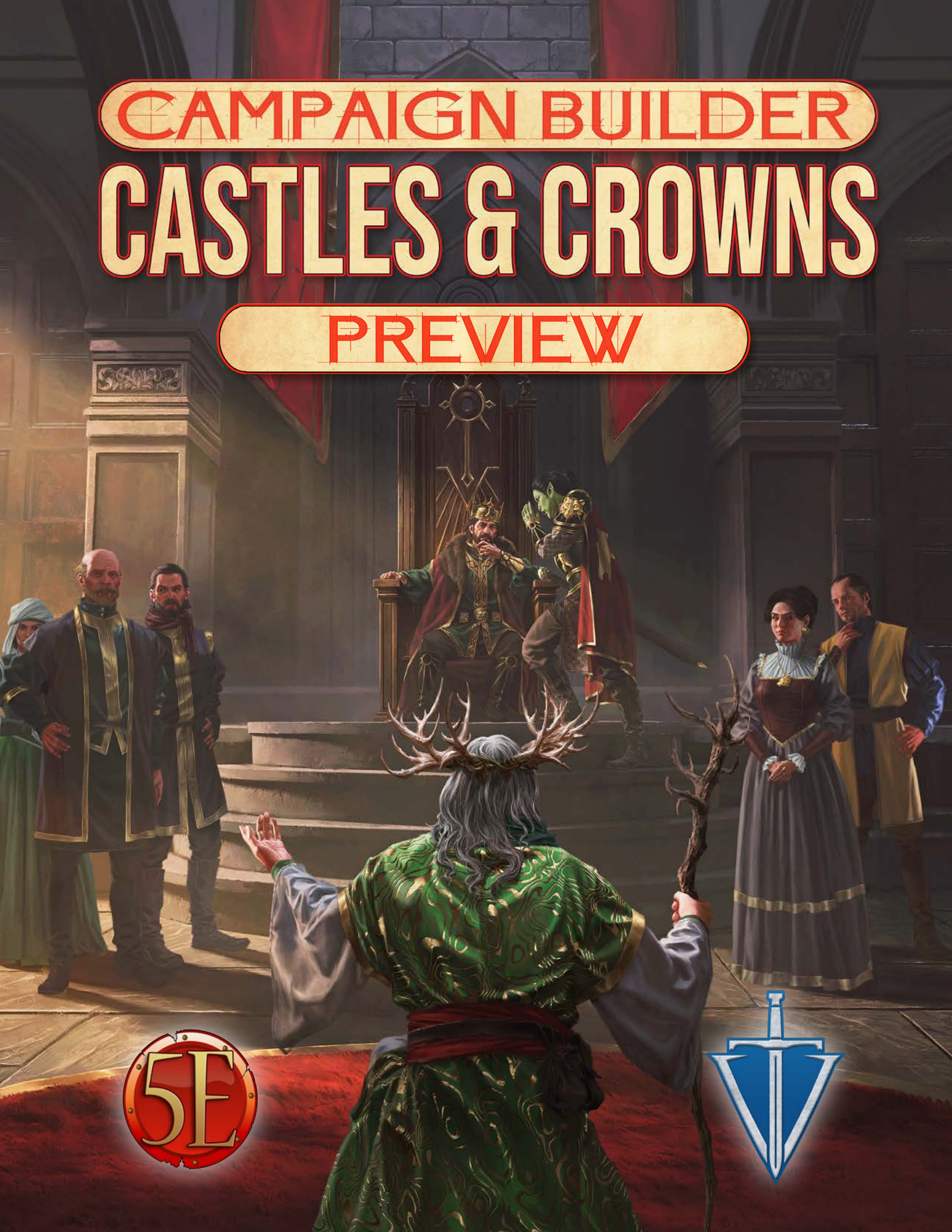


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LONG MAY YOU REIGN...

Campaign Builder: Castles & Crowns is the latest installment in Kobold Press's **Campaign Builder** series, which takes your campaigns to new heights with practical homebrew guidance, new character options, and ready-made elements to set your games apart from the rest—all fully compatible with *Tales of the Valiant* RPG and 5th Edition.

This book provides a complete toolkit to create, expand, and enhance the kingdoms in your game, whether you are running an established setting or working with your own homebrew setting. From regents to royals, from intrigue to diplomacy, *Campaign Builder: Castles & Crowns* strengthens and expands your game world immediately.

