

# NPC Profile – Rudir

## General Background

The most active character in The Predatory Duchess is Rudir, a chaotic-good thief with a mystical and mysterious past. She can be either ally or adversary, depending on what path players choose to pursue. A powerful asset both in and out of combat, befriending her will open up future adventuring opportunities related to the Thieves' Kingdom.

## Appearance

Rudir is a young woman with dark skin and hair. Heavy scars mar the upper right part of her face, making her age difficult to determine. She dresses modestly in clothes typical of the local style, though she always wears trousers, never dresses. Within the realm of practical and unobtrusive dress, she does like some color when appropriate, especially greens or blues. She is sometimes seen wearing a gold medallion about the size of a sparrow's egg, set with jewels and inscribed with a mysterious sigil.

## History

At a young age, Rudir was left alone in a large city. Alone, but not unprepared – she was equipped with several starknives, a sturdy pack of beginner's lockpicks, and a pair of amulets... one real, one a clever forgery. She has no solid memory of her life before she was alone, when she presumably had parents - or at least someone who looked after her and taught her basic larceny.

Early in her career as a thief, she realized that the amulets she carried meant something to other thieves. Showing the correct one to a local guild-connected thief would earn her immediate recognition. If she was feeling ambitious, she could instead present herself by breaking in to the leader of the guild's office and waiting there to show him her amulet. If successful, she would have not just recognition, but the ability to make any request she liked.

In cities without thieves' guilds, she found that her amulet opened doors in the temples of Desna. She felt the call of her divine abilities while helping a group of urchins escape an orphan-catcher and find sanctuary in one of those sacred places. Her hereditary amulet and starknives both serve as holy symbols, and she sees her calling as part of her destiny.

While she is still not entirely certain of the nature of her heritage, her current theory is that her upbringing was some kind of a test. There may be multiple other princes and princesses out there, and what they do while wandering the world will determine how they are treated when they finally discover the true nature of the kingdom. As a result, she attempts to do as much impressive stealing as possible, while also building good relationships with local thieves' guilds. Despite these ambitious goals, she has a very strong sense of self-preservation.

## During the Adventure of the Predatory Duchess

In general, Rudir will keep pace with the level of the highest PC in the party. She should always have more rogue levels than cleric levels – a good rule of thumb is 2:1, though this is flexible. She is chaotic good, and worships the god of thieves, or some other Chaotic Good god appropriate to the setting. In games set in Golarion, she worships Desna.

## Allegiances

The local thieves' guild has fallen out of favor, with the new Duchess strongly opposed to their continued existence. Rudir is here to help restore them to political prominence, while also keeping her eye open for opportunities to plunder a century's worth of accumulated royal wealth. She seeks a

suitable new ruler, one who will be willing to re-establish the royal family's traditional understanding with the guild. Of the primary claimants, only Awoo is compatible with her goals, and she can be recruited if players follow that path. If the party supports Duke Oren or Duchess Eleana, she will become an adversary. If characters do not support any claimant, she may still follow the party if their goals are compatible, though she will quickly depart if they ally themselves with someone she disapproves of: Oren, Eleana, or any NPC who is evil or lawful neutral. She is nervous around lawful good characters; if the party is mostly lawful good it will be more difficult to get her to accompany them, though she may still occasionally provide aid.

### **Parallel Progress**

If the party spends a great deal of time investigating Oren or Eleana before looking for the true heir, or if they officially support either of those claimants before meeting Awoo, Rudir will make contact with Awoo before the party gets the chance. If they support a different claimant, she will attempt to keep Awoo safe and hidden.

## **Character Stats and Abilities**

Because Rudir specifically employs methods that do not cause permanent death, she has been constructed using PC rules rather than NPCs rules, making her more powerful and better equipped than the standard NPC. This version was constructed for a campaign using a high fantasy point allotment, but stats and equipment can always be adjusted to bring her more in line with a given party's power level.

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### **Rudir, Princess of Thieves**

Female human rogue 4/cleric 2

**NG** Medium humanoid (human)

**Init** +4; **Senses** Perception +11

#### **Defense**

**AC** 16, touch 16, flat-footed 11

**hp** 32 (6 HD, 4d8)

**Fort** +6, **Ref** +4, **Fort** +6

**Defensive Abilities** evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

#### **Offense**

**Speed** 30 ft

**Melee** +1 merciful starknife +10 (1d4+1d6+1 nonlethal or 1d4+1 lethal 18-20)

**Ranged** mwk starknife +9 (1d4/18-20)

**Special Attacks** sneak attack +2d6, channel positive energy 5/day (DC 13, 1d6)

**Domain Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 2<sup>nd</sup>, concentration +4)

**Spells Prepared** (CL 2<sup>nd</sup>; concentration +4)

1<sup>st</sup>-cure light wounds, sanctuary, command, true strike (D)

