

Character Bios

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CHARACTERS

Anders Bibelow

Introduction

This character was designed as part of a project for the Gotham Writers Workshop class in Game Writing. The assignment draws from an existing game, [The Merchants of Kaidan](#) with the goal of creating a new character, developing their backstory and motivations, and staying true to the nature of the gameplay (14th-century merchant simulator/RPG).

Bio

Full name: Anders Gail-Rees Bibelow **Title:** none

Gender: Male **Age:** 35 **Height:** 5'10" **Weight:** 175lb **Hair:** light brown

Physicality: solid in frame and modestly overweight; he is not athletic or overly concerned with his stature, he carries himself confidently in later life

Personal style: not overly ostentatious, practical but with a bit of a flare of finery beneath well-worn clothes; he is also taken to wearing or adorning himself with items of personal or historical meaning

Personality: Intelligent, gregarious, and inquisitive. A good listener with a keen and attentive ear. While he cherishes the solitude of the open road, he enjoys the companionship of friends and acquaintances alike. He can be driven and sometimes single-minded in pursuit of his goals, but never loses sight of the people he is trying to help. Legacy, both in the broader and personal sense, are of great importance to him.

Place of birth: Donnsford **lineage:** secretly descended from the clans of Prince Gerstoff

Family:

Grandfather:	Yustoff Bibelow
Father:	Horace Bibelow
Mother:	Ayda Bibelow
Older Brother:	Elias Bibelow
Younger Sister:	Elsa Bibelow

Friends:

Jonas Mairport (childhood friend)

Connections (society, educational, etc.):

(early years) Minor society connections through the lower noble houses; (later years) members of the merchants' guild, experts in antiquities, historians and notable members of local communities

Hindrances (physical appearance, prejudice, etc.):

- His family's status as a minor noble house is mostly in name only. Unbeknownst to anyone by Anders' father Horace, House Bibelow has fallen on hard times. The Registrar of Lords has threatened to de-charter their House if they can't weather the significant losses of the family trading business which has left them heavily indebted to the Crown. Horace has squandered much of Yustoff Bibelow's fortune in mostly-failed attempts to expand their House's renown. The manor house, the opulent lifestyle, all a glittering façade to hide the dark truths on which House Bibelow resided. Because of this scandal they are at best tolerated in broader social circles, with only the meagerest of connections at court. Closer to home in Donnford, many local families, both noble and common, remember the good name of the Bibelow house respect their legacy and accord them so measure of respect and recognition.
- Despite this, his position among the merchant guild has provided him with some additional access to resources and individuals that he would not have had access to from his societal position alone. However, these connections are often checked by individuals and/or groups whose beliefs run counter to those of Anders; there are many who despise him for his interest in the commonfolk and some who even see his interest in ancient lore as seditious. There many some who know or suspect his family's connection to Prince Gerstoff.

Occupation:

Merchant

Education:

Homeschooled (early age), Academy

Source of income:

Small family stipend (early years and while in attendance at the Academy), wages from minor position in his father's business (early-to-middle years), profits from his own business (middle-to-later years)

Personal beliefs:

He must help preserve cultural artifacts and ensure that the continuity of their history is maintained. He sees the real value of legacy and now has come to understand that his father was looking to do the same for their family in his own way.

Likes: A good story, the countryside, rediscovering something lost and forgotten. Meeting friends again after a long time away. A Moerrin stew made in a particular roadside tavern.

Dislikes: Dishonest and narrow-minded people, opulent displays of wealth, remaining in one place too long

Strengths: Being a good listener, focus and drive in pursuit of his goals, innate intelligence

Weaknesses: When his drive becomes too single-minded, he occasionally loses sight of his purpose and can find it difficult to know when to quit.

Flaws: A desire to be recognized as someone who understands and values the nature of people and places. This and his broad knowledge can sometimes be perceived as arrogance.

Favorite place?

- Bottom Hollow (in the countryside near Bibelow Manor) in the summertime
- Quad of the Li (Academy - sometimes referred to as the Oft Quad, as it was frequently forgotten) in the autumn

Safe place?

The remains of tower near his family manor. Overgrown and forgotten, the last bits of stonework were held together more by vines than mortar. Even from this low vantage point he could see most of the surrounding countryside.