RESPLENDENT ROYALTY

In this preview, you will find a snippet about the crowns of legend, potent magic items that can shape the course of a courtly campaign, and part of the “build your own kingdom” section—breaking down the steps for creating interesting rulers for your lands.



CROWNS OF LEGEND

This section shows one of the fabled magic items found in *Campaign Builder: Castles & Crowns*. These items grow in power alongside the characters who wield them. The rules are summarized here along with a sample item.

PROPERTIES AND ATTUNEMENT

A fabled magic item begins as a common magic item. It has a small but useful property that it grants to any character who possesses it. This minor property *does not* require attunement to use.

To access the higher-level properties though, a PC must attune to the fabled item using the standard attunement rules (see **Attunement** in this chapter). Once attuned, the PC can use the fabled item's more powerful properties as they increase in level. If a PC higher than 1st level attunes to a fabled item, its level-dependent properties, up to the character's current level, are immediately available.

At the GM's discretion, an item's more powerful properties might become available only after the character completes a particular quest or event related to the item's story rather than immediately upon reaching each property's required level.

If a PC chooses not to attune to a fabled item, it remains a common magic item, granting only its minor property, regardless of the character's level.

Unless otherwise noted, properties granted by a fabled item are in effect as long as the character is wearing, carrying, or touching the item.

CROWN OF GRIFFONS

Wondrous Item, Fabled (5th-Level and Higher Properties Require Attunement) *Price Varies*

One of two crowns forged personally by legendary smith Kelgror, the *Crown of Griffons* was an undesired gift. At the end of the Nine Kingdoms War, the various involved rulers found an unsteady peace when relics of power were commissioned for each of them.

The *Crown of Griffons* however was not crafted for one of noble birth, but rather for a griffon-riding ranger named Bronwyn, who earned the peoples' love. The free people elected Bronwyn as their lord and paid a king's ransom to have the crown crafted with the likeness of his noble steed, a golden griffon.

Sadly, the ranger never wanted his appointed station and grew restless during his brief time at court, and



he would eventually abdicate the throne, following a particularly tragic loss. This act signaled the end of the brokered peace among the nine kingdoms and the beginning of the Lost Crowns Age.

While wearing this crown, you always know the direction of true north. Additionally, you have advantage on WIS and CHA checks made when interacting with any Beast or Monstrosity with either an avian or feline nature—or both.

Feathertalon Lord (Requires Attunement). As your level increases, you gain the following benefits while wearing this crown.

5th level. You have the heightened eyesight of a bird of prey, granting you proficiency in the Perception skill if you do not have it and doubling your proficiency in the skill if you already do. Additionally, you possess the litheness of a cat, and when you expend your full movement speed, any opportunity attacks targeting you are made with disadvantage until your next turn.

9th level. You gain a +1 bonus to saves. You also gain the ability to cast *gust of wind* once per long rest. While concentrating on this spell, you gain a fly speed equal to half your movement speed.

13th level. Your bonus to saves increases to +2. Also, whenever you make an attack with a piercing or slashing weapon, you deal a critical hit on a 19 or 20, and on a critical hit, you roll the extra dice for damage three times, instead of the normal two.

17th level. Your bonus to saves increases to +3. Additionally, you can cast *dominate monster* once per short rest. Beasts and Monstrosities with an avian or feline nature have disadvantage on their saving throws against this effect. You can also use the crown's 9th-level effect after only a short rest.



KINGDOMS AND RULERS

After a long and difficult battle, a defeated human king is surrendering to his rival general—the witch queen Nicnevin.

Packed with useful advice, descriptions, and tables, this chapter makes it easy to build entire fantasy kingdoms—perfect for noble heroes and their inner circles to find adventure and intrigue—and the powerful rulers who govern them. Included are several sample realms and monarchs, ready to be slotted into a campaign or simply used for inspiration.

DESIGNING A RULER

Unless a kingdom is in a state of anarchy, it will have one or more rulers. These powerful individuals might be wise and kind, impetuous and cruel, or anything in between. The suggestions and tables below will help in creating memorable and vital NPCs that players will enjoy interacting with—or will love to hate.

As with the previous kingdom tables, rolling randomly may lead to some odd results, so feel free to disregard or change particular elements when creating a ruler. Alternatively, embrace those apparent contradictions to end up with a fascinating and complex three-dimensional leader.

NAME

A ruler needs a good name. If desired, name generators and lists of names can be found online or in other books. These resources are often particularly helpful when kingdoms are inspired by historical cultures and can provide authentic-sounding NPC names.

