

SECOND EDITION

PATHFINDER®



Curtain Call

ADVENTURE PATH

**Singer,
Stalker,
Skinsaw Man**

By Kendra Leigh Speedling

Kintargo

650 FEET



LONG ROADS
COFFEEHOUSE

• NEWT MARKET

• XERXIS MANOR

LADY DOGUR'S
SCHOOL FOR
GIRLS

• CEBARINNE ESTATE

AULAMAXA ESTATE •

JHALTERO ESTATE •

• SILVER SUPPERS

• BERNAI SILVER COMPANY

• THREE-LEGGED DEVIL

• KINTARGO
OPERA HOUSE

• SONGBIRD HALL

ASHEN MAN
CULT HIDEOUT

ABALONE
HOUSE

BLADE WITCH'S
WORKSHOP

PATHFINDER

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Curtain Call

ADVENTURE PATH

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Singer, Stalker, Skinsaw Man

Chapter 1: Siege of Songs.....4

The PCs travel to the Shackles, far south of Kintargo, to seek out the retired diva Oriole in hopes of hiring them to play the lead villain role in their opera, only to find Oriole's estate under siege by a small army of fey and a nefarious dragon.

Chapter 2: Setting the Stage 22

Back in Kintargo, it's finally time for the PCs to start rounding up sponsors for the opera and begin working the numerous tasks that they, as the show's co-producers, are responsible for: hiring actors and a composer, seeking out expert stagehands and rare supplies, and even handling a few scandals.

Chapter 3: All In!..... 48

When their hard-won lead villain vanishes, the PCs track Oriole to the nearby city of Vyre, where it becomes apparent that their opera's costumer, Fenton, is not only more sinister than he seemed, but responsible for Oriole's kidnapping!

Chapter 4: Stitcher's Redoubt 62

The PCs explore Graymire Textiles, an abandoned tanner's workshop now owned by Fenton. Within, they discover his awful plans for Oriole. If the PCs don't act fast, the star of their show will become a murderer's latest trophy!

KINTARGO AND VYRE

Over the course of this Adventure Path, all pertinent information about the cities of Kintargo and Vyre are provided in context alongside the encounters and events that take place therein, but if you're looking to expand your game's presentation of either city, check out the following.

Pathfinder Lost Omens World

Guide: A two-page summary of the nation of Ravounel appears on pages 104-105 of this book, including some information about Kintargo. A paragraph of information about Vyre appears on page 105.

In Hell's Bright Shadow (Hell's Rebels Adventure Path, book 1):

This volume features an extensive gazetteer of Kintargo that can give you a great starting point for expanding upon the events of *Curtain Call*.

Dance of the Damned (Hell's Rebels Adventure Path, book 3):

This volume features an extensive gazetteer of Vyre that can give you a great starting point for expanding upon the events of *Curtain Call*.

Tomorrow Must Burn (Age of Ashes Adventure Path, book 3): This volume provides a quick update to many of the locations in Ravounel and Kintargo in a post-Hell's Rebels era.

Curtain Call Player's Guide: Finally, the Player's Guide for this adventure presents much of the information described above in a player-friendly format.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

"Singer, Stalker, Skinsaw Man" is designed for four characters.

- 14.** The PCs begin this adventure at 14th level.
- 15** The PCs should reach 15th level after recruiting Oriole.
- 16** The PCs should reach 16th level before Oriole is abducted.
- 17** The PCs should reach 17th level by the start of Chapter 4.

The PCs should reach 18th level by the time they complete the adventure.



Chapter 1: Siege of Songs

The announcement of a brand new opera by beloved director Fallenta Sumac d'Vevenoux sends ripples through the arts circuit, and it won't be long before critics and fans from across Avistan and Garund are taking note and making plans to visit Kintargo and attend what many hope to be an amazing premiere.

There's much work to be done in the meantime, however. The opera doesn't even have a title yet, much less an actual premiere date. The securing of the Kintargo Opera House as its venue and the revelation of Fallenta's involvement, along with the introduction of the PCs as both the opera's coproducers and inspirations, are but the first steps of a complex and potentially dangerous path to critical and financial success!

Fallenta wants to hire Oriole, a former opera diva who retired into obscurity at the height of their career, to play the villain's role in the opera. Unfortunately, Fallenta isn't the only one with her eyes on Oriole, as they've also attracted the attention of Fenton Vilorgo, a gifted seamster and opera costumer who is secretly a powerful summoner and sadistic devotee of Norgorber's Father Skinsaw aspect. Fenton is fascinated by the stage and its stars, and for several years, he's been developing a ritual to steal a performer's voice and capture it within a construct, "preserving" their talent forever as his personal singing pet. After his first attempt failed, he became obsessed with Oriole's talents as a performer, and he views their retirement as a personal insult. When he

hears Oriole has returned to the stage, he perceives a second chance to progress his plans and infiltrates the production in hopes of abducting the diva. Having refined the theoretical principles of his ritual, he now believes using a wax eidolon as the receptacle for Oriole's voice will provide it with the spiritual power it needs to be completed. Fenton knows the PCs are formidable opponents, so he intends to keep a low profile around them until he makes his move.

INITIAL DECISIONS

Once the PCs have recovered from their adventures in the nearby city of Vyre and the announcement gala where they revealed their plans to Kintargo, Fallenta invites them to their first meeting as coproducers.

"Good, you're here. Working with your notes from our first meeting, I've made an initial outline for the opera's script, but I wanted to get your input before I start in earnest. After all, no one knows your adventures like you do, and I'm sure you have thoughts on the show. Have a seat, and we can get started."

Fallenta explains that she intends to write this opera using the classic styles of Cheliox, but with that decision comes another—she and the PCs must determine which of the three categories of Chelaxian opera would make the most sense for them to stage. In case the characters (and the players) have forgotten, Fallenta summarizes the three choices.

Opera Histria (Spectacular Opera): The most bombastic tradition is an opera that focuses less on individual character arcs but on the spectacle of the story itself, resulting in productions heavy on action and meant to thrill.

Opera Prepostera (Comedic Opera): This tradition is one aimed at the "common" people, and operas in this style are often regarded as light-hearted or comedic, designed to inspire and lift the audience's spirits.

Opera Verita (Dramatic Opera): This tradition is the most serious of the three styles and emphasizes serious tones meant to evoke feelings of sadness or melancholy, inviting the viewer to explore the deeper emotional meanings of life.

The categories aren't entirely mutually exclusive, but the PCs should choose their predominant tone as the opera's style.

SOLIDIFYING THE ACTS

Fallenta and the PCs went over the opera's three acts in the previous adventure, but she gives the PCs a

chance to adjust any decisions they may have made during that meeting at this time. Use this as a chance to re-familiarize the PCs with their choices, but also as a chance for them to make last-minute changes. After all, if a PC's previous choice for their character's aria in the opera was focused on something heavy and grim, that choice might no longer make as much sense if the group has decided to create a comedic opera!

THE PERFECT VILLAIN

Once the style and acts are decided upon, Fallenta nods and sets down her pen.

"Excellent, that should give me plenty to work with. As for the rest of your duties, you have several things to handle before we begin rehearsals, but first, we need to cast a crucial part: your nemesis! And I have the perfect performer in mind.

