

BUILD A BARD

A CHARACTER CREATION PACK FOR
ROLE PLAYING OR STORYTELLING

BY ELIOT SILVARIAN



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	3
Name and Gender	4
Tables	5
Creative Skills	5
Backgrounds	6
Quirks	7
Special Items and Trinkets	8
Prompts	9
Characters	12
Notes	20

INTRODUCTION

Story comes in many forms. It can be expressed through a myriad of colors in a painting, a song rich with feeling, a dramatic voice speaking to an enraptured audience, or countless other methods. This is for any character with a story to tell, a need to be creative, or a drive to inspire others. I've kept a loose definition of bard, because there are many ways to be creative and expressive. A bard can travel around singing, or write stories, or express themselves through creating inventions. This supplement endeavors to help you step outside the box of the stereotypical bard, as well as add depth to your character.

The prompts and tables are setting neutral, so you can use them with any setting, though not every detail will fit every situation. The ready made characters are for you to use in your own TTRPG games, stories, or cosplays. The rest of the creation pack can be used to further personalize them. I would love to hear about the characters you create and their adventures!

NAME AND GENDER

Is your name given or chosen? Do you have a different stage name? Is there meaning behind the name? What are your gender and pronouns?

Name ideas

- Allegra
- Cadence
- Calliope
- Dorian
- Indigo
- Kingsley
- Fable
- Lilac
- Lyric
- Viola

Gender ideas

- Non-binary
- Genderfluid
- Distant notes floating on the breeze
- A clanging gong
- A discordant harmony
- A celestial melody
- The scratching of a pen across paper
- The sound of waves crashing on the beach

TABLES

You can choose however many details you want from the tables below or roll dice and let them decide for you. Take them as they are or use them for inspiration for other ideas.

CREATIVE SKILLS

1. Painting
2. Drawing
3. Dancing
4. Singing
5. Songwriting
6. Instruments
7. Writing stories
8. Telling stories
9. Acting
10. Acrobatics
11. Weaving tapestries
12. Cooking
13. Architecture
14. Linguistics
15. Clothing design
16. Chanting
17. Poetry
18. Archiving
19. Giving speeches
20. Horticulture

BACKGROUNDS

1. You grew up in a tavern learning your craft from traveling bards.
2. You grew up in your family's restaurant, learning to bake and cook from a young age.
3. You come from a long line of weavers, whether through family or apprenticeship, and have learned the secrets of your trade from the best in the land. Through the weaving of fine colors and threads, you document stories and events to display as art.
4. You grew up in a caravan surrounded by performers. You've been learning your craft your whole life.
5. As a teen, you ran away and joined a group of performers, learning your craft while working for the group.
6. You spent a while following an adventurer around and documenting their experiences through your craft.
7. You grew up in a druid circle, learning how to use nature to bring comfort and healing, putting people at ease in a relaxing environment.
8. You were a theatre kid, acting and performing from a young age. You know many stories and plays and can immediately connect with any other theatre kid you meet.
9. Your background in herbalism serves you well as you create paints in a myriad of colors, knowing the best ingredients to blend to create the desired shades.

10. You apprenticed in woodworking, from a mentor or a guild, to learn the skills needed to create fine instruments with beautiful woodwork and intricate carvings.
11. After completing an apprenticeship to learn sewing and tailoring skills, you spent time traveling to learn about textiles and clothing from different places and how to craft clothing in a variety of methods and materials.
12. You learned to wield swords both to fight and entertain, and can amaze the crowds with your ability to dance as you flourish your blades and perform stunts.

QUIRKS

1. You have a talent for reading a person's taste well enough to know what sort of song or what color palette will speak to them.
2. There's one certain color you have to use in every painting.
3. You have to perform a certain ritual every time before you go on stage to perform. Drink or eat a specific thing, chant a certain phrase, or whisper a blessing over your instrument.
4. You have a piece of clothing or jewelry you have to wear whenever you perform or work on your craft.
5. You pull a tarot card every day to help direct your creative decisions.
6. You have to write your songs or stories with a certain ink that's special to you.