Whatever a ruler's name, it's a good idea to say it out loud a few times to check that it's not too challenging to pronounce or ridiculous sounding. Players should respect or fear a kingdom's ruler, not descend into fits of giggles whenever their name is mentioned.



TITLE

Next, the ruler needs a title. If building upon the previous **Building a Kingdom** section, then that kingdom's system of government should help inform this choice. Alternatively, roll a d100 and consult the **Ruler Title** table.

TABLE 5.15 RULER TITLE

d100	Title
01-03	Archmage/First Wizard
04-06	Basileus
07-09	Caliph
10-12	Chieftain
13-15	Czar
16-20	Dictator
21-25	Duke/Duchess
26-28	Elder
29-31	Emir
32-34	Emperor/Empress
35-37	First Citizen/First Speaker
38-40	First Minister
41-44	High Priest
45-47	Khan
48-57	King/Queen
58-60	Matriarch/Patriarch
61-64	Overlord
65-66	Pasha
67-68	Pharaoh
69-74	Prince/Princess
75-77	Rajah
78-80	Regent
81-83	Satrap/Governor
84-86	Shah
87-89	Sultan/Sultana
90-92	Tribune
93-96	Tyrant
97-00	Warlord

Giving a ruler a suitably grandiose style of address and an epithet turns Queen Epiphania into the much more impressive sounding Her Divine Magnificence, Queen Epiphania the Imperturbable. Choose or roll a d12 three times on the **Styles of Address** table. The first adjective is often preceded by *His*, *Her*, *Their*, and/or *Most*. A given epithet might be well deserved, flattering, or ironic.

TABLE 5.16 STYLES OF ADDRESS

d12	Adjective	Noun	Epithet
1	Blessed	Eminence	Bloody
2	Brilliant	Excellency	Cruel
3	Divine	Grace	Fair
4	Excellent	Highness	Farsighted
5	Faithful	Holiness	Gifted
6	Gracious	Lordship	Indefatigable
7	Honorable	Majesty	Just
8	Illustrious	Potentate	Proud
9	Imperial	Protector	Ruthless
10	Royal	Resplendence	Thoughtful
11	Serene	Sovereign	Unready
12	Venerable	Worship	Wise

BACKSTORY

Think about the ruler's history and what they did before ascending to the throne of the kingdom. Did they live a sheltered life at court or attend every feast, party, and ball they could? Did they lead the kingdom's armies into battle against its enemies, study wizardry at the Five Towers of Thaumaturgy, or train to become a priest at the Golden Temple of Apollo? Perhaps they were an adventurer themselves in the past, a fact that could potentially color their view of the PCs, for good or ill. Maybe they grew up penniless on the streets of Zobeck or another big city, oblivious of their royal parentage.

Next, decide how they became the ruler. Did the previous incumbent step down or die of old age? Was the succession a peaceful affair, or did a bloody feud erupt between several candidates for the throne? Did the ruler liberate the kingdom from the rule of a tyrant, or did they seize the throne in a violent coup against a weak but benevolent king? Were they called back from a carefree life of adventure and exploration to take on the mantle of rulership?

It's not necessary to come up with more than two or three bullet points, but establishing a ruler's backstory at this stage helps to bring them to life.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION

Next, decide what the ruler looks like. Start with the basics like gender, lineage, and age.

Does the ruler belong to the same species as the kingdom's predominant lineage, or do they have a different ancestry? Choosing a ruler from the same lineage is logical, but a dwarf ruling an elf kingdom raises interesting questions about how this unusual situation came about. Perhaps a dwarven hero rescued the elves from enslavement by a cruel hobgoblin tyrant and welcomed them into the forested mountains of his kingdom? Now, centuries later, the elves still live in the forests and honor the hero's descendants as their monarch. Or maybe a dragon, a celestial or fiend, or a vampire or lich rules the kingdom? The inhabitants could be aware of their ruler's true nature, treating their monarch with a mixture of respect and fear, or they could be none the wiser.



A ruler's age can influence how they are perceived or treated by both their subjects and their enemies and allies. A child ruler might be king or queen in name only while a regent or advisor makes all the key decisions on how the kingdom is run—and not always with the young monarch's best interests at heart. A young but adult ruler might be seen as naive and easily manipulated by their scheming courtiers while an elderly ruler thought past their prime might find themselves losing their influence over their nobles as they seek to curry favor with the likely successor.

The **Physical Appearance** and **Clothing & Gear** tables can help flesh out a ruler's physical appearance and any distinctive personal effects.

