

## Iron Crown Recent History

Iron Crown is in decline. Several decades ago, the Yan Ki nobles were beset by their ancient nemesis, The Old Ones. The Old Ones were ancient beings that not only threatened Iron Crown, but existence itself. The Yan Ki were already on a strange trajectory, having compromised their principles and their bodies while living eons on the Astral Plane. They developed psychic powers, their skin grew yellow and pale, and their bodies became gradually twisted. These were the positive changes. Their morality suffered as well, and rather than fight a glorious, but hopeless battle against The Old Ones, as their ancient Celtic culture would have demanded, they instead did the unthinkable. The Yan Ki allied with a powerful devil, an ally that could stop The Old Ones. The devil queen Vlaakith became the patron of the Yan Ki and they vowed to follow her, even as far as to refer to themselves as “one of kith,” or simply, Kith-yan-ki (githyanki).

Vlaakith, of course, wanted something in return – access to the vaults. The ancient vaults of Iron Crown possess all the most wretched, evil and powerful artifacts in the multiverse. They’ve been exiled here for safe keeping and protection from the likes of Vlaakith and her armies of fiends. At first, Vlaakith demanded the liberation of many of the artifacts, but after a series of terrible calamities, she instead keeps it as her private treasure vault, occasionally even sending adventurers into the vault to retrieve an item on her behalf. It seems it is easy to intern an item into the vault, but getting it back out was never intended.

The nobility has found servitude not exactly to their liking. They have sulked away to their estates, like the rest of the subjugated city state under its new, diabolical rule. Iron Crown remains but a specter of its former glory, its ancient and eclectic architecture crumbling and unseen menaces that haunts its shadows.



## Campaign Traits

Campaign traits are tailored to particular campaign, and give your character a built-in reason to begin the first adventure in a new campaign. Some campaign traits also grant teamwork benefits if you choose to begin a campaign with your character having a preexisting relationship with another PC.

Campaign traits assume a lot more about your character’s backstory than other traits do, and those assumptions are mostly about very recent events in your history rather than formative childhood events. You have a certain amount of leeway in adjusting or changing a campaign trait’s expected backstory once you’ve selected which trait is right for you, but get your GM’s approval before you run with a modified backstory.

All of the following traits revolve around elements that are important to the campaign. You can look at these traits to get a general, spoiler-free idea about the types of foes and problems your character might face at some point during the campaign—this is by design. Knowing that there are going to be elements such as thieves, shadow monsters, devils, and the like should help you build a character that

fits more organically in the campaign you're about to join. The following traits are geared toward your character teaming up with a ragtag group of adventurers, mercenaries, freed slaves, guards, and rapskillions.

**Child of Infamy:** Your family has long been in show business. Perhaps it was your parents, or an older sibling, or an uncle or aunt—whatever the case, one of your close relatives is, or was, a well-known and well-loved actor or actress. That this relation died in some compromising and embarrassing way has done little to alter your family's name and fame—if anything, the unfortunate death has increased it. When folk learn your last name, they are quick to assume you live a wild life like your ill-fated relative, and whether you bask in this notoriety or do your best to hide your heritage, the years of association with the acting scene have had their effect. You've certainly inherited your relative's talents, and are a larger-than-life figure, a melodramatic attention-hound, or a sly manipulator of emotions. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Perform (act) skill checks, and the skill is always considered a class skill for you. Furthermore, you've inherited some of your relative's funds, and begin play with a nest egg of 300 gp that you can spend however you wish.

**Conspiracy Hunter:** You've long heard rumors of dark deeds afoot in Iron Crown. Shipments of valuable cargo that go missing with nary a trace or question asked. People who disappear as though they never existed. Lords of business and nobles who speak in veiled references and accidental slips of masters even they must obey. What lords rule the Iron Crown underworld? Do the tales of far-reaching criminal organizations hold a hint of truth? Could the fabled **Balthazar crime family**, said to have been purged from the city ages ago, have somehow survived or reformed? And what hold do they hold over the city today? You don't know, but you're determined to find out! Choose one of the following skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Knowledge (local), Perception, Sense Motive, or Stealth. You gain a +1 trait bonus on this skill and it is always considered a class skill for you.

