Strongholds 1: The Monk’s Monastery

Strongholds

There is a style of play that encourages PCs, as they reach higher levels, to adventure less and manage affairs more. Back in the day, as they say, when a PC reached ~7th level, they’d build a stronghold. They did this mostly because it was neat. The stronghold was a symbol of the PC’s growing power and influence outside the context of combat.

Once a character has a stronghold, important NPCs in the area come to consult them or ask for aid. It means they come into conflict with other powerful characters with their own strongholds.

When a PC leaves on an adventure, the DM spends some time thinking “what’s happening back at his stronghold?” The answer can give the player many opportunities for roleplaying or adventuring upon their return.

“Your knights report kidnappings among the local towns. The villagers say ‘demons’ but the knights suspect something else…drow.” Clearly an invitation to adventure!

“Your scribe says a herald approached the tower while you were gone. The duke requests your presence at court.” Maybe the duke wants

The Monastery

When a Monk PC spends the time and money necessary to build a Monastery, he gains a new ki-based class ability, and followers!

Strength of the Hearth

After spending a week in the monastery meditating at least eight hours a day, the monk gains the ability to use Strength of the Hearth a number of times equal to his monk level.

**Strength of the Hearth**: as a reaction, spend a ki point and one Hit Die. Roll the die and add the monk’s Constitution modifier to it. The monk regains hit points equal to the total.

The monk regains all uses of Strength of the Hearth upon returning to his monastery and spending a week in meditation.

Followers

When the monastery is complete, the monk gains followers. Characters who’ve heard of the monk’s adventures and come to ally themselves with the monk, or live under the monk’s protection.

The monk rolls on the following chart.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% Roll</th>
<th>Type of Follower</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-7</td>
<td>2-20 monks of 1st level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8-12</td>
<td>2-16 monks of 2nd - 3rd level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13-15</td>
<td>2-8 monks of 4th level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>1-4 monks of 5th level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>1 6th level monk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19-23</td>
<td>2-8 Priests of 1st level</td>
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</tbody>
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These followers are not thralls, they are independent characters. The monk is, to them, as the mayor of a town to its residents. The followers will aid the monk and render their services, but they expect the monk will also protect them in turn.

Monks can count on their followers to maintain the monastery without being directed. They can also be set to various tasks. Blacksmiths can forge arms and armor. Scribes can craft scrolls, Wizards can perform research.

Some followers are powerful indeed. These characters should be considered local allies. A Unicorn or an Amethyst Dragon doesn’t live at the Monastery, they live in the woods or hills nearby and visit the monastery regularly to consult the Monk or trade news. The Monk can also call upon them for help. They may arrive during dire circumstances to help the monk should his party find themselves in mortal danger.
Followers do not typically join the monk’s adventuring party, but they can serve as party members should the Monk choose to adventure alone.

Followers with class levels will gain class levels in their own time, at the DM’s discretion.

Every time the monk levels up, or alternately whenever the monk completes a major quest, they roll on the chart again, ignoring duplicate results.