

# Trusted Axe Cartel - 528SuTrAxCa

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The sound of metal striking metal and the hiss of tempering steel is the sound that can be expected from the Trusted Axe cartel's workshop. But when the sound has stopped and only furious yelling and the breaking of furniture can be heard from one of the adjacent rooms it is a sign that something has gone wrong.

A brokered deal, regular and pay held in good faith goes south and when the deposit is requested the money goes missing. Evidence points to foul play by the once clients, but there is more to this story than clients that want to skip out on the bill. Rivals, spies and even a take over are setting the forge cold and the anvils gathering dust.

**DM:** (A new, ambitious group of merchants have stolen from the Trusted Axe Cartel who is the largest supplier of high quality, crafted goods in Armele. The Cartel finds out they've been robbed and that their biggest clients have broken their contract based on the theft.)

Inside the Silver Ring Tavern, the mood was lively and full of energy. Music played while people danced, sang, ate warm meals and drank heavily. Some guests tried their luck at card games while others watched with laughter and cheers. At the largest booth near the back, a group of wealthy, stylish patrons threw money around as staff hurried to keep up with their orders. Everything felt festive and familiar to the adventurers, who had been enjoying the food and companionship during a break in their journey. But that feeling quickly vanished when the main door burst open and six angry dwarves strode inside. Their powerful builds and matching

hand tattoos revealed they were members of the Trusted Axe Cartel, a respected guild of smiths and merchants.

A loud shout from one of the dwarves silenced the room as he demanded to know where Jeb and Tarnius were, accusing them of selling low-quality gear. The group started combing through the tavern looking for answers while the eldest dwarf approached the barkeep and quietly made a payment. One dwarf, calm and direct,

questioned the adventurers about the missing merchants and the deal that had gone wrong. She explained that their guild had delivered weapons and armour under contract, but the final payment was suddenly denied with claims that the gear was faulty. They inspected the returned items and found they weren't dwarven-made at all. Soon, Garmanel, the leader of the Cartel, arrived at the table with drinks and greeted the adventurers politely. He offered to share a proposal and asked for their help, believing they might know something or could track down the ones responsible. His confidence and warmth stood in contrast to the tension that had just swept through the tavern.

**DM:** (The leader of the Cartel, Garmanel, is a kind old dwarf who seems to be pragmatic and level headed. Refer to **528MoCoCo**)



The Trusted Axe Cartel explained their long-term contract with Jeb and Tarnius had fallen apart under suspicious circumstances. Their genuine dwarven gear was swapped with poor human-made copies, ruining the deal and damaging their reputation. The cartel was known for quality and honour, and the party saw clear signs

that something didn't add up. Garmanel and Gondanel asked for help finding the real merchandise and offered gold and lasting friendship as a reward.

After a round of drinks lifted the tavern's mood, the dwarves gave the party space to decide. Garabek chased a lead while Garmanel promised strong ties and loyalty for anyone who restored their honour. As the night wore on, the adventurers were left with a choice: take on the task and gain a powerful ally, or walk away from what could be lasting security and respect.

**DM:** (The job will pay well, ensuring a steady flow of income every season for the next ten years. It would be enough for each party member to retire from adventuring and live comfortably. Refer to **528TuTrAxDa**)



The marketplace was loud, crowded and full of strong smells that overwhelmed the senses at first. Still, the party quickly noticed stalls selling interesting wares, including one where they learned a merchant was selling dwarven-made goods. Despite interference from a mercenary elf,

they found the sellers easily and began asking questions. The young vendor seemed eager to talk and invited them to return at sunset to see more of the rare and valuable gear he claimed to have access to.

At dusk, the party returned and was led to a nearby warehouse after the merchant had packed away his lesser goods. He explained his group was small but saw a chance

to profit by selling quality items sourced from careless traders. Inside the warehouse, they were met by a dozen armed figures and possibly more in the shadows. Tension rose when one man recognized the party from the tavern where the Trusted Axe Cartel had appeared. Realizing the connection, he panicked, and the mood quickly shifted as the party's presence triggered suspicion and alarm.



**DM:** (The party can try and persuade the merchants and their guards, hired mercenaries, that they don't mean harm or combat would start swiftly. **528WeNeKiBI** and **528SaArOtEv**. If it does come to combat the objective really should be to capture the merchants (and nobles

starting a career in being a merchant) or to find evidence that they stole and set up the Cartel. If they can do that and escape then that will be enough for a successful encounter. Or defeating the guards and merchants would be a Very Difficult encounter with four merchants, a few captains or leaders of the mercenaries and some more dangerous foes in the form of assassins or highly trained mages. Refer to **528ThGrTrWa** for mechanics for the warehouse as well as **528GrTrCo** for opponents.)