0 (at will)-stabilize, guidance, read magic, resistance

**Domains:** Luck, Liberty

#### **Statistics**

**Str** 10, **Dex** 18, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk:** +4, **CMB** +5, **CMD** +19

**Feats** Alertness, Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (starknife)

**Skills** Acrobatics +8, Appraise +6, Bluff +9, Climb +6, Craft: Jewelry +6, Diplomacy +11, Disable Device +11, Disguise +11, Escape Artist +8, Heal +9, Knowledge (Dungeoneering) +5, Perception +11, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +5, Stealth +13, Use Magic Device +6

**Languages** Common, Thieves' Cant

**SQ** aura, rogue talents (fast stealth, finesse rogue), thieves' court, trapfinding +2

**Combat Gear** amulet of cure moderate wounds (2 charges)

**Other Gear** masterwork starknives (2), ring of protection +1, blackjack, masterwork thieves' tools, artisan's tools, silk rope (50ft), backpack, chalk, beggar's rags, artisan's outfit, 200gp

**Special Items** (see below) +1 merciful starknife (Wanderer's Butterfly), Quaint Clay Bracelet, Thieves' Court Amulet

### **Special Abilities**

**Thieves' Court (Ex)** The Thieves' Kingdom has its own language of signs and gestures, as well as a written language of symbols. A rogue who is a member of a thieves' guild or related to the Thieves Kingdom receives "Thieves' Cant" as a bonus language. This can be taught and learned like any other language.

### **Special Items**

**Wanderer's Butterfly** – A +1 merciful starknife made in the shape of a butterfly and engraved with Thieves' Cant symbols (the merciful attribute allows the wielder to choose to deal non-lethal damage for a bonus of +1d6 to damage rolls). It also serves as a holy symbol for Desna. Note: Rudir does not often throw this weapon, instead using it as a melee weapon and throwing her non-magical starknives.

**Quaint Clay Bracelet (Tinker's stash)** – A bracelet of rough beads made from fired clay or tin. Concealed inside some of the clay and tin beads are tiny precious stones. The beads must be broken or melted to retrieve the stones inside. Conceals 6 stones of different types, representing 1500gp total value.

**Thieves' Court Amulet (pair)** – Two nearly identical necklaces, covered in symbols, pictograms, and small gems. One is real and one is fake. The real one grants the bearer certain privileges, serves as a holy symbol for Desna, and is worth 350gp in materials alone. The fake is practically worthless, and if presented to a guilded thief informs them to mislead and otherwise thwart the bearer.

### **Tactics**

#### **Outside of Combat**

Rudir is relatively friendly to those who pose no immediate threat, and will usually try to talk before engaging in a fight. If a goal can be achieved through trickery or theft she will almost universally prefer that to combat.

#### **In Combat**

Stealth and personal survival are her highest priorities. Rudir always prefers to hide in shadows and will be very careful not to attract attention. If there is a secondary non-combat objective (such as stealing an object or freeing a prisoner) she will default to making that her primary goal during the encounter. If she can be fairly confident a shot will finish off or disable a particular enemy, she will do so (especially if that NPC comes soon in the turn order). If a player character is very low on health or needs stabilization, that will become her first priority, as long as attempting to help would not put her in extreme danger.

Rudir will attempt to be non-lethal when fighting enemies who are within one alignment step of herself. She may even help them survive or escape if she does not think doing so will potentially harm Awoo or herself. If an encounter does not seem like it poses a high risk of death for anyone Rudir is allied with, and there is any object of material wealth that can be stolen in the chaos, she will make an attempt – though she is very measured when considering risk versus reward.

## **Rudir as an Ally**

### **Outside of Combat**

Rudir is a skilled street-level diplomat, though she is hesitant to employ her skills in formal situations. She will assist players in spreading rumors or gossip, getting normal people or criminals on the party's side, and talking enemies out of initiating combat. She will attempt to prevent players from killing people within one alignment step of herself whenever possible, and may even thwart their attempts to ambush or undermine people of those alignments. While she is generally very supportive of thieves and hates the idea of imprisonment, she may make an exception for any thief of evil alignment. If the party needs to meet with someone of lawful alignment in a formal setting she will usually either refuse to accompany them or make an attempt at some form of theft, if a plausible opportunity presents itself.

One of her techniques for spreading goodwill is to give away substantial portions of her spoils to the poor, especially orphans, thieves, performers, and travelers. She also has a tendency to offer poor merchants uncommonly good deals on non-portable goods – she would happily trade 1,000gp worth of silk for a small gem worth 300gp, if the merchant making the trade was needy or deserving. After any such trade, make a diplomacy check for Rudir with a DC of 10, and on success all merchants in a given town will improve their attitudes towards her.

