

Free Market Villainy

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Frank and his two companions, Patricia and Roger, raced through the burning village, searching for the culprit of the cold-blooded attack. Spying his archnemesis Demetrios in the town square, he drew his mighty bastard sword and faced down the evil mage. "That's the fifth town you've torched this week!" he exclaimed. "Where the hell are you getting the components for such powerful magic?!"

Demetrios just laughed sinisterly. "It's really quite simple," he explained with a mocking tone. "I buy them from the auction house. In fact, just this morning I bought a blood ruby for a mere five thousand gold."

The adventurers looked at each other, confused. "We sold a blood ruby for five grand this morning," said Patricia, putting the pieces together.

"I know, the free market is a wonderful thing," replied Demetrios, wagging his finger with impish glee. "By the way, you might consider hiring a consultant. You've been selling your goods for at least 20% under market value."

Furious, Frank gripped his sword tightly and prepared to charge. "Silence!" he shouted, enraged. "We're putting a stop to your villainy right here, right now!"

Demetrios chuckled slyly. "Actually, I think I'll just teleport away...using this angel feather I bought off the auction house!" Casting a quick spell, he waved goodbye to the dumbfounded adventurers before vanishing in a column of light.

The group fell silent for a long while. Finally, Patricia spoke up over the roar of the blaze. "Why did we kill that angel, anyway?"

"Someone said angel feathers were worth a lot of money," groused Frank.

Roger gave his companions a sheepish glance as he returned his daggers to their sheaths. "Well...I wasn't *wrong*."