"If any of you followed opera before, you've probably heard of Oriole. Their reputation is legendary; they can perform any voice part with equal artistry. Unfortunately, Oriole officially retired a couple of years ago, and no one knows where they are now—no one who's talking, anyway. But I'm sure finding them will be easy enough for people of your talents!"

Fallenta's happy to tell the PCs what she knows about Oriole, though, like most, she knows little about their personal life or past. If the PCs suggest a different actor for the role, Fallenta flatly refuses, as bringing back an opera star widely considered to have retired before their time would be a boon for both the show and its publicity. If your players are steadfast in hiring a different actor for the role, you can still use the remainder of this chapter—you'll just need to make adjustments as needed to fit the party's choice!

FINDING ORIOLE

A PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Society check or a DC 20 Theater Lore check to Recall Knowledge recognizes Oriole's name, while a critical success indicates that the PC may have seen performances that Oriole once starred in. Fallenta can fill the PCs in on all this information automatically if they ask. Oriole was renowned for their ability to sing any vocal register with amazingly beauty, as well as for their dedication to the role and skill at embodying whatever character was required. Oriole is a ganzi nephilim human—see page 92 for further information on them, including public knowledge the PCs can learn from Fallenta or by succeeding at a Recall Knowledge check.

Before the PCs can attempt to convince Oriole to come out of retirement, though, they need to track Oriole down. Fallenta knows the diva isn't in Kintargo, and there are several conflicting rumors about where they went after announcing their sudden retirement from the opera scene several years ago. Magic, of course, could help in tracking Oriole down, but Fallenta notes that others have attempted the same over the years with little success. Fallenta doesn't know Oriole well enough to try to contact them via *sending* (and, as such, neither should any of the PCs), and others' attempts to use *scrying* to spy on them have traditionally failed. *Pinpoint* is a potential solution, but this is an uncommon 8th-rank spell that's beyond Fallenta's ability to cast. It's also beyond the PCs, at least until they reach 15th level, which is ironically likely to occur at the end of this chapter after they've already found Oriole. The spell isn't currently available for purchase in scroll form or in other forms in Kintargo (Fallenta's checked recently), and unless one of the PCs has seen Oriole in person (unlikely, unless they critically succeeded in their attempt to Recall Knowledge), *pinpoint* wouldn't be helpful anyway.

Other spells and rituals, such as *commune*, could narrow down Oriole's location, though responses are limited, so exact identification involves some trial and error. Otherwise, the PCs must delve into the world of theater gossip to seek answers. This uses the research subsystem (*GM Core* 190), with locations around Kintargo or the use of divination magic serving as research options.

Personal Recollections: A PC thinks back on what they may have heard about Oriole; **Maximum RP** 2; **Research Checks** DC 27 Theater Lore to Recall Knowledge, DC 30 Performance or Society to Recall Knowledge.

Songbird Hall: A PC spends two hours speaking with priests and worshippers at Songbird Hall, Kintargo's temple of Shelyn; **Maximum RP** 4; **Research Checks** DC 30 Religion to speak with local priests to learn what they know, DC 32 Diplomacy to speak to worshippers about what they've heard.

Street Gossip: A PC spends two hours asking around on the streets of Kintargo; **Maximum RP** 4; **Research Checks** DC 27 Kintargo Lore to know the best places to ask around for answers, DC 32 Diplomacy to Gather Information more generally in the city.

Three-Legged Devil: A PC stops by Kintargo's oldest performance hall, the venue where Oriole got their first big break, to spend two hours speaking with old-timers or looking through the venue's records for clues; **Maximum RP** 4; **Research Checks** DC 27 Performance to entertain the staff and locals so that they'll share more personal information about their old friend, DC 30 Diplomacy to do the same without breaking the ice via performing, or DC 32 Perception to look through old documents in storage.

SEEKING ORIOLE

RESEARCH 14

UNIQUE

Research Checks personal recollections, Songbird Hall, street gossip, or Three-Legged Devil

2 Research Points Oriole's sudden retirement from performance took place after one of their best-reviewed shows in Absalom. They claimed they wanted to "go out on a high note," but others believe Oriole had grown bored or even jaded with their life.

4 Research Points Oriole has performed in Kintargo before and is generally admired by the populace. They spent a fair amount of time at Songbird Hall, one of the only places in pre-secession Kintargo that a nephilim could feel safe in showing their true self. Oriole's first big break in Kintargo was a performance at the city's oldest performance hall, the Three-Legged Devil, and they made long-lasting friendships with the owners and locals of that venue. Most believe that Oriole has abandoned Avistan entirely.

7 Research Points The PC manages to contact one of Oriole's more recent castmates from one of their final shows. This castmate shows the PCs a preserved feather from one of Oriole's old stage pets, left with them as a memento. She says Oriole is very fond of birds, taking their name from their favorite one. More generally, the word on the street is that Oriole settled somewhere along the west coast of Garund.

10 Research Points The PCs make contact with an associate of Oriole's who indicates they relocated to an island in the Shackles known as Petrel's Perch, in an island chain off Garund's coast and to the east of Yoha's Graveyard.

12 Research Points The PCs contact one of Oriole's friends, who describes their visit to Petrel's Perch years ago. The friend can describe the island to the PCs, mentions that Oriole was in the process of overseeing the construction of a private manor on the island, and that Oriole was gifted some "guardian statues" fashioned to look like Arshea from an appreciative patron. He says Oriole always held up a symbol of Arshea while walking past them.



Oriole

14 Research Points The PCs significantly impress a contact with their dedication to getting Oriole back on the stage, and they give one of the PCs a sapphire and ruby necklace worth 1,000 gp to help them fund the opera and (perhaps) to bribe Oriole back into the business.

Reward: Grant the party 20 XP for each Research Point threshold they reach, for a possible total of 120 XP if they achieve at least 12 Research Points.

OFF TO THE SHACKLES

Once the PCs discover where Oriole has retired to in the Shackles, either by achieving at least 10 Research Points or by succeeding via divination magic, they must arrange transportation. Petrel's Perch is located in the northeastern reaches of the Shackles, near the Garundi coast and far even from the more frequently traveled sea routes of the area's pirates.

While none of the PCs have been to Petrel's Perch, access to accurate maps and sea charts is enough to allow them to use *teleport* to reach the isle's shore. The island is located almost 1,500 miles south of Kintargo, so if the PCs want to make the trip in one casting, they need a 8th-rank *teleport*, and even then, they arrive 10 miles off-target. This is a complication, since Petrel's Perch is less than 10 miles across, which would very likely result in the PCs splashing down in the ocean a few miles off shore from the island. A better solution would be to use a few castings of 7th-rank *teleport* to make the trip in two steps, but still, as Fallenta points out (if she's involved in the discussion), actually making landfall on the island via *teleport* might be tricky. The PCs can also make short work of the journey south via *umbral journey* spells, but in the end, mundane ship travel is always an option.

Since Fallenta hasn't yet decided on a premiere date for the opera, there's plenty of time to make the journey south via passenger ship if there's no other option. This trip is not only long, but dangerous—it requires sailing along the coast of Cheliox, around the eternal hurricane known as the Eye of Abendego, and then through pirate-controlled waters. Furthermore, all of the islands in Petrel's Perch's chain are uninhabited; this, coupled with the wilderness of the nearby coastline, results in there being very little ship traffic in the region (qualities that played a key part in Oriole's choice to retire to this particular island). As a result, the PCs will need to charter a ship for at least part of the journey. When all is said and done, a sailing trip from Kintargo to Petrel's Perch is closer to 2,400 miles, would take just over a month to complete (assuming good weather and a few short stops along the way

TELEPORTATION ACCESS

Teleport is an uncommon spell, but Curtain Call's pacing works best when the PCs gain access to this magic. In the previous adventure, "Stage Fright," the PCs may have discovered a *wand of teleport* (6th-rank) and a 7th-rank *scroll of teleport*.