### **In Combat**

Rudir will assist allied players in battle, but she has her own methods. She will usually not respond to player commands unless they align closely with what she would naturally do: a command to draw the leader's attention would likely be ignored, while a command to heal a particular ally who can be reached easily would likely be obeyed.

In the event that a PC performs some action of special significance to Rudir, her combat behavior will change slightly from then on. She will be more likely to focus fire on targets menacing that character, and will ignore personal risk if they badly need healing or stabilization. A near-death experience may be a good reason to have her take a level of Cleric the next time she levels.

### **Rudir and Awoo**

If players support or recruit Awoo, Rudir will quickly form a friendship with her, generally prioritizing her safety. If Rudir attempts to flee a losing battle, she will take Awoo with her, though players who make a serious effort to earn Awoo's trust may be able to countermand these attempts with a diplomacy check. If Rudir meets Awoo before the party does, or if she is present when players discover Awoo, it will be very difficult to get her to stop accompanying the party. If Rudir suspects the party is attempting something that is unnecessarily risky to Awoo's well-being or that they are plotting a betrayal, they will attempt to disappear together.

Rudir will also advocate for strong support of the local thieves' guild, and will insist that she can ensure the guild's leadership will be chaotic good. Any player character who attempts to dissuade Awoo from supporting the guild will find it challenging and may potentially earn Rudir's ire - though if the rest of the party is still generally looking out for Awoo's well-being, Rudir will mostly retaliate through pranks and minor thefts.

### **As the Erstwhile Heir**

Her behavior changes slightly if players choose to support Rudir as heir. She'll wear her hair down to conceal the scarred portion of her face, begin to wear richer clothes, and will be more likely to agree to formal meetings with lawful good and even lawful neutral characters. She will focus less on thievery

when there is any chance that being discovered would hurt her reputation, and her philanthropic actions will become more blatant, public, and widespread. She will craft a small sigil that bears the crest of the royal family, and allow it to be accidentally revealed during key moments. However, she will never actually formally claim to have proof that she is the true blood heir, instead emphasizing her mysterious and unknown childhood.

## **Rudir as an Adversary**

Rudir becomes an adversary if players support Oren or Eleana. If the party begins to support one of them but later changes their mind, they may still be able to recruit her if they have not killed any of her NPC allies.

When players first meet Rudir as an adversary she will usually attempt diplomacy, especially if more than half the party has neutral or good alignment. During this meeting she will not initiate combat unless players have attempted to kill her or one of her NPC allies in the past. If players attack first, she will attempt diplomacy even during the first round of combat. If that doesn't work, she is likely to flee and return for an ambush later. Once players have established a combat-based relationship with Rudir, they must be very careful at night: setting watches and guards even when in town at Inns.

Adversary Levels track an enemy NPC's current feelings towards the party, and provide guidelines for their behavior as the conflict becomes more heated. Once players have killed one of Rudir's NPC allies it is no longer possible for them to reduce their adversary level, even if they no longer support the claimant who sparked the conflict.

**Adversary Level 1:** Players goals conflict with Rudir's but they have not attempted to hurt her or any of her NPC allies.

Rudir will attempt to thwart plans, but will do so through subterfuge and lies rather than violence whenever possible. If she meets the PCs face-to-face, she will attempt to win them to her side. She will not initiate combat unless an ally is in danger.

If Rudir defeats the party: she will steal money and any small magical items, and leave a note telling the party to arrange a meeting if they want them back. She will attempt to stabilize anyone who is unconscious and will leave them outside a good-aligned church.

**Adversary Level 2:** Players have engaged in combat with Rudir, but did not do a lot of damage or were not clearly aiming to quickly kill her. They have not attacked her allies.

Rudir will attempt to track the players and steal from them whenever possible, especially if horses are left unguarded, widows unlocked, or a watch is not set. If her thievery is successful, she will leave behind taunting notes. At this point, diplomacy is still very possible, and players who choose not to support the Exiled Duke or the Golden Duchess can still convince her to join their side.

If Rudir defeats the party: she will steal all of the party's possessions, including mounts and clothing (leaving enough for basic modesty). She will still attempt to stabilize anyone who is dying, and will leave them somewhere it is likely they will receive help.

Rudir's level equals the highest party member level +1.

She has cohorts equal to the number of players in the party -2.

**Adversary Level 3:** Players have attempted to kill one of Rudir's allied NPCs, or have reduced her below 2/3 hitpoints in a previous combat encounter

Rudir is extremely wary of the players, and is actively working against them. She will work with the local thieves' guild to target them, placing substantial bounties on anyone who manages to rob, capture, or kill them. Bounties will prefer those who manage to rob the party or take them alive. Diplomacy is very challenging.

