



# WHEN THE SKY FALLS

AN EVENT BOOK  
by  
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## Those Who Prey Upon the Weak

### *An adventure seed by Monte Cook*

*The sky has fallen. The fist of the gods has struck the earth and now all is in chaos. The skies grow dark and the displaced survivors seek shelter. But who will save the living when they are preyed upon by the dead?*

This web enhancement for *When the Sky Falls* is an expanded adventure seed suitable for four 4th- to 5th-level player characters (PCs). It provides a strong skeleton for an adventure, but relies heavily on information found in *When the Sky Falls* by Bruce R. Cordell. DMs should flesh it out with place names, relevant nonplayer characters (NPCs), and additional content as necessary to insert it into their own games.

Not only can DMs use this scenario as an adventure unto itself, it also provides plenty of mood and atmosphere details for roleplaying in the aftermath of a meteor strike. The threats characters face at a time like this need not be supernatural to be a challenge. No matter what type of meteor strikes in your campaign—mundane, thaumaturgic, or engram ark—issues will arise that require the PCs to deal with refugees, overcrowding, con men, and chicanery.

### BACKGROUND

This adventure occurs in the days following a meteor strike, about 50 miles from the impact site, in a small village (any village will do). This settlement is now swelling to many times its normal population with refugees who have escaped death and have fled the destruction. Many intend to move on from here, but many more have no idea where to go. Their homes have been destroyed, they've lost loved ones, and it seems as though their lives are over—ended in one cataclysmic act of the gods.

### SETTING THE SCENE

The sky above is still unnaturally filled with dark clouds and ash. The air feels much colder than it should—it seems like the end of the world to most of the dirty-faced and hungry refugees who stand about with what few worldly belongings they could carry away from the blast zone. These are the lucky ones. They got out alive. Their old villages and hamlets are gone in the terrible fires that followed the strike; the communities closer in were utterly vaporized.

This village, itself scarred by a few acid rainfalls, remains intact. But what was once home to a few hundred souls is now burgeoning with nearly a thousand. These people have little to eat and are quite literally stumbling about in shock.

### THE JACKALS

Wherever there is misery, there are those evil persons who prey upon the miserable and take advantage of suffering. The area around the impact site is no different.

While the ruling monarch has indeed sent troops and supplies in to help with the situation, a fellow named Mordigan is posing as a kingdom official taking stock of the losses. Mordigan walks among the refugees and asks them questions about their lost loved ones, and about what valuables (if any) they were able to take with them when they fled. This false administrator is nothing more than a very sophisticated thief, however. His ally, an elf illusionist named Tolaen, follows him invisibly. She listens intently to what Mordigan finds out. When they find someone with valuables, they return that night.

Tolaen uses her illusions to make the chosen victim think that a dead loved one—whom the refugee described to Mordigan earlier that day—has returned from the grave with instructions on how to appease the gods so that they will not drop “another hammer upon the anvil of the earth.” These instructions invariably involve leaving their valuables out in the wild, where Tolaen and Mordigan can gather them later.

### THE PLEA

A real royal official named Marva Talisman contacts the player characters. She's gotten word that a number of the refugees have had visions of dead relatives lost in the impact. Marva wants to know if there is truth to these stories, and the rumor that the gods may be planning on striking the world with another meteor.

### INVESTIGATION

The official gives the PCs the names of a few people who have had visions. Some investigation turns up the following points of information:

- Each one has been visited by a royal administrator named Mordigan, gathering information. He did not seem suspicious in any way, and he came alone.
- Marva Talisman can confirm that no one named Mordigan works as a royal official.

- Mordigan is the name of a charlatan and thief who frequented this area a few months back (characters can learn this with a Gather Information check [DC 20] among the villagers—but not the refugees).
- Mordigan sometimes worked with a female elf illusionist named Tolaen (characters can learn this with a Gather Information check [DC 25] among the villagers—but not the refugees).

## MORDIGAN

Mordigan is a smart fellow. Unless the PCs are being extraordinarily discreet (DM's discretion), he hears that they are asking around about him and sends some hired thugs to take them out.

The thugs pose as hunters, approaching the PCs to ask them for directions. With their bows on their backs, their "walking staves" in hand, these do not look like warriors. When they get close, they attack.