While there are no spellcasters currently in Kintargo who offer spellcasting services that include *teleport* at 8th-rank, one *scroll of teleport* at rank 8 is available for 1,300 gp at Crissali's Fine Tomes, Kintargo's finest bookshop. Fallenta offers to purchase this scroll for the PCs to use to return home with Oriole.

As soon as the PCs gain any of these items, all spellcasting PCs should gain access to *teleport*. Consider also allowing access to similar fast-travel spells like *migration*, *nature's pathway*, and *umbral journey*.

to resupply), and would cost each PC approximately 60 gp each in passage. This is about twice the normal cost, to account for the potential dangers along the way. If it comes to this, Fallenta steps in to pay for the cost of the trip, and whether or not the PCs encounter dangerous encounters, bad weather, or other trouble along the way is left to you to decide.

The return trip should be easier, as Fallenta strongly encourages the PCs use *teleport* or other powerful magic to do so. Traveling back to Kintargo via this spell is much safer, since being 10 miles off-target to Kintargo is much less likely to drop the travelers miles out to sea. Further, offering Oriole an easy and magical return trip has a good chance to impress them and might help convince them to return to the stage.

PETREL'S PERCH

Petrel's Perch is just five miles across at its widest point. Most of the island's shoreline consist of jagged cliffsides, but an idyllic lagoon inside of the "C" shaped island features a lovely beach on which Oriole has seen to the construction of a single pier that can accommodate most sailing ships. Much of the island is covered by subtropical forest with thick, trackless undergrowth, but on a clear day, one can see Oriole's estate sitting atop the island's highest peak from several miles out to sea.

No map of Petrel's Perch is needed for this section, as all of the action takes place on the estate grounds. The walk up from the beach along the trail is uneventful.

BREAKING THE SIEGE

As the PCs make their way through Oriole's estate, they have opportunities to break the fey siege apart. This uses the Diminishing Victory Points variation of the Victory Points subsystem (*GM Core* 185). When the PCs arrive on Petrel's Perch, the fey have accumulated 15 Siege Points. The PCs have multiple opportunities while exploring to decrease this value—they have until they reach Oriole's solarium (area **A10**) or until 36 hours have passed since their arrival at Petrel's Perch to decrease the Siege Point value as much as possible. The lower the Siege Point total, the better their chances are of convincing Izhkarial to stand down without a fight (see Ending the Siege on page 17).

THE SIEGE

Petrel's Perch is under attack by Izhkarial, a powerful brine dragon from the northern Shackles who's heard of Oriole's talents. Izhkarial views humanoids as charming pets and hopes to take Oriole home as her resident "songbird." In order to secure her latest pet, the dragon has sent a small army of loyal subjects to Petrel's Perch to go about the business of capturing Oriole alive and then delivering them to the dragon, who waits in safety on a nearby isle.

The siege, however, hasn't gone as planned. Although Oriole wasn't expecting an attack, they've long been wary of intruders and had a magical defense built into their estate: if anyone attempts to enter their house without permission, a barrier of sonic energy materializes over the windows and doors, blocking entry. Izhkarial's strike team triggered the barrier when they first attempted to sneak into the estate; they were able to dodge through it before it fully formed but were then cut off from the rest of their forces. Now, the fey are split into two groups—one stuck inside the estate and another left outside. Those who are outdoors are trying to find a way in while standing guard against any allies Oriole may have summoned. Both groups grow increasingly nervous about how long this is all taking and fear that it's only a matter of time before a bitterly disappointed—and possibly violently vengeful—Izhkarial arrives to "take matters into her own claws."

Ironically, Oriole herself has remained completely unaware of the fey siege, as but an hour before the attack began, they'd retreated to their bedroom to work on a new song. To ensure they wouldn't be disturbed, they activated the room's silence effect, blocking all sound from outside and then promptly

lost track of time. Increasingly enraptured, their work on a "new song" quickly transformed into an entire collection. To have a chance to recruit Oriole, the PCs must get inside the house and deal with the strike team before Izhkarial arrives to capture the diva!

PACING THE SIEGE

The siege on Oriole's estate involves numerous encounters. Though not all of them necessarily require combat, a party trying charge straight through might quickly get in over their heads. The players should feel the situation is urgent, but if they need to retreat and rest, there's time to do so. In fact, doing so might make things a little more pleasant, since the *control weather* ritual expires 24 hours after the PCs' arrival. Once this happens, the PCs have only 12 more hours before Izhkarial returns to check up on the siege's progress (see Ending the Siege on page 17).

ESTATE FEATURES

Through the rain and lush foliage, a wrought-iron fence with an open front gate comes into view. Beyond it stands an elegant two-story mansion, its brick walls adorned with vines and roses that twine up its sides. A sheen of rippling energy covers the building's many windows, as well as a skylight visible on the second story.

If the PCs followed the trail up from the beach, they arrive at area **A1**. The thick undergrowth outside the fence is difficult terrain. The iron fence that surrounds the estate is 10 feet high and can be Climbed with a DC 25 Athletics check.

Inside the manor, ceilings are 10 feet high unless otherwise specified. Although the house contains many valuable objects and art pieces, these aren't presented as treasure, as stealing Oriole's possessions will hardly endear the PCs to the diva!

THE HARMONIC BARRIER

When the fey invaded the house, they triggered a complex ward known as a harmonic barrier. This ward persists until Oriole deactivates it or the PCs disable it—the fey lack the skill and bravery to do so themselves.

HARMONIC BARRIER

HAZARD 14

ENVIRONMENTAL **MAGICAL**
Stealth DC 38 (master)

Description Every potential point of entry to the house, whether window or door, is covered with a barrier of

sonic energy that prevents passage, visible as a faintly shimmering energy field.

Disable DC 38 Thievery (expert) to remove the barrier from a single window or exterior door, DC 38 Occultism (master) to manipulate the harmonics in a way that disrupts the entire barrier (four successes are required to disable it), or *dispel magic* (7th rank, counteract DC 31) to counteract the barrier from a single window or exterior door

Deny Passage ♦ (sonic) **Trigger** A creature attempts to enter or exit the manor through a window or exterior door; **Effect** The barrier blasts the triggering creature with devastating sound, ringing out like a thunderous low-pitched gong; the triggering creature must attempt a DC 34 Reflex save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected and can pass through the window or door without harm.

Success The creature takes 7d6 sonic damage but can pass through the window or door.

Failure The creature takes 14d6 sonic damage and is pushed back 5 feet.

Critical Failure The creature takes 28d6 sonic damage, is pushed back 10 feet, and falls prone.

Reset The harmonic barrier resets the instant after it's triggered.

Reward: Grant the PCs 40 XP once the entire party manages to get into the manor, regardless of method. If the PCs disable the barrier from 3 or fewer entrances, increase Siege Points by 1. If the PCs disable the barrier from 4 or more entrances (including removal of the entire barrier), increase Siege Points by 2.