SPECIAL ITEMS AND TRINKETS

1. A painting/poem/story given to you by someone you've inspired.
2. An instrument you built yourself, whether a full stringed instrument or smaller maracas, a thumb instrument, etc.
3. A songbook given to you by a bard you admired
4. A beautifully crafted music box with intricate gear work. When wound by the key on the side, it plays a comforting melody.
5. A sketch of your first performance that you keep with you as a reminder.
6. A set of dice made from teeth.
7. An intricately carved flute made from dragon bone.
8. The first coin you were ever given for your art or performance.
9. An instrument case that keeps your instrument in tune.
10. A letter from an admiring fan that inspires you when you're discouraged.
11. A bottle of poison ink that when fresh on the page, will knock unconscious anyone nearby who isn't acclimated to the ingredients.
12. An enchanted pen and ink pot. As long as there is ink in the pot and they're within 10 feet of each other, the pen magically refills itself as you write.

PROMPTS

- What sort of creativity is your specialty? Music, writing, storytelling, painting, cooking? Something else?
- Have you always felt drawn toward one particular type of craft or have you tried different things over the years?
- What are your tools of choice? Pens, paintbrushes, ink, favorite paper, etc.
- Do you have a portable writing desk? What do you carry in it?
- What do you carry your equipment or instruments in?
- Do you have a dream instrument? Tools you hope to be able to get someday? If you could have any instrument or tools, what would they be?
- Do you use magic? Is it innate or learned? How does it influence or affect your craft?
- Are there any certain colors associated with you?
- What sort of clothing do you like? Do you have a signature style or article of clothing?
- Are you a traveling bard or do you keep more to one area? Is that what you prefer, or would you rather be doing something else?
- Do you write music, play music written by others, or both? Do you write lyrics?
- How did you learn your craft? Was there anyone specific who taught you or did you pick it up here and there?

- What is your favorite sort of location to perform and share your craft? Do you like performing at events? Do you prefer to perform for a crowd or just for yourself?
- Are you part of a band or other group of artists and creators? Just a group of friends or a larger guild?
- Do you feel drained or energized after performing for a large crowd? After a busy day performing, do you like to hang out with people afterward or go catch some alone time?
- What do you most love to tell stories or sing songs about? Do you prefer to recount history, speak of current events, or tell fictional stories through your craft?
- Is there something that drives you to create? Something you feel a need to share with other people? Something you need to work out for your own self?
- Have you ever made an instrument or any of your supplies yourself?
- Is there a memory of a bad performance that stuck with you? How did it change you?
- Is there a memory of a good performance that stuck with you? How did it change you?
- What is your favorite performance ever? What makes it your favorite?
- Are there details about your appearance that would speak of your craft to an observer? Ink stained fingers, dried paint splashes, calloused fingertips?
- Do you ever use tarot or oracle cards or any other sort of divination in your storytelling and connecting with people?

- How do you relate to people? Are you charismatic and relational? Withdrawn?
- How do you relate to animals? Do you have a pet or an animal you ride?
- Did you grow up with a lot of stories? Where did you read or hear them?
- Do you have any favorite books or stories?
- Is there anyone you dedicate some of your creations to? Songs told in someone's memory or honor, paintings done in their name, stories to preserve their memory?
- Do you have a patron that supports your craft?
- Do you ever get stage fright?

CHARACTERS

Name: Nightshade

Gender: Non-binary.

Pronouns: They/them.

Ancestry: Fae.

Appearance: Fair skin, purple hair, dark eyes, 2 horns on head. They wear poisonous flowers in their hair and a lot of black, purples, silvers, and greys. They're often repressing a smirk and listening closely to everything around them.

Craft: Diplomacy and linguistics.