Most cherished possession:

A hand-drawn map of the countryside around his childhood home, rendered on a scrap of old parchment

Fondest memory: The marriage of his childhood friend Jonas. Held at Bibelow manor, this was one of the last occasions where everyone in his family was together and truly happy.

Worst memory: The arrest of his father and the reclamation of the manor house. The last time he saw many of his family members.

What do they want? (motivations/goals)

- Use his knowledge and connections to help preserve the legacy of important cultural artifacts and ensure that the continuity of their history be maintained.
- Restore the family name and honor. Ensure that the legacy of his family can continue as well.

What's in their way? (obstacles)

- Dislike of house Bibelow among members of the Court
- Resistance to the so-called *Originalists*, those that seek to preserve the continuity of pre-dynastic history and culture
- Disdain for Anders' association with the commonfolk
- Profiteering – there is a well-established practice of grave robbing and trade in artifacts
- Access to resources – all of these endeavors require time and money; Anders has to work hard to fund his various efforts without compromising his ideals

Secrets? His family's connection to the old prince and the dissolution of House Bibelow.

Arc: Inquisitive and eager youth to arrogant dilettante to worldly and well-intentioned adult

Gameplay:

Reluctantly becomes a merchant and begins questing for historical and cultural artifacts to pursue a more lucrative trade in these items.

It starts as a thrill, but becomes a way of creating a legacy (for himself and others). He uses his wealth and connections to fund the recovery of these artifacts and make sure that they only wind up with people or institutions that valued them.

Backstory:

Anders grew up as the middle child in a low-ranking noble house far from the lofty towers of the capital. Slightly overweight and below average height as a child, he was mostly overlooked by his family, his father in particular. He was gregarious and good natured despite his isolation, and used his abundant free time to roam the hills and meet many of the locals that his family would never deign to interact with. He learned their stories and their culture, often times taking note of the wilder tales. While sympathetic with those he befriended over the years, he was not moved to improve their lot, still seeing the world through the lens of his upbringing.

Over the years, Anders would be given tokens of appreciation from the people that he befriended, many of which had little intrinsic value but had great significance in their culture. At first, they were mere curios to him, just simple things of which he didn't really appreciate the weight of their meaning. As time passed, he became to value them and saw more of what they meant to those that parted with the gifts he was given. Roaming the countryside, he would see many of the strange markings and symbols on old structures, and his idle curiosity turned to a deeper interest. He collected those strange, discarded artifacts that he found, but never dug deeper, not really wanting to delve into their origins. At parties of the local families, he told these tales to entertain and astound rather than enlighten.

Years at the Academy far away from home only softened these connections, and Anders became something of a dilettante, enamored more with the philosophy of history rather than its deep connection to the people of the land. While his father believed in the necessity of education, he also had to see to the practical aspect of maintaining his business and furthering the financial legacy of his family.

As the middle son he was not given a position of prominence in his father's trading company, but instead a well-funded role at the bottom. He would learn by doing, as his grandfather had done when he helped revive the Bibelow name and reestablish it in the Registers of the King. Anders understood his father's position, but still resented it. The idea of legacy became twisted in his mind, and the thought of continuity brought a bad taste to his mouth.

Still, Anders was a man of conviction and determined to make the best of the situation. His new position was more work than he had ever done in his privileged life so far, but the years of his youth spent wandering the countryside helped him adjust to life on the road. So too did his time at the Academy. He readily adapted what he had learned, becoming an efficient if not successful trader. Traveling farther afield, his path crossed many more ancient ruins and he slowly became aware of a trade in cultural artifacts. These were often sought by more wealthy patrons, and Anders began to gravitate towards pursuing these objects. What he had learned over the years made him an effective collector and trader, readily seeking out the most valuable pieces and easily distinguishing fakes from true relics.

This reawakened something in Anders, and he learned more of the stories and read the collected histories, knitting together a greater understanding of the local world that his family and the

generation of nobles before them had torn asunder. In the beginning, this appreciation presented itself more as arrogance than empathy, seeing himself as the only one who saw the true meaning of their shared cultural narrative. Over time, as his business grew and he met more of the people in the kingdom, he began to understand the true nature of his unique position; he must help preserve these artifacts and ensure that the continuity of their history be maintained. At that moment, he saw the real value of legacy, and how, in his own way, his father was trying to do the same for his family.