A1. ESTATE GROUNDS MEDIUM 14

An iron gate fashioned to look like a page of sheet music hangs open in front of the house, swinging crookedly on broken hinges. Past the gate, pathways extend to the east and west, as well as to the house's front door, which also hangs slightly open but is covered with a faint shimmer of energy—as are the building's shuttered windows. Farther to the northeast of the manor stands a gazebo, its trellised sides adorned with vines. Patches of wildflowers grow here and there alongside the path amid several taller trees.

The shimmer of energy on the doors and windows is the harmonic barrier (see above). The windows are all closed with wood shutters and fitted with panes of glass; the harmonic barrier won't trigger until someone tries to actually enter through a window they've opened, which allows curious PCs to safely open shutters and peer into rooms as they wish.

The wooden gazebo at area A1a contains a blown-over wicker chair, but little else of interest unless a PC Searches the area and succeeds at a DC 34 Perception check to discover a delicate looking magic key carved from abalone shell—see Treasure on page 11.

Creatures: A team of six shanty chanters, fey native to the Shackles, brought an inadvisable ally here: a spinosaurus they found on a nearby island and managed to cast *charm* on. They were able to command their dinosaur ally to break open the gate (an act of petty vandalism) and hoped to use it against the magical barrier once it materialized, but when the dinosaur took a bit of damage from the harmonic barrier, it broke free from its enchantment and is now quite displeased. After it ate one of the shanty chanters, the remaining six fled to the far side of the manor.

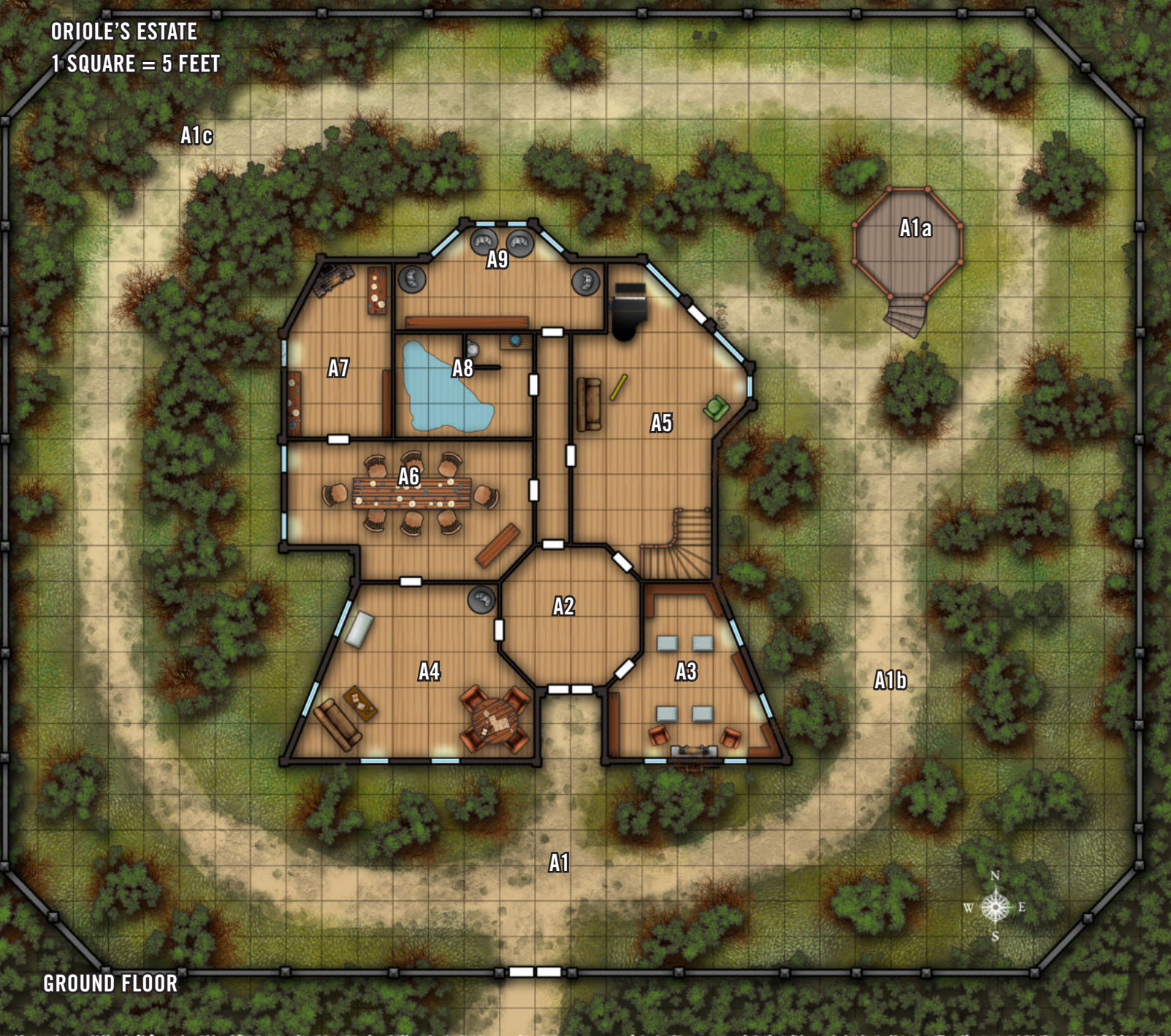
As the PCs approach, the immense spinosaurus hunkered down on the path surrounding the manor at area A1b is obvious, but a successful DC 30 Perception check is enough for PCs to discern that the dinosaur seems wounded and wary as it lurks motionless, almost as if it were waiting for something to happen. It's warily awaiting the return of the shanty chanters, ready to leap up to attack them again on sight.

Spotting the shanty chanters is trickier, as the half-dozen fey have relocated to a position on the far side of the manor at area A1c, where they now lurk in the particularly dense undergrowth on either side of the path. They're hopeful that their companions inside of the manor will finish the mission so they can all leave.

The spinosaurus, still a bit wounded from its experience, doesn't immediately attack the PCs if it notices them, but it does lurch to its feet and issues a low rumbling growl. If the PCs approach within 20 feet of the dinosaur, it attacks, but otherwise it remains where it is, potentially giving a party who can cast *speak with animals* a chance to recruit its aid. A PC who heals the dinosaur of its damage causes the creature to roar in relief and begin stalking around the grounds in search of the shanty chanters—it won't attack the PC or their allies as long as they leave the dinosaur alone.

The shanty chanters aren't as friendly. Once they spot the PCs wandering the grounds, they move toward the party until they can attempt to cast *charm* on one or two of them. Once a fight begins, one of the fey makes sure to use Shanty Call while the others focus on attacking with spells, resorting to melee only as a last resort. If the spinosaurus sees any of the shanty chanters, it attacks them at once, even breaking off from an ongoing fight against the PCs to do so. As soon as at least half of the shanty chanters are slain, the remainder abandon their post and flee Petrel's

ORIOLE'S ESTATE
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



THE SHACKLES



UPPER FLOOR



Perch entirely. The dinosaur is content to stay in the vicinity if the PCs haven't antagonized it.