**Thug, human War3 (4):** CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 3d8+6; hp 24, 22, 16, 13; Init +1; Speed 30 feet; AC 14 (+1 Dex, +3 armor); Attack +4/+4 melee (1d6+1, quarterstaff) or +4 ranged (1d8, longbow); SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +2; AL N; Str 13, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 12, Cha 9

**Skills and Feats:** Listen +3, Spot +3; Ambidexterity, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff), Two-Weapon Fighting

**Possessions:** Masterwork quarterstaff, studded leather armor, masterwork longbow, 20 arrows, *potion of cure light wounds*, 25 gp

The thugs do not fight to the death, however—they were only paid 25 gp each for the job (with the promise of 25 gp more if they managed to kill them). If one of the thugs is subdued and questioned, he reveals Mordigan's location. The con man and his accomplice are currently holed up in an old shack about a mile away from the village.

Mordigan is tall and charming, with dark hair, a thin mustache, and a winning smile. Tolaen is small, and her blond hair is cut very short. She bears a scar across one cheek. (However, she frequently uses *change self* to look like someone else—often a human or half-orc male.)

When the PCs come for Mordigan and Tolaen, it's likely that one of the two will be watching for them. In such a case, Tolaen casts *invisibility*, *mage armor*, and *expeditious retreat* on herself, in that order (if possible). Mordigan drinks his *potion of sneak*, and then they bolt.

In any event, neither of these opponents is interested in fighting the PCs or inflicting any real damage (and in fact, neither is very good at that). Their only interest is escape. This could lead to an interesting chase scene across the wilderness as these two try to get away, using every trick they can think of—Tolaen's spells would be very useful in this case. They flee toward the meteor crater, assuming no one will follow them that way. If cornered, they might fight for a bit, but eventually they surrender.

**Tolaen, female elf (high) Wiz4 (Ill):** CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d4; hp 13; Init +1; Speed 30 feet; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Attack +3 melee (1d3+1, unarmed strike); SV Fort +2 Ref +3 Will +4 AL NE; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 14, Wis 9, Cha 11  
**Skills and Feats:** Hide +3, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (local) +8, Move Silently +3, Spellcraft +8, Spot +3; Improved Unarmed Strike, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (Illusion)

**Possessions:** *Hand of the mage*, scroll of *mage armor* and *expeditious retreat*, *potion of blur*, *potion of levitate*, *cloak of resistance +1*, 100 gp ring, 250 gp ring, 124 gp

**Wizard Spells Prepared (5/5/4):** 0—*daze* (3), *flare*, *ghost sound*; 1st—*change self*, *color spray*, *silent image*, *shield*, *ventriloquism*; 2nd—*invisibility* (2), *minor image*, *mirror image*

**Mordigan, male human Rog4:** CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d6+4; hp 19; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (+3 Dex, +2 armor, +1 ring); Attack +6 melee (1d4-1 dagger), or +6 ranged (1d8, light crossbow); SV Fort +2, Ref +7, Will +3; AL NE; Str 8, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 16



**Skills and Feats:** Bluff +7, Decipher Script +6, Diplomacy +7, Escape Artist +10, Forgery +8, Hide +7, Intuit Direction +9, Knowledge +4, Listen +4, Move Silently +9, Perform +10, Search +8, Spot +4, Use Magic Device +6, Use Rope +8; Alertness, Quick Draw, Weapon Finesse (dagger)

**Possessions:** Masterwork leather armor, dagger, light cross-bow, 12 bolts, *ring of protection +1*, *potion of sneak*, *dust of tracelessness*, 390 gp

## TOWARD THE CRATER

If the PCs chase Mordigan and Tolaen, engineer a side encounter with some interesting meteor aspect that occurs on the way. The PCs might come across a mass of meteoric iron in the form of "shale balls." Or, the chase might awaken a molten elemental that is almost certainly too powerful for the PCs to deal with, even if Mordigan and Tolaen help. Perhaps then the pursuers will become the pursued as they flee from the otherplanar monster.

## CONCLUSIONS

Whether or not Mordigan and Tolaen get away, the belongings they have stolen from the refugees lie within the shack—heirlooms, jewelry, nice clothing, and so on. The total value of these goods is 1,400 gp, but it isn't very portable. Good-aligned PCs, however, will want to see this stuff returned to its rightful owners (Marva Talisman can help with this). If the PCs hand it over, she rewards them each with a royal stipend of 200 gp each.

Should the PCs decide not to return the lost goods, but at least offer evidence to Marva that the visions of coming calamity were false, she offers them a reward of 100 gp each.

If the PCs don't stop Mordigan's con, he continues it for at least another week, then he and Tolaen flee the scene for and remain gone for about six months.

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