**Diabolist Raised:** All your life you've lived within the grip of devil-possessed Iron Crown. You care little for the religion of your country, but that is the way of life in the most magnificent empire in the world, and who are you to question the faith of the empire's rulers? Certainly not a fool like some of your more idealistic acquaintances possessed of bizarre ideals about personal freedoms and egalitarian rulership—who can say whatever happened to them? You know of Hell and the rigidity of its grim rulers, you've seen devils and how they might be employed to the betterment of those with the might to control them, and you know of the dark faith of your country. You might not be a devil worshiper yourself, but there are realities to living in Iron Crown, and it's always good to know what's really going on behind the scenes. Your knowledge of diabolism grants you a +1 bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Sense Motive checks made against Iron Crown's nobility, and a +1 bonus on all saving throws made against mind affecting attacks from devils.

**Infernal Bastard:** You are a tiefling. You might be an escaped slave, a hidden shame, or a homeless vagabond, but whatever your upbringing, life has been particularly hard on you. You have suffered greatly, nearly starving to death, nearly being beaten to death by racist sailors, and so on. Whether or not these experiences have made you a bitter and cynical scoundrel or a pious and hopeful optimist is up to you, but one thing is certain—you are something less than even your tiefling kin. Perhaps it is a result of your hard life, or perhaps it is due to some fault in your fiendish heritage, but you lack a tiefling's standard resistances to cold, electricity, and fire—instead, you merely have a +2 bonus on all saving throws made against these effects. Likewise, you do not have the ability to use darkness as a spell-like ability once per day—instead, you may choose any one 0-level spell that you can instead use at will as a spell-like ability.

**Shadow Child:** Since Iron Crown's pact with diabolic powers, it has long suffered under a peculiar curse, with fell beasts that hunt the shadows. No one can say from whence these night-horrors come—though some blame the mysterious wizards of Tempest, other claim that it's some curse laid by the god Erias, while still others suggest some shadowy mastermind manipulates an ebony brood from the depths of Iron Crown's underground ruins or from within the evil infused vaults. Whatever the case, the people of Iron Crown have long feared the shadows, but not you. Your goal is to reclaim the darkness from the beasts that hide within. You've acclimated yourself to the dark, and thus act with greater precision in the shadow than most. When attacking targets in areas of dim light, you do not suffer the standard 20% miss chance on attack rolls for being in the poorly lit area.

**The Delver's Exile:** Iron Crown's dilapidated Delver's Guild in the Freeman's Ward has long excited your imagination. Forcibly closed by the order of the city's diabolical rulers, the Delvers of Iron Crown were exiled, forcing them to leave behind untold knowledge in their extensive library and the treasures of countless expeditions. Today, the guild lies under the pale of fearful rumors and dark magic, and bureaucratic red tape has prevented trespass on the guild's well-protected grounds. Having secretly and illegally contacted agents of the Delvers, you've expressed your interest in aiding their ventures in Iron Crown—with a particular eye toward investigating the guildhouse, the source of your long-standing adventuresome interests. To your surprise, some days ago you received a message back from an unnamed guild member operating underground in the city-state. Along with encouraging you to investigate the guild house and report your findings, he's sent along a battered and tarnished, yet still functional *wayfinder*. You've promised yourself to pay back your unknown contact the 500 gp cost of the item someday, but until then, it's yours to use. A *wayfinder* is a magical compass that grants you a +2 circumstance bonus on Survival checks to avoid becoming lost, and can be commanded to emit *light* as the spell (CL 5th) as a standard action.

**Iron Crown Firebrand:** There's something very wrong with the world. Spouses were not meant to huddle at their windows hoping and fearing day after day that their loved ones returned from work safely. Parents were not meant to hush their children when questioned about what happened to their neighbors. Citizens were not meant to avert their eyes and hurry by as guardsmen beat old friends in the street. The people of Iron Crown have suffered long enough! It's time for a change. But how? You've heard rumors of bands of free-thinking individuals meeting after the citywide curfew. Perhaps they might share your ideals? You are quick to react to opportunity, both physically and mentally, and know that it is with sudden and swift action that many conflicts are best resolved. You gain a +1 trait bonus on Initiative checks, and if you act in a surprise round, you gain a +1 trait bonus on all attack rolls.