

Blackstaff Tower Intro

As you enter onto the Street of Bells, at first it appears like the other main thoroughfares that run through Castle and Sea ward. It is clean, busy, and wealthy. The cobblestone street is over 100' wide, with several lanes of carriages going to and fro. The sides are lined with raised curbs to allow the pedestrian traffic to avoid the horses and wagons. The buildings are mostly gray and tan fieldstone but they are expertly mortared and finished smooth. They are two and three stories tall with red, blue, and green peaked roofs.

As you continue down the boulevard, you become aware of its distinctive charm. A pleasant melody of bells, chimes, and whistles seem to come from the very air itself, like a thousand invisible birds all singing their distinctive songs. The whole experience breathes peace.

Further down the street, you see your destination. The Tower of the Order of Magists and Protectors. The Tower is actually several towers that rise above the rooftops, connected by ramparts and walls, looking more like a small fortress. From a distance the walls appear like a shimmering blue metal, but it is actually a highly polish blue stone of unknown origin. Surrounding the entire structure is a gossamer fence of sparkling green magic. **[PAUSE FOR PLAYERS]**

As you approach the main gate, a section of the fence dissolves to allow entry.

However, before you can enter, you have to get past the crazy beggar, pacing back and forth in front of the entrance. He looks like a dirty, disheveled hermit with long greasy gray hair and a beard down to his waist. He is wearing robes which are now tattered rags but were once quite exquisite. James, you recognize them as that of a high ranking priest of Oghma. He is holding a wooden sign that reads "The End is Nigh". He appears to be in a trance, repeating the same mantra over and over:

Prophecy of the great Aluondo 951DR

What once was one is sundered in two
When midnight falls, two become one
Where the land is bathed in fire blue
Who is safe til the fourth age is done

A fifth will start at portends four
A moon of blood, a mire of night
A serpent of gold will storm the shore
A hand of silver will die in fright

The Lords of Splendor will fall
The Ageless One will rise
Deep water will drift
And chaos will fill the void

Heroes of old will be born and
Heroes of new will be returned
Heroes of true will be torn and
Heroes of time will be unlearned

[PAUSE FOR PLAYERS] He will not speak to the players. He only repeats the prophecy.

Making your way past the crazy hermit, when you enter the main structure, you are in a huge vaulted foyer. With its naves and cloisters, the place looks more like a church, a church of magic. The floor is a giant mosaic in the symbol of Mystra, inlaid with golden runes. Small globes of light float throughout, illuminating the cavernous room. Dozens of wizards are scurrying about with books and scrolls and tomes, moving in and out the dozen or so doors that encompass the room. As each

person hurries through the room they all stare at and whisper about one man calmly sitting on one of the benches that line the wall. You can overhear bits of whispers, “What’s the Blackstaff doing here?” “Maybe he’s looking for new students.” “I hope he’s here to kill Ten-Rings, that pompous git.” “Are you mad?! Don’t say that. Him and his creepy son have ears everywhere.”

The man they called Blackstaff is clearly one who does not usually wait for anyone. He exudes magical power. Although he is clearly an elderly man, he is the exact opposite of a frail old wizard. He is tall and robust with long jet black hair. He has sharp green eyes, and he is oddly without any beard, which allows you to see clearly the three parallel scars that run down the right side of his face. He has robes of luxurious purple and wears a large ruby and gold pendant. In his right hand he holds a long black metal staff topped by a crystal that slowly changes colors. With his free hand he is conjuring items one after the other, which appear and are then replaced by the next object, first a dog, then an arrow, then a noose, a gold ring, an egg, a rat...

Standing beside him is a woman who is clearly less patient. She is a young and attractive woman with smooth dark skin and almond eyes. She has medium cropped curly black hair and she is dressed more like a squire than a wizard, although she carries a long wooden staff streaked with silver with an ornate top stylized like a wolf with green eyes. She has a bothered look about her, and she constantly moving her hands impatiently, strumming them, tapping them, twiddling her thumbs. Occasionally the older wizard will reach out a hand to calm her, but it only lasts a moment before she continues. **[PAUSE FOR PLAYERS]**

As the players approach, two self-important men stride up to the waiting wizard. Both look perpetually annoyed. The older one is clearly in charge as the junior one walks behind him. The older one looks like a dandy, as if he were trying to be a noble and a wizard at the same time; overly gilded olive-green robes, frilly white sleeves and collars, with a golden scimitar by his side. He also wears 10 ornate rings, one on each finger. He has thin, slicked back salt and pepper hair. He has a very prominent unibrow and a razor thin mustache and goatee that barely hide the permanent sneer on his ferret-like face.

The other one is a younger version of the first. Same ferret face, same sneer, same ugly unibrow, except that the hair is brown and tied back in an obnoxious bun. He is dressed all in black with gilded edges. He does not appear to have any weapons on him.

Immediately, the older wizard begins barking at the Blackstaff. “You’ve got some gall coming here! When I require your presence, I will summon you!”

Calmly, Blackstaff replies, “I’ve come to try and settle our differences, Khondar, before it’s too late. Perhaps we should continue this conversation in your offices?”

“You’d like that, wouldn’t you? Get me alone so no one can hear your lies? You have no authority here! I am not one of your puppets, like the Masked Lords. Ragault will hear of this inde....” Suddenly, Khondar realizes that you are nearby, listening. He turns on you, “Who in Hades are you. Are you a member of the Order? Because I guarantee you won’t be. Can’t you see that your superiors are talking?”

Blackstaff interrupts, “I’m sorry, Ten-Rings, I believe he’s here for me. You’ll have to excuse my friend. What he lacks in social graces, he makes up for in eyebrows.”

“You insolent dog! You’ll pay for that,” the younger mage yells, as he begins to draw something invisible from his belt, with his left hand.

Khondar turns on his son, “Not here, Centiv, you fool! That’s just the show he wants.” He turns back to Blackstaff. “We’re done here. You *will* get what coming to you, Dhanzscul, but on my terms, not yours.” As Khondar and his son, Centiv, storm out of the foyer, Khondar barks at some hapless mage, “And get that crazy hermit out of here,” pointing outside. “I don’t care if you banish him to Avernus, get him off my lawn!”

The black woman beside the Blackstaff speaks, “Well, that was unproductive, Samark.”

“On the contrary, Vajra, that has proved a great many things.” Then he turns to face you. “Well met. I am Samark Dhanzscul, but most people call me Blackstaff. This is Vajra Safahr, my –er-student. How can we help you?” **[PAUSE FOR PLAYERS]**