SHANTY CHANTERS (6)

CREATURE 10

Page 88

Initiative Perception +20

ELITE SPINOSAURUS

CREATURE 12

Pathfinder Bestiary 2 6, 82

Initiative Perception +23

HP 220 (currently 180 after taking damage from the harmonic barrier)

Treasure: The magical *abalone shell key* hidden in the gazebo isn't meant to unlock any actual lock but is instead a way to bypass the harmonic barrier—a fail-safe left hidden here by Oriole in the case of an emergency should an ally need to enter the manor. Unfortunately, no one's explained this to the PCs, but a character who examines the key and succeeds at a DC 30 check to Identify Magic discovers the key's purpose. A character who carries the key can come and go freely through the harmonic barrier. In order for multiple PCs to pass through, they need to toss the key back and forth through an open doorway or window. The key has no other use beyond this, but its delicate artistry makes it an art object worth 200 gp.

Reward: If the PCs defeat the shanty chanters here, decrease the Siege Point total by 2. If they set the spinosaurus against the fey and the dinosaur remains in the area, instead decrease the Siege Point total by 3. Grant the PCs XP as if they defeated the spinosaurus in combat if they avoided fighting it and instead recruited it.

A2. FOYER

Low 14

Paintings adorn the walls of this octagonal entry hall, some reaching almost all the way to the ceiling. There seems to be no rhyme or reason to the art's curation, as the paintings' subjects range from portraits of well-dressed people to landscapes to abstract shapes. Closed wooden doors, each carved with music notes, stand in four of the walls, with the door to the front yard hanging open on its hinges. Light filters in from a skylight in the arched ceiling twenty feet above, and a thick, slightly rumpled red carpet crisscrosses the floor. Three marble statues of a beautiful androgynous figure stand between the interior doors.

Oriole showcases their favorite pieces of art, regardless of subject, in their foyer. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Survival or DC 25 Perception check realizes the rumpled carpets show the trail of creatures that hurried out of the foyer, one group toward area

A4 and the other toward area A5. On a critical success, they identify that four creatures ran through the door to area A4 and one ran toward area A5.

Creatures: The statues are recognizable as depictions of Arshea to any PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Religion check to Recall Knowledge, but they are more than mere decorations. The three statues are divine wardens, gifted to Oriole by a former patron. Izhkarial's strike team prioritized escape over fighting them, and thus the constructs are undamaged. They immediately attack any intruders, but don't pursue foes outside this room.

If presented with a religious symbol of Arshea, the divine wardens stand down. Alternatively, the PCs can convince them to cease hostilities by taking an action to recite an Arshean prayer and succeeding at a DC 32 Religion check.

ARSHEAN WARDENS (3)

CREATURE 12

UNCOMMON MEDIUM CONSTRUCT MINDLESS

Variant divine warden (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 73)

Perception +23; darkvision

Skills Athletics +23

Str +6, **Dex** +7, **Con** +5, **Int** -5, **Wis** +4, **Cha** -5

Items +1 greater striking flaming flail

AC 33; **Fort** +21, **Ref** +25, **Will** +20

HP 270; **Immunities** death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, mental, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, unconscious

Divine Destruction (divine) As divine warden, but 12d6 vitality damage (Will DC 32).

Faith Bound (divine) As divine warden.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ flail +25 (disarm, magical, sweep, trip), **Damage** 3d6+11 bludgeoning plus 1d6 fire

Melee ♦ fist +24 (agile), **Damage** 3d6+11 bludgeoning

Divine Innate Spells DC 32; **Cantrips** (6th) *divine lance*

Divine Domain Spells 2 Focus Points, DC 32; **6th** *charming touch* (*Player Core* 378), *captivating adoration* (*Player Core* 378), *unimpeded stride* (*Player Core* 375), *word of freedom* (*Player Core* 375)

Faithful Weapon As divine warden.

Instrument of Faith As divine warden.

Reward: If the PCs get the wardens to stand down, decrease the Siege Point total by 1 and grant the PCs XP as if they'd defeated the wardens in combat. If they destroy the wardens, increase the Siege Point total by 1.

A3. LIBRARY

Shelves displaying rows of leatherbound books stretch from floor to ceiling in this room. Wooden bookends carved to resemble musical instruments are placed at intervals

between the tomes. Window seats draped in gauzy fabric provide cozy reading nooks with views out into the yard, and a door leads into the room from the east. On either side of the room are four glass cases, each displaying a slim volume atop a marble pedestal.

Treasure: The library contains books on music, performance, and the arts. Consulting the collection while Investigating grants a +2 circumstance bonus to skill checks to Recall Knowledge about these topics. The collection is 90 bulk and worth 650 gp, but looting the books won't help the PCs recruit Oriole.

The librettos on display in the four glass cases are of Oriole's favorite productions: *Lament of the Sea*, *The Huldra Queen*, *Unheard Whispers*, and *Long-Lost Favor*. These are the original librettos; Oriole has extensively annotated each one and has bookmarked the pages of their favorite arias. Each rare text is worth 100 gp. The librettos are also a clue to the password in the music room (area A5). A character who looks

through all of the marked passages in these four books over the course of 10 minutes of Investigation and then succeeds at a DC 27 Theater Lore check, a DC 32 Society check to Decipher Writing, or a DC 34 Perception check remembers enough about these arias to notice similarities between the first lines and the decorations of the archway to the stairs in area A5. They realize this immediately if the PCs have already been to that room or notice it as soon as they visit.

A4. PARLOR

An overstuffed couch and coffee table take up one corner of this comfortable parlor, while a breakfast table and chairs sit on the opposite side. Sheets of music are fanned out on the table, with the remains of a half-eaten pastry abandoned next to them. Several bay windows with cushioned seats provide a view of the lush greenery outside, and there's a statue of a dancing nymph in the northeast corner.

After running afoul of the divine wardens, half of Izhkarial's strike team fled through here, led by two rusalkas named Tekaraal and Nivara. They slowed down upon realizing the divine wardens weren't following, making them more difficult to track, but a PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Survival check or DC 35 Perception check spots a faint trail of blood leading to area A6.

Treasure: A PC who Searches this room for 10 minutes or who Seeks near the nymph statue and succeeds at a DC 32 Perception check spots a secret panel in the wall. If pressed, the panel slides open to reveal a metallic rod, faintly radiating magic. This is a *control baton* for the stone bulwarks in area A9 and can be identified as such with a successful DC 28 check to Identify Magic. A character who holds the *control baton* in one hand can issue simple commands to the stone bulwarks as an action.

A5. MUSIC ROOM

Low 14

A beautiful piano occupies a nook to the north in this spacious room, with sheet music sitting upon it. Along the walls are several instrument stands holding a violin, mandolin, flute, and lyre. A harp sits next to a white couch to the west. Windows look out onto the terrace and gardens, and musical notes etched in gold-leaf decorate the wooden trim on the walls. A spiral staircase in the south leads up to the house's second floor, its entrance adorned with a wooden archway carved with what appear to be four different scenes from four different stories. A field of energy shimmers within the archway itself.



Arshean Warden

Oriole spends a great deal of time here, composing and practicing new songs.

Creatures: Part of Izhkarial's strike team, a kishi named Miavri and two harmonas, took refuge in the music room after escaping area A2. Upon realizing the constructs weren't following, they decided to hide here and try to investigate the upper levels, but they're still pondering how to get past the barrier blocking access into the stairwell through the archway.