He would become a great merchant, using his wealth and connections to fund the recovery of these artifacts and make sure that they only wind up with people or institutions that valued them.

Gunj'r (the Clanless)

Introduction

The goal of this assignment was to start from existing concept art and work backwards to develop a character's backstory and motivations, solely based on their appearance.

Visual reference

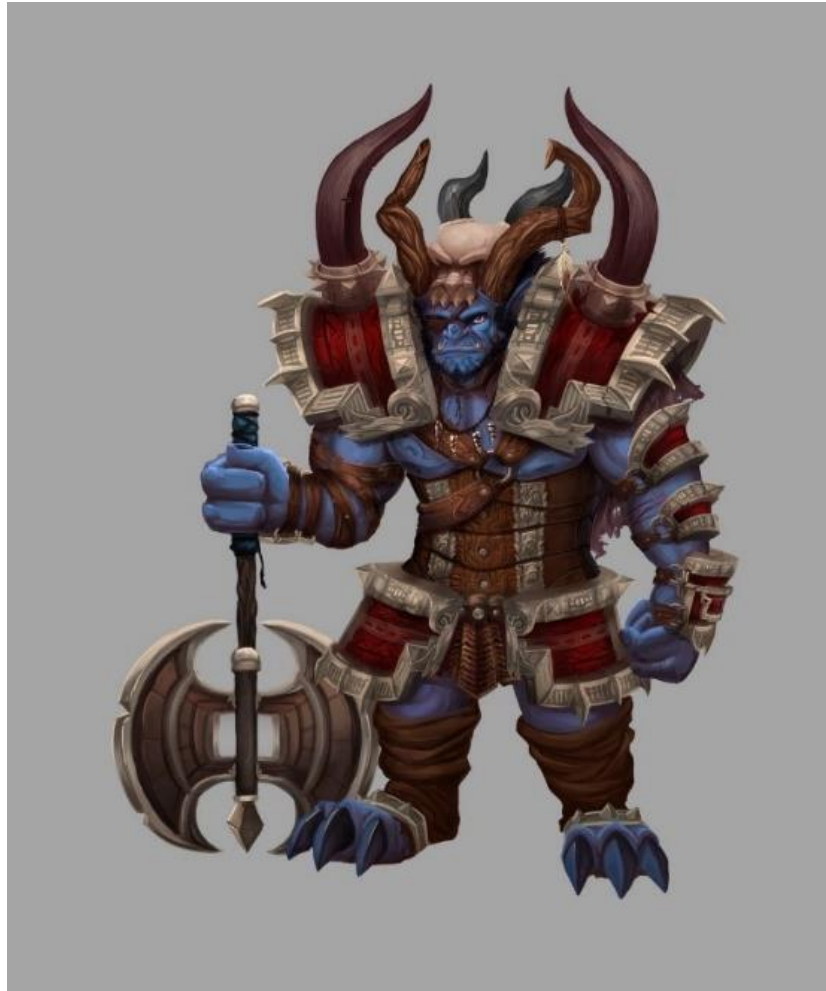


Figure 1 Gunj'r, formerly Gunj'r-en Blackmane, leader of Clan Blackmane, Tor of Danahar

Bio

Full name: Gunj'r-en Blackmane **Title: (former)** leader of Clan Blackmane, Tor of Danahar

Gender: Male **Age:** **Height:** 6'7" **Weight:** 250 lbs **Hair:** blue-black, streaks of white

Physicality: While shorter than other clans, he is strong for his size and possessed of remarkable endurance. Muscular and battle-scarred.

Personal style: Avoids any significant ornamentation other than the runes of his clan. He is rarely if ever seen without his signature armor, durable, practical, and designed for intimidation.