Lifestyle: They're hired by a variety of people for their smooth-talking diplomacy skill and their knowledge of a range of languages. They work in court politics, negotiate deals, write letters, craft speeches, and different odd jobs that fit their skills.

Favorite things: Pens. Nice Paper. The smell of a lit candle. Poison ink. Botany. Skulls.

Name: Coriander.

Gender: Non-binary.

Pronouns: She/her.

Ancestry: Human.

Appearance: Light brown skin, very curly chestnut hair, green eyes. She gets distracted easily and generally looks concerned about something.

Craft: Cooking.

Lifestyle: She's been working in a tavern for several years and keeps thinking about getting out and doing something different, going on an adventure, but she's had a hard time taking the step to actually leave. She's anxious and stressed with her job, but anxious about leaving. She loves food and cooking, but is getting burned out and ready to finally go find her way.

Favorite things: Spices. Soups. Aprons with pockets. Spoons. The smell of bread baking.

Making people happy and content through a good meal.

Name: Rowan.

Gender: Genderfluid.

Pronouns: They/he/she.

Ancestry: Human.

Appearance: Light skin, eyes that seem to change color, and they change their hair color often. They're observant and interested in the details, and get excited over little things that make them happy. They wear a lot of bright colors in a variety of styles, dressing to suit their mood for each day.

Craft: Clothing design and sewing.

Lifestyle: They love making the right clothes to make their client happy in who they are. They have learned to be themselves and embrace who they are and want most of all to help others do the same for themselves. They see clothing as an extension of that, and will work to help others find what fits them best and helps them feel happiest and most at home in who they are.

Favorite things: Pretty colors. Pretty fabrics. Sewing lots of details. Shiny things. Helping other people find themselves.

Name: Avi.

Gender: Male.

Pronouns: He/they.

Ancestry: Halfling.

Appearance: Dark brown skin, wavy black hair, and pointed ears. Usually wears gold rimmed glasses, but sometimes drops them on the chain around his neck to peer closely at a book and forgets to put them back on. Busy and distracted until he gets immersed in something, then can stay intensely involved for hours. Usually wears dark oranges, reds, and browns.

Craft: Librarian and storyteller.

Lifestyle: He's the head librarian in a large town. He spends a lot of time by himself sorting through books and looking for new stories, but is always excited to help someone find just the right sort of book. He loves to tell stories to anyone who will listen, and is known for his dramatic tellings of children's stories.

Favorite things: Books. Coffee. Cloaks. Pens. The crisp smell of fall.

Name: Arabella.

Gender: Female.

Pronouns: She/her.

Ancestry: Elven and human.

Appearance: Long silver hair, light brown skin, and pointed ears. Usually appears peaceful and gentle.

Craft: Weaving tapestries.

Lifestyle: She travels from place to place, going where summoned to create tapestries for those who commission her. She learns of their life and stories, then begins to work, weaving together a detailed rendition of a scene showing the important things to be remembered. When the tapestry is complete, she moves on to the next place, occasionally taking side trips to wherever catches her fancy.

Favorite things: Beautiful architecture. The colors of changing seasons. Trying new yarn. Seeing new places.

Name: Finley.

Gender: Non-binary.

Pronouns: He/they.

Ancestry: Fae.

Appearance: Wild curly black hair, pale skin, brown eyes, pointy ears, and a mischievous smile. He loves fanciful, elaborate clothes in bright colors and is usually wearing a patchwork coat in shades of purple and blue.

Craft: Writing songs and playing the lute.

Lifestyle: He lives with a caravan of performers, traveling around doing shows in various places. He's considered setting out on his own, though he would miss his found family.

Favorite things: Purple. Songs about adventure. Jam sessions. Campfires. Hot chocolate. Seeing new places.

BUILD A BARD

BY ELIOT SILVARIAN

This document was created in Canva. The title and header font is Old Cupboard, designed by Cecil Howe. The main font is Alegreya.