Miavri's been relaxing in the chair near the eastern window as he thinks over how to find a way through the barrier in the stairwell archway. Meanwhile, the two harmonas have taken up perches atop the harp and wait patiently for orders from the kishi. Miavri's in his human persona, his hyena face hidden, and when he spots the PCs, he rises up from the chair he's been relaxing in with a gasp of relief. Miavri pretends to be a trapped guest and thanks the PCs for "coming to our rescue!" He claims that his good friend Oriole fled upstairs, only to become trapped in there by some sort of "fey magic" that's blocked the archway. If the PCs can remove this barrier, he promises to escort them upstairs and introduce them to Oriole.

Of course, this is a lie—Miavri hopes the PCs can remove the barrier, at which point he and the harmonas attack. Although Miavri's skilled at Lying, his story is relatively implausible, especially if the PCs realize that the nature of the barrier feels more like one of Oriole's defenses rather than "fey magic," or if they recognize the harmonas for fey and not "fancy songbirds" like Miavri claims. As such, he takes a -4 circumstance penalty to Deception checks when he attempts to Lie about this to the PCs. If he suspects his lies aren't working, he tries casting *subconscious suggestion* on whomever he thinks is the party's leader to try to get them to agree to the request and attempt to remove the barrier.

Once combat breaks out (either after the PCs see through the lie or disguise, or after they remove the archway's barrier), Miavri orders the harmonas to attack. He spins his head and joins the fight. While these fey are loyal to Izhkarial, their loyalty isn't absolute. A harmona reduced to fewer than 30 HP attempts to flee or begs for mercy (speaking in Fey). Miavri does the same if reduced to fewer than 50 HP. If mercy is granted, any of the fey here can tell the PCs about Izhkarial's intentions and the strike team's incursion into Oriole's estate, although they don't know what happened to the rest of the team. They do mention hearing music across the hall (from area A8), but haven't investigated yet. They warn the PCs that Izhkarial intends to return soon and that she'll be angry if the fey haven't captured Oriole by that point.

As such, the PCs had best be prepared for either a fight or for some silver-tongued fast talking to convince the dragon to lose interest in her latest pursuit. Miavri and the harmonas promise to do what they can to help convince Izhkarial when she arrives, though they don't seem optimistic that they can talk her out of her goals. In any event, Miavri offers the PCs his *major charm of acid resistance* as a reward as thanks for the mercy they've granted him.

MIAVRI

CREATURE 13

UNIQUE MEDIUM FEY

Variant male kishi (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 149)

Perception +23; low-light vision

Languages Common, Fey, Mwangi

Skills Athletics +26, Deception +25, Diplomacy +23, Society +20, Stealth +24

Str +7, **Dex** +5, **Con** +3, **Int** +1, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +6

Items *major charm of acid resistance*

AC 32; **Fort** +20, **Ref** +26, **Will** +23

HP 232 (currently 220); **Weaknesses** cold iron 15, **Resistance** acid 15, piercing 15

Speed 25 feet

Melee ✦ jaws +26, **Damage** 3d10+13 piercing plus Grab

Melee ✦ claw +26 (agile), **Damage** 3d8+13 slashing

Arcane Innate Spells DC 33; **5th** *subconscious suggestion*; 1st charm (at will)

Constrict ✦ 2d10+13 piercing, DC 33 (grabbed by jaws only)

Head Spin ✦ As kishi.

Sudden Charge ✦✦ As kishi.

Vicelike Jaws As kishi.

HARMONAS (2)

CREATURE 11

Pathfinder Bestiary 3 132

Initiative Perception +24

Hazard: The spiral staircase in this room leads up to area A10, but the carved wooden archway before it is filled with a shimmering wall of force that blasts anyone who attempts to interact with it with waves of damaging sound. The carvings on the archway depict four scenes—a woman wrapping herself in a cloak at the edge of a stormy ocean, a man clad in rags reaching up to touch a butterfly emerging from a cocoon, a slender woman clutching a sword to her chest, and a portly man with his hands raised to a night sky in which a single star shines brighter than all the rest. Any PC who successfully studied the librettos in area A3 or the guardians in area A9 immediately recognizes these four scenes as depictions of famous arias—in particular, the first lines of four different arias.

ARCHWAY BARRIER

HAZARD 14

UNIQUE ENVIRONMENTAL MAGICAL

Stealth DC 10

Description A shimmering field of force fills the carved wooden archway, beyond which a flight of stairs leads upward.

Disable DC 30 Performance (expert) to perform the four aria lines (requires four successes), DC 41 Thievery (master) to deface one of the four carved images (requires four successes), *disintegrate* of any rank, or *dispel magic* (7th rank, counteract DC 31) to counteract the barrier

AC 39; Fort +30, Ref +22

Hardness 30; HP 80 (BT 40);

Immunities critical hits, object immunities, precision damage, sonic

Deny Passage ◆ (sonic) **Trigger** A creature interacts with the barrier; **Effect** The barrier blasts the triggering creature with devastating sound, ringing out like a shrill operatic cry; the triggering creature must attempt a DC 34 Reflex save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature takes 7d6 sonic damage.

Failure The creature takes 14d6 sonic damage and is pushed back 5 feet.

Critical Failure The creature takes 28d6 sonic damage, is pushed back 10 feet, and falls prone.

Reset The harmonic barrier resets the instant after it is triggered.

Reward: Grant the PCs 40 XP if they manage to learn about Izhkarial's plans and recruit the fey's aid. If they kill the fey here, decrease the Siege Point total by 1, but if they grant them mercy and earn their aid, decrease the Siege Point total by 2 instead.

A6. DINING ROOM

A long dining table, its legs carved into a delicate feather pattern, takes up the center of this room. The ceiling overhead is painted with a colorful mural of three women (two of whom have wings) in robes reclining affectionately against one another on couches and enjoying a meal. Along the southeast wall stands a well-stocked bar, though the bottles it holds are rather dusty.

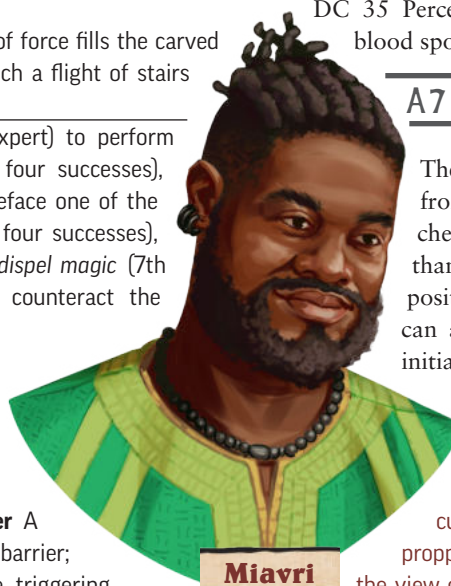
Oriole eats in the parlor and doesn't spend much time here, though on rare occasions, they invite some old friends to their home for a dinner party. The mural on the ceiling depicts Shelyn, Desna, and Sarenrae,

recognizable by anyone at least trained in Religion.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Survival check or DC 35 Perception check can follow the trail of blood spots leading from area A4 into area A7.

A7. KITCHEN

Low 14



Miavri

The door to the kitchen is barricaded shut from inside, requiring a DC 30 Athletics check to Force Open. If this takes more than one round, the rusalkas inside take position on either side of the door so they can ambush the PCs and roll Stealth for initiative, while the shanty chanters hang back. One of them activates Shanty Call.

