptly after working a murder case which was left unsolved. After that she became a private investigator, and you lost track of her. You wonder what persuaded her to come back. The Carpenter case seems quite similar to her ill-fated final case—a wealthy man was killed in his home during a robbery. Is it somehow related, or will solving this case simply put her unresolved feelings about the other one to rest?

You hope that with your assistance this investigation can be brought to a swift and satisfactory conclusion. The railway project is very important to the city, and to all the goblin engineers involved in its construction. If someone is trying to disrupt it, they have to be stopped! If you were instrumental in ensuring that Snakesford Station opens on time, even your father would have to admit that you had done something with your life.

Your fellow investigators

Detective Alma Ostler: Your hero. Nobody knows more about this city than she does. She smokes a pipe, just like in the old newspaper photos. You would love to talk to her more about her old cases, but you have tried to curb your enthusiasm—you want to act professional.

Pharolin Orvresslar: A drider. You've never seen a drider before. He's wearing armour and carrying rather a lot of weapons—does he think this is some kind of war? He kind of scares you, and you haven't spoken a lot.

Zzuxartha Ssestl: A yuan-ti. She looks awfully young—but you suppose that you shouldn't talk. She seems very friendly and sweet, but she has been behaving quite strangely. You don't think she's ever been in a big city like this before, and isn't sure how to behave.

Yuan-ti name pronunciation guide

Zzuxsartha Ssestl *zoosh-sar-tha ses-t'l*

Zzizzizth *zizz-izth*