Personality: stoic, haunted, and driven by revenge

Place of birth: **lineage:** Get of Nahran, Clan Blackmane

Family:

Father: Threnj'r-en Blackmane

Mother: Suf-es Blackmane

Younger Brother: Nevj'r-en Blackmane

Friends: General B'hov-en DurnRout

Connections (society, educational, etc.):

- The Great Company (through General B'hov-en DurnRout)
- Remaining elders of Lyngdal, tribe of Men

Hindrances (physical appearance, prejudice, etc.):

- He has learned to compensate for the absence of his right eye, it still represents a potential weakness in battle.
- The Blackmane and other Clans of the Tor tend to be shorter and stockier than lowland Orks. There are those among other Clans feel that they are inadequate warriors as a result and so are considered inferior among their people. In truth, the greater endurance of the people Tor makes them effective fighters.
- Without a clan he is considered a pariah among other Orks. He is grudgingly given a measure of respect for his prowess in battle, but he is mostly shunned and is unable to hold any rank or title.

Occupation: occasional mercenary and soldier in the *Great Company*, an alliance between Orks and Men

Education: none other than the lore and traditions of his people

Source of income: mercenary bounties

Personal beliefs: honor, family, justice

Likes: Strong ale, skilled bards, solitude, directness

Dislikes: Dissemblers and those that speak too at great length, trolls in general, but a particular hatred for those that slaughtered his clan (Zelok (leader), personal guard: Thoolum, Aa-pesho, and Buhduun)

Strengths: Steadfastness, loyalty, honor

Weaknesses: Jaded and world-weary. General wariness of others causes him to keep to himself and avoid connection with others, sometimes denying him the aid that he might need

Flaws: An almost monomaniacal pursuit of every Troll that destroyed his village

Favorite place? Kaarshen Peak during a winter's sunrise. The ice caves there were considered a holy place to his people and he often would seek their solitude at this location in his youth. He hasn't returned there since the attack. However, he has considered returning there should he live to complete his mission.

Safe place? None – He had once considered the tors of his homeland the safest spot in the world, but with the ruin of his village he can find no rest or comfort anywhere.

Most cherished possession: Cloth armor crafted by his mother. He had done his best to remember her teachings and has repaired it many times over the years. He still wears it beneath his heavy outer armor.

Favorite possessions:

- The skull of Zelok, leader of the Trolls, after his death by Gunj'r's hand. He wears it now as part of his armor.
- Necklace containing a toot from Zelok and each of three personal guards.

Favorite weapon: great axe

Fondest memory: His naming day.

Worst memory: Learning of the attack on his village and returning to find it in ruin.

What do they want? (motivations/goals)

- Vengeance on the Trolls that slaughtered his people.
- Returning home and starting a Clan of his own.

What's in their way? (obstacles)

- Age. Trolls outlive Orks so it is possible that he may not be able to complete his goal.
- Events of the world. The war that has spread over the continent has often derailed his mission.
- Prejudice towards him by the other Clans.

Arc: Ascendant young leader to clanless pariah to triumphant warrior to father of a new Clan

Backstory:

Day. Bright and clear. A borderless view stretching endlessly to the horizon. The 'Old Man' would've hated it, Tommar grinned. There were too many shadows, too few places of concealment for the camouflaged fortifications he'd favored so much. This was no day to celebrate the death of the General. Still, he'd have laughed at the Universe spittin' in his eye this way.

Tommar grinned again, shaking his head at himself. General *B'hov-en DurnRout*, honored for his near-miraculous victory at the *City of Durn*, had been neither old nor a Man when Tommar had given his friend that title. The fact that the General tolerated the moniker from Tommar, the only human in the *Great Company*, was testament to the farseeing spirit that had allowed the alliance between Orks and The Clan of Men in the first place.

In truth though, the *Great War* that still engulfed them was nothing of the sort. Even Tommar, who had little time for schooling, had a memory long enough to know this. The current conflict was but

one of many, a long line stretching into the past as far the day's horizon. It was a war that had swept up generations of men, women, and children in its maw, and would continue to do so for the foreseeable future. Tommar himself was one, devoured whole as an orphaned child, found and adopted by the General's men those many years ago. That same thought brought his gaze to the hand resting on his axe, and Tommar didn't need to see his own reflection to count his years, the scars he saw there did it for him.

Though a trusted ally to B'hov during his life, Tommar was now only tolerated out of respect in the shadow of the General's great life. This was well enough for Tommar, who stood on the periphery of the proceedings, for there would have been no great speeches or fanfare in any case. "All that must be said should be said while life is lived." The dead could not hear the words.