If Rudir defeats the party: she may still attempt to stabilize anyone who is wounded, but will not be as scrupulous as she has been in the past (especially towards any characters of evil or lawful neutral alignment). The party will wake up captive in a mysterious dungeon of Twisted Corridors, and Rudir will attempt to dissuade them from their current path. If they can't be dissuaded or she is unconvinced of their sincerity, she will have them transported by sea to a distant land and dumped there unceremoniously with no weapons, equipment, or money.

Rudir's level equals the highest party member level +2

She has cohorts equal to the number of players in the party -1

**Adversary Level 4:** Players have killed one of Rudir's allies, or reduced her below half hitpoints in a previous encounter.

She will potentially spare the lives of any characters in the party who are within one alignment step (chaotic good, neutral good, or chaotic neutral), or anyone who has advocated against harming her or her allies during past encounters. Everyone else will be killed. If she has not previously attempted to interrogate/convince players in the Twisted Corridors, she will do so. Once again, any survivors who are unwilling to change sides and cannot convince her they intend to change sides will be transported to distant lands. Diplomacy is extremely difficult, impossible if the party has deliberately killed one of Rudir's allies.

Rudir's level equals the highest party member level +3

She has cohorts equal to the number of players in the party

**Adversary Level 5:** Players who were previously transported to distant lands return to cause trouble.

At this point, Rudir is tired of your nonsense. She feels she has been more than fair, and will simply try to kill the PCs every chance she gets.

Rudir's level equals the highest party member level +3

She has cohorts equal to the number of players in the party +1

### **Rudir's accomplices**

Once Rudir's Adversary level has advanced to 2, she will be accompanied by accomplice cohorts whenever the players meet her.

These NPCs will be two levels lower than Rudir. Cohorts default to focusing her target or engaging with whoever is attacking them. They will attempt to flee when reduced below half health or if the encounter is going poorly. Killing one of her cohorts will advance her to adversary level 4. If a cohort is killed, it will take her time to replace them.

Replacement days:  $1d12 - 2Y + 3X$

Where Y is Rudir's Adversary Level and X is the total number of her Cohorts you have killed.

At Adversary Levels 2-4, her accomplices will be primarily rogues, with some multi-classed NPCs or clerics as a possibility. If you wish to randomize them, use this table:

Rudir's Accomplices – Roll a D6 to recruit a new accomplice

- 1-3 Rogue
- 4 Rogue with one level of cleric
- 5 Rogue with one level of wizard
- 6 Cleric: Desna

At Adversary Level 5, Rudir likely has more resources. While there should always be at least one rogue and one cleric in her party, the rest can be any class.

## **A Princess of Thieves**

Rudir's mysterious connections give her a high level of influence over local thieves.

### **The Thieves' Kingdom**

Players should be able to learn no more about the Thieves' Kingdom than Rudir knows.

The Thieves' Kingdom describes the upper echelons of a secret group that monitors and manages the discipline worldwide. There are few formal rules and meetings usually occur by chance, when key members happen to meet in a place of conflict. Three major families make up the kingdom's royalty (though the term "family" should not be taken literally), each representing one of the chaotic alignments: chaotic good, chaotic neutral, and chaotic evil.

There is some concealed conflict between the good and evil factions. Deliberately bringing lawfully-aligned forces into the conflict is seen as disgraceful, and no thief will ever provide evidence that would result in another thief falling prey to the law. Beyond that there aren't really rules, as befits a chaos-based organization.

Physical strongholds for the Kingdom do exist, some functioning as training centers, others as treasure hoards, still others as safe houses or sanctuaries. Whether any of these are substantial enough to constitute a true kingdom is a matter best left to future adventures.

### **The Thieves' Guild**

The majority of thieves' guilds tend towards sharing the alignment of whichever royal family is more powerful at a given time. The Thieves' Guild of Herrost is on the fence between chaotic good and chaotic neutral when Rudir arrives, and will become controlled by the chaotic good faction if Rudir works with them.

The party's relationship with Rudir will have long-term effects on how they interact with various thieves' guilds they encounter during future adventures. Befriending her will cause thieves' guilds to be friendly or helpful to players in the future, while earning her enmity will cause them to be unfriendly or even hostile. This effect initially decreases the further they get from Herrost, but its reach will increase over time.

If Rudir is killed by the players, they will become marked and all guild-affiliated thieves will be hostile to them, often specifically targeting them for theft or death. Clerics of Desna will also be unfriendly, unless players have made significant attempts to atone.