

# Beeleggers

It all started when those well-intentioned fools up in the Imperial District decided to ban mead. Now maybe mead was more of a worry now than it used to be, seeing that mages have figured ways to convince the honey-spirits how to give regular mead a proper, heavy kick. And sure, more than a few members of the demihuman races turned out to have a real problem keeping their noses out of the new, boosted mead-casks. Nobody's arguing that there weren't problems -- but banning **all** of the mead, period? That was just too heavy-handed.

Worse, it was stupid, because the only thing that it did was convince a lot of people that smuggling mead was a great way to draw in the coin. And *didn't* it, just? The Halflings got in early, of course -- pick up any Halfling up and turn him over; all sorts of interesting things will tumble out of his pockets, and not a single blessed one of them will have a tax stamp -- and locked up the market with brutal industriousness. And they weren't interested in letting any *talfoks* compete with them, either.

So, the bees. The Imperial Crown couldn't prohibit the use of bees, because bees make honey and bees make

wax and both of those industries have some pretty solid advocates in the Privy Council. Fortunately, the right spells would allow the hives *themselves* to be temporarily possessed by a honey-spirit willing to boost the mead to something worth drinking; and it was easier to hide a spirit that way from both the Emperor's Rangers **and** the Halflings. The hives just had to be moved around, every so often. It kept the scrying spells from tracking the hives down easily.

Of course, moving about twenty thousand or so bees at a time can have its own set of troubles. Figuring out which paths to use in the woods, which Elves to avoid, which Elves to bribe, how to handle a cart collision and subsequent swarm; these are not trivial exercises. But the coin is good. The coin is *extremely* good. The city-folk can't get enough of boosted mead. And nobody's more ready and willing to keep swilling it down than those pious moralists in the Imperial District. Screaming hypocrites, the lot of them.

([background](#))

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