And even while Tommar's own position faltered, the General's most enduring legacy would not lie in valor or victory, but with the many and disparate Clans of Ork within the ranks of the Great Company assembled here today. For at the heart of the alliance was a deceptively simple yet powerful idea: *that brotherhood could stand as a bulwark against the tides of war and history*. B'hov could not alter the flow of that mighty river, but he could help steer it, guiding into calmer shallows ahead. The Old Man had never spoken of what he'd envisioned for what followed, and it probably was of little consequence to him. He'd fought for the chance for something *different*, for like Tommar, B'hov had sure as hell tired of war.

At that moment, Tommar felt the wash of heat from the pyre before he saw it. He didn't look towards the center of the field at first, but spared another look around. There was someone he suspected would be there though he had not seen him until this moment. As collective gazes were all turned towards the flames, none would have given a glance outward to the rocky outcropping just beyond the tree line.

There on the precipice was Gunj'r. Companionless, but not alone, the General's former right hand rested against an axe that dwarfed any that Tommar could dare wield. Gunj'r was an inconstant member of the Great Company. Clan-less, he was pariah amongst his people, unable to hold rank or title. It was doubtless Gunj'r would have sought them in any case, for there was only one that he would have accepted but that name would never be spoken again. From what little Tommar could learn from B'hov, Gunj'r had been a prince of sorts, the next in line to lead *The Blackmane*, the once-great mountain Clan of *Danahar Tor*. But his people were killed to the last, save Gunj'r who had been sent by his father to seek dialogue with the Men of Lyngdal valley. Although distant, it didn't take long for Gunj'r to hear word of the slaughter. While news of their deaths stung quickly, his revenge would consume the years that followed.

Unable to join the other *Great Clans* in battle, Gunj'r became a mercenary, taking the fight to the Trolls that had killed all that he had ever known and loved. It was somewhere in there that the General had come across the younger Gunj'r, perhaps seeing in him the same spirit that would cast an oath at the heavens itself. B'hov could tell from Gunj'r's stature that he was most likely a *Tor-kenn*, one of the Northern Orks whose smaller size belied a sprit as dense and strong as the craggy peaks they inhabited. From there it wasn't long before the astute General had pieced together

Gunj'r story. And while he never pressed Gunj'r on his past, he accepted the new recruit without question, making it known that he valued the younger Ork's axe arm and counsel. This unique position afforded Gunj'r the perfect opportunity to wage his personal war against the backdrop of the greater one.

When Tommar had first met Gunj'r, the once-prince had long been on his path of retribution. Battle-scarred but still strong, Gunj'r wore an armor unadorned save for the runes of his people. The only medal he allowed himself was a simple necklace of four teeth.

As the months turned into years, the time between visits to the Great Company grew longer, less frequent. Tommar could see a new weariness in Gunj'r now single eye, although the Ork was careful to conceal it. B'hov confided in Tommar that the trail of *Zelok*, the leader of the Trolls that had killed his family, had grown cold. Although *Zelok* by this time was old, the lives of Trolls outstripped those of the Orks, and Gunj'r knew that his time to bring honor to his name was running out.

In the months that lead up the General's final campaign, Gunj'r seemed filled with a renewed purpose, the most animated Tommar had seen in years. It was also the first time that he had seen, or rather, overheard, the General and his old friend arguing. From what Tommar could gather, Gunj'r had located the last of *Zelok*'s personal guard and needed some manner of assistance from B'hov. Focused on the upcoming battle, the General's resources were drawn thin, as was his patience for dealing with distractions, even if it was his longtime counselor. When Gunj'r finally left the encampment, he was alone and unaided.

Yet Gunj'r did rejoin the Company about a month later. Although few words were spoken between Gunj'r and the General upon the former's return, Tommar did notice that the necklace of three teeth now held a new companion. But it was not long before Gunj'r would depart again, and for the final time. He would not be there on the eve of the great battle that would eventually claim the life of the General.

Tommar never knew until now what toll the news of his friend's death would have had on Gunj'r. He had imagined that Gunj'r would have cursed the same fates that took him from the side of the General during his final battle. But as Tommar looked up at Gunj'r at that moment, he noticed on his head the horned trophy of *Zelok*'s head, and he knew that the Ork was clanless no more. Although his head was bowed in honor of his fallen brother, Gunj'r stood in his triumph as defiant as ever, the only worthy tribute that he could offer to the General.