This once-tidy kitchen is ransacked, its cupboard doors torn off and haphazardly propped up against the windows, blocking the view outside. The remains of a small table and chairs, which formerly barricaded the door into the room, lie scattered across the floor. Packages of rice and beans, hastily torn open, are spilled over the marble counters, while a brick stove stands to the north.

Creatures: The two rusalkas, Tekaraal and Nivara, led their team into the kitchen and barricaded themselves inside while they planned their next steps. They attack upon the PCs' arrival and refuse to surrender or share information, as they're looking forward to making Oriole miserable in captivity.

SHANTY CHANTERS (6)

CREATURE 10

Page 88

Initiative Perception +20

TEKARAAL AND NIVARA

CREATURE 12

Variant rusalkas (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 229)

Initiative Perception +22 or Stealth +25

Items greater elixirs of life (3 each)

Primal Innate Spells DC 35; **5th** *control water* (at will), *hydraulic push* (×3); **2nd** *invisibility* (at will), *mist* (at will);

Constant (6th) *water walk*

Reward: For defeating the fey here, decrease the Siege Point total by 2.

A8. BATHS

TRIVIAL 14

Set into the floor of this tiled room is a gently frothing pool of water surrounded by vines and greenery that seem to grow out of the walls. Though indoors, it appears as a

tropical forest pond. A wall to the north partially conceals a small sink and lavatory, and the room smells of flowers and perfume. Opera music plays from a small clockwork device set along the pool's edge.

Oriole's bath is enchanted to fill, drain, heat, or bubble upon verbal command. They've decorated it to match the forest outside so they can feel like they're enjoying the great outdoors without dealing with all the pesky bugs.

Creatures: While Oriole rarely gets visitors, they currently have an unusual houseguest: an imentesh protean who showed up a week before the PCs' arrival. The imentesh dramatically introduced herself as "Grandmama," claiming that Oriole was descended from her line, and made herself at home. Although Oriole has no idea whether they're actually a descendant of Grandmama's, they were amused enough by the protean's antics and personality to go along with it regardless.

Grandmama has been relaxing in the baths, listening to some of Oriole's performances on a clockwork spy she's used to record the songs onto. She has been doing so for the entirety of the siege and has no idea the estate is under attack. When the PCs enter, the serpentine creature rises up with a startled splash from the waters of the pool, coiling her tail around her like a boa and pressing a claw to her chest in exaggerated shock as she addresses the PCs.

"Goodness me! Don't you know to knock before you interrupt a lady in the bath? How very forward... especially considering that I don't recognize you. Are you friends of my dear Oriole?"

Though surprised to see newcomers, Grandmama finds the PCs interesting and is quite chatty. If informed the estate is being attacked, she reacts with the dramatic fanning and fretting of an elderly noble lady with the vapors; she muses that, perhaps, she should make her exit while Oriole's unruly "guests" have it out.

The PCs can convince Grandmama to remain on the estate with a DC 33 Deception, Diplomacy, or Performance check; each PC can attempt to do so once. If no PC succeeds, she uses *translocate* to abandon the estate and doesn't return. On a success, she offers them the clockwork spy, telling them to "enjoy my dear descendant's work!" This recording contains Oriole's four favorite arias, giving them hints to the puzzle in area A5. If the PCs play the recording in area A5, it automatically disables the archway barrier there.

If the PCs attack Grandmama, she clucks her tongue as if in the presence of naughty grandchildren

and fights back, although she abandons the estate via *translocate* if reduced to fewer than 100 HP.

GRANDMAMA

CREATURE 11

UNIQUE LARGE MONITOR PROTEAN

Variant elite imentesh (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 6, 207)

Initiative Perception +21

Divine Innate Spells DC 34; **5th** *dispel magic*, *divine wrath*, *sending*, *translocate*; **4th** *creation*, *shatter*, *translocate* (at will); **3rd** *haste*, *mending*, *shrink item*, *slow*; **Constant** (5th) *truespeech*, *unfettered movement*

CLOCKWORK SPY

CREATURE -1

Pathfinder Bestiary 3 48

Initiative Perception +8

Treasure: If the PCs win Grandmama over, she gifts them both the clockwork spy as well as her *major entertainer's lute* and two *greater potions of acid resistance* to "protect your delicate mortal forms." If they critically succeeded in their attempt, she also gives them the *illuminated folio* she was perusing in the bath.

Reward: If the PCs ally with Grandmama, grant them 40 XP and decrease the Siege Point total by 2. Additionally, she aids them in the encounter with Izhkarial (see page 17).

A9. GALLERY

Low 14

A large bay window juts from the northern wall of this room, providing a view of the trees outside. Display cases arrayed along the wall contain a variety of props, stage weaponry, and several costumed mannequins, each with a label beneath it in swirling script. Four statues stand throughout the room: a dark-haired woman in a red gown, a clean-shaven man dressed in rags, a slender woman with a sword at her waist, and a portly man with glasses. Each one is posed as though in the midst of singing.

The gallery showcases props and costumes from Oriole's opera days; each one is labeled with the name of the show, Oriole's role, and the year of the performance. Each statue depicts Oriole in one of their four favorite roles: Devorine from *Lament of the Sea*, Teracio from *The Huldra Queen*, Raliana from *Unheard Whispers*, and Vortalis from *Long-Lost Favor*. A PC who succeeds at a DC 32 Society or DC 27 Theater Lore check to Recall Knowledge recognizes these depictions; the character and opera names are also inscribed on plaques at the bottom of each statue.

Creatures: The statues are no mere decoration, but stone bulwarks! The constructs do not leave this

ARCHWAY PASSPHRASE

"When darkness came, I wrapped myself in its cloak." [Alto aria from *Lament of the Sea*]

"Bright forgotten dreams, like butterflies within cocoons." [Tenor aria from *The Huldra Queen*]

"Love will be my sword for you." [Soprano aria from *Unheard Whispers*]

"My guiding star, I will not lose my way again." [Bass aria from *Long-Lost Favor*]

room, and a PC using the *control baton* found in area A4 can order them to stand down. Alternatively, if a PC prepares a disguise to Impersonate Oriole, they can attempt a DC 32 Deception check to fool the constructs into standing down. Otherwise, the stone bulwarks attack all intruders; they won't pursue foes

out of this room. These stone bulwarks do not have a ranged thrown rock Strike.

OPERATIC STONE BULWARKS (4)

CREATURE 11

UNCOMMON MEDIUM CONSTRUCT MINDLESS

Variant stone bulwark (*Monster Core* 324)

Initiative Perception +17

Melee ♦ fist +24 (magical), **Damage** 2d10+13 bludgeoning and binding stone

Reward: If the PCs get the bulwarks to stand down, they gain XP as though they defeated them in combat. If they destroy the bulwarks, increase Siege Points by 1. If they use the *control baton* to issue commands to the bulwarks to patrol the grounds, decrease Siege Points by 2.

A10. SOLARIUM

This bright, open room features three large windows, with couches and chairs placed to provide a good view of the grounds below. An easel with a half-completed painting of a jungle landscape stands in one corner, while above, the domed ceiling is made entirely of glass. An archway in the south leads to a spiral staircase that descends to the lower level.

This room is one of Oriole's favorites to paint in; the painting on the easel is a half-finished landscape of an imaginary vista.

The first time the PCs enter this room, the end of the Siege begins as the dragon Izhkariel makes her dramatic entrance through the skylight above—proceed with "Ending the Siege." If the siege has already come to an end as a result of the passage of 36 hours, nothing of interest takes place herein.