TABLE 5.17 PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

d20	Feature
1	Aquiline nose
2	Brawny
3	Completely hairless
4	Disfigured or ugly
5	Disheveled
6	Distinctive scar on face
7	Distinguished
8	Grubby
9	Hirsute
10	Homely or nondescript
11	Immaculately turned out
12	Missing an eye, an ear, or a limb
13	Significantly over/underweight
14	Stooped or bowlegged
15	Strong jawline
16	Studious
17	Tall and lithe
18	Tattooed
19	Unusually shaped birthmark
20	Very attractive

TABLE 5.18 CLOTHING & GEAR

d20	Item
1	Adamantine breastplate engraved with a dragon in flight
2	Bronze helmet with 2-foot-long, curling bull's horns
3	Chain shirt of gleaming mithral
4	Collar of semi-precious stones in the shape of an eagle
5	Copper breastplate emblazoned with a grinning demon's face
6	Crown made of flowers and leaves
7	Dark-blue turban or patterned keffiyeh headdress
8	Golden crown with long points representing the rays of the sun
9	Golden, serpent-shaped arm bracelet with emeralds for eyes
10	Green silken robes embroidered with golden lotus flowers
11	Headdress of brightly colored feathers
12	Heavy royal-blue robes trimmed with ermine
13	Iron scepter topped with a skull
14	Lionskin cloak
15	Long necklaces of white, black, and rosy-pink pearls
16	Ornate, diamond-studded crown with a purple-velvet bonnet
17	Plain white cotton robes and leather sandals
18	Purple toga
19	Silver coronet studded with sapphires
20	White ash staff topped with a glowing green crystal

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

To ensure a ruler is as well rounded as possible, it's a good idea to assign them personal characteristics similar to PCs. Suggestions for personality traits, ideals, bonds, and flaws or secrets can be found in the following tables. If the ruler has an epithet, that might provide a clue to one or more of their personality traits. Ideals are often linked to alignment, so if this hasn't been decided yet for the ruler, now is a good time to do so. Alternatively, roll a d12 and consult the **Ideals** table and allow the result to inform their alignment.

TABLE 5.19 PERSONALITY TRAITS

d20	Trait
1	Being ruler means I get to line my pockets with the hard-earned coins of my gullible subjects.
2	Crushing my enemies on the battlefield and hearing the lamentations of their loved ones brings me great joy.
3	Everything I touch turns to ash.
4	I act like a petulant child when I'm not the center of attention.
5	I have an insatiable curiosity and love new things.
6	I have grown tired of late, and the crown sits heavily on my head.
7	I have no time for people who beat around the bush rather than telling me straight.
8	I have yet to meet anyone who is my equal, let alone someone of superior intellect.
9	I like to consider things carefully from every angle before making my move.
10	I never fail to speak my mind and am not afraid to cause offense.
11	I prefer my own company (and my dog's) to that of my court.
12	I put the well-being of my subjects first and foremost.
13	If I really set my mind on it, nothing can stop me.
14	It's hard to keep track of everything that's going on in the kingdom. Thank the gods I have people to take care of such trivia.
15	My attention often wanders when I should be concentrating.
16	My elegant coiffure, beautifully tailored clothes, and glittering jewels ensure I am the best dressed in any room.
17	My enemies are everywhere, and I no longer know whom I can trust.
18	Now that I've achieved all I set out to do, it's time to enjoy the rest of my reign in peace.
19	The glass is half empty at best, and those who think otherwise are naive fools.
20	There is always time for music and merriment.

TABLE 5.20 IDEALS

d12	Ideal
1	Altruism. Everyone in my kingdom will have a roof over their head and bread on their table if it's the last thing I do. (Good)
2	Aspiration. One day, my kingdom's borders will stretch from sea to shining sea. (Any)
3	Community. Together we have the strength to hold back the darkness. (Lawful)
4	Fairness. Our laws must be followed by all—and not just when it's convenient to do so. (Lawful)
5	Freedom. Our people must never again be ruled by tyrants. (Chaotic)
6	Hedonism. This calls for a celebration! Huzzah! (Chaotic)
7	Knowledge. Books are steppingstones to greatness (Neutral)
8	Live and Let Live. While I rule, we will never meddle in the affairs of our neighbors. (Neutral)
9	Might. All who stand in my way must bend their knee or die on the spears of my legions. (Evil)
10	Peace. I am determined no one in my kingdom will die during my lifetime in a needless war. (Good)
11	Redemption. I must make amends for the sins of the past. (Any)
12	Retribution. I will inflict swift and terrible revenge on everyone who has wronged me in the past. (Evil)

TABLE 5.21 BONDS

d10	Bond
1	Everything I have accomplished has been to honor my father's name.
2	I am determined to recover the great lost halls of our people from our enemies and restore them to their former glory.
3	I am extremely proud of my three daughters and would do anything to see them achieve greatness.
4	I have sworn an oath to preserve the sanctity of the Holy Mountain and the Sepulcher of Saint Rahael the Twice-Blessed.
5	I will not rest until the Iron Lord has been defeated and his heads adorn the spikes above the castle gates.
6	My allies can always rely on me to stand shoulder to shoulder with them.
7	My hall of hunting trophies is my pride and joy.
8	One day I will feel ready to marry again.
9	The beauty of the wilderness must be preserved.
10	Vimryrth the Thunderer, my loyal companion and mighty steed, is my one true friend.

TABLE 5.22 FLAWS AND SECRETS

d12	Flaw or Secret
1	Creatures from the void have stalked me in my dreams since I read that accursed tome!
2	I find it almost impossible to make decisions.
3	I find respite from the pressures of the throne in the bottom of my tankard.
4	I lash out angrily at those who irk me.
5	I made an ill-advised pact with an archdevil, and my son and heir's soul is forfeit.
6	I'm an impostor who imprisoned the real ruler and took their place.
7	I'm being blackmailed by a foreign power and am secretly acting in their best interests.
8	I'm having an illicit affair with someone close to me.
9	I'm very susceptible to flattery.
10	My brother's death wasn't really a hunting accident.
11	My father died on the battlefield because of my cowardice.
12	The kingdom faces bankruptcy because I've gambled away almost the entire contents of the royal treasury.

FINAL DETAILS

Once the basics have been established, add a few more final details to bring the ruler to life. Are there any catchphrases they like to use? Do they have any mannerisms, such as impatiently drumming their fingers on the side of their throne when faced with time-wasting PCs? Perhaps they are prone to daydreaming, and it's hard to keep their full attention?

What are their passions and interests? Maybe the king loves hunting and fishing, or the governor enjoys painting portraits of her dogs in her spare time? More suggestions for fleshing out rulers can be found in the following **Kingdom Types** section.

A suitable NPC stat block for the ruler can be found in the **Appendix** or from *Tome of Beasts*, *Creature Codex*, or *Tome of Beasts* 3.

Open a Trove of Wonders!

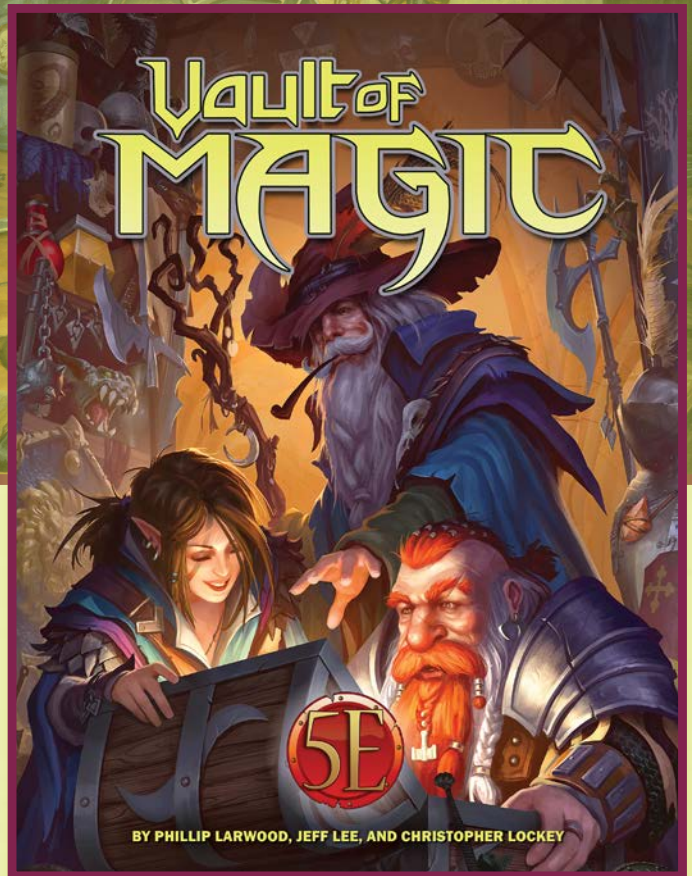


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