A11. ORIOLE'S BEDROOM

Every inch of this bedroom is covered in an eclectic array of knickknacks, from floor to ceiling. A velvet-draped four-poster bed sits against a diagonal wall, its sheets rumpled, and a door in the northeast corner leads to a walk-in wardrobe filled with a staggering array of clothes.

Oriole views their bedroom as an inner sanctum and had the walls of the chamber enhanced magically so that they serve as soundproofing. Sound within the room functions normally, but as long as both doors to the bedroom are closed, no sound from the outside world can reach this chamber. It's within



Grandmama

this room that Oriole has retreated with enough food, water, and wine to last for a few days while they work in solitude on their latest creation.

Treasure: The expensive gifts that Oriole might reward the PCs with after their improvised performance are found here; see page 21 for a full list of these treasures. At your discretion, if the PCs don't earn all of these gifts in this chapter, Oriole might give the remainder out later in the adventure once they get to know them better.

A12. THEATER

This cozy theater features five blue velvet chairs. The ornately carved wood-paneled walls evoke the feel of pre-Civil War Chelaxian opera halls. A stage flanked by colonnades is to the north, its deep-purple curtains closed and embroidered in silver with swirling constellations. A small piano has been placed in the northeast.

Oriole originally intended to host private performances here, though they never have, and the theater has been ignored since the house's construction.

ENDING THE SIEGE

There's two ways the Siege of Petrel's Perch can end. Either the PCs finally enter the upper floor of Oriole's manor, or 36 hours pass after their arrival on the island. In both cases, regardless of the actual trigger, you should present the end of the siege as the result of the dragon Izhkarial finally losing patience and coming to the island to capture Oriole herself, as she assumes her minions have failed. In any case, Izhkarial's approach to the PCs' location should be suitably dramatic. For example, if it takes place in the solarium (area A10), the dragon lands on the estate's roof and smashes the glass skylight open with a swipe of her tail (note that she's not actually attempting to enter the manor yet, so this act of destruction does not trigger the harmonic barrier if it's still active) and then accosting the PCs through the shattered roof. The dragon's attitude and her actions upon arriving in the PCs' vicinity depend upon how many Siege Points remain.

5 or Fewer Siege Points: Izhkarial is surprised to find her fey have failed so spectacularly and cedes to caution. She suspects the PCs are dangerous, and the PCs gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all checks made to Influence her. The influence encounter with Izhkarial lasts for 4 rounds. Grant the PCs 120 XP.

6–10 Siege Points: Izhkarial is annoyed to find her fey have underperformed, but doesn't automatically

see the PCs as potentially dangerous. The influence encounter with Izhkarial lasts for 3 rounds. Grant the PCs 80 XP.

11–14 Siege Points: Izhkarial is frustrated that her fey haven't yet succeeded and sees the PCs as new pets to capture (at best) or foes to destroy (at worst). The PCs gain a –2 circumstance penalty to all checks made to Influence her. The influence encounter with Izhkarial lasts for 2 rounds. Grant the PCs 40 XP.

15 or more Siege Points: Izhkarial sees things have gone about as well as she expected and doesn't give the PCs a chance to speak to her. After greeting them, she attacks at once.

SPEAKING WITH IZHKARIAL

If Izhkarial doesn't immediately attack the PCs, she greets them with voice that rumbles like a crashing wave.

"Friends of my new pet, I take it? You need not fear for the songbird's safety; Oriole will be well-looked after. The same cannot be said for you if you get in my way, however, so I'd advise you to drop your weapons and leave the way you came in."

If the PCs attack, the dragon roars in delight as the group plays into her expectations, but otherwise, the dragon is willing to chat with the party for a bit before she makes up her mind. This influence encounter plays out over the course of several 5-minute rounds. The number of rounds the PCs have available to influence the dragon depends on the current Siege Point total, as detailed above.

IZHKARIAL

LEVEL 16

UNIQUE **GARGANTUAN** **AMPHIBIOUS** **DRAGON** **PRIMAL**

Artistically inclined brine dragon

Perception +28

Will +28

Discovery DC 27 Dragon Lore, DC 32 Nature, DC 34 Perception

Influence Skills DC 27 Theater Lore (to share stories about favorite performances), DC 30 Performance (to appeal to Izhkarial's appreciation of entertainment), DC 32 Diplomacy, DC 34 Deception, DC 38 Intimidation

Influence 1 Izhkarial agrees to leave Oriole alone if the PCs make a contribution to her hoard worth at least 8,000 gp.

Influence 3 Izhkarial reduces her demand to a bribe worth 3,000 gp.

Influence 5 Izhkarial agrees to leave without any bribe.

Influence 6 Izhkarial agrees to leave without any bribe

and is so impressed with the PCs that she offers them a reward (see Treasure, below) in return for their efforts to come to a non-violent solution.

Influence 7 As Influence 6, but two treasures are offered.

Influence 8 As Influence 6, but all treasures are offered.

Resistances Izhkarial isn't impressed by those who are crass, crude, or unseemly. Any PC who critically fails a Charisma-based check to Influence her (or at your discretion, any PC who simply acts in an unseemly manner) takes a -4 penalty on all future checks to Influence the dragon.

Weaknesses Izhkarial finds intimidation by "particularly tiny things" amusing. Small or smaller creatures who use Intimidation reduce the Influence DC to 32.

Background Izhkarial has dwelled on a remote island in the northeast Shackles for centuries but has kept her presence in the region mostly hidden. She has a habit of collecting humanoids to keep as "pets" and favors those who are skilled performers. Her island home is inhabited by a large number of fey, and whenever a previous pet expires, she charges her fey minions with exploring the surrounding islands and sea routes. When they discover a talented new "pet," they report to her and she begins plotting their abduction at once.

Appearance A deep blue-green dragon with sleek lines and glistening fins, Izhkarial takes pride in her appearance.

Personality artistic, determined, haughty

Penalty If, at the end of the influence encounter, the PCs fail to at least reach Influence 5, or if they fail to reach Influence 3 and don't agree to pay the bribe Izhkarial demands, the dragon attacks.

If the PCs come to an agreement with Izhkarial, the dragon casts one last appraising eye over the party as if sizing them up for potential pets, then says, "Very well. Oriole is yours to do with as you wish." She then departs into the sky, calling out in Fey to any surviving minions that she's changed her mind and that they're to leave Petrel's Perch at once. Izhkarial has no further role to play in Curtain Call, but if the PCs are concerned about a dragon out in the Shackles potentially continuing to abduct "pets" from ships and islands, you can expand this adventure to allow the PCs to track the dragon down in her lair for a second confrontation; if you do so, consider adjusting the large amount of treasure they gain from Oriole at the end of this adventure to make up for the fact that they'll surely find more than enough treasure in a dragon's hoard.

Treasure: If the PCs gained enough influence with Izhkarial, the dragon offers one, two, or all the of the items she brought with her from her hoard as rewards for their silver tongues and entertaining arguments. If the PCs are offered a choice, they can

pick any one or two of the three items, but if the PCs reached Influence 8, Izhkarial just undoes the leather belt that her *spacious pouch* is affixed to and gives them the whole lot—all three magical items inside the pouch and the pouch as well. The full list of items Izhkarial carries in the pouch appear in her stat block below.

Reward: If the PCs manage to buy Oriole's freedom by bribing the dragon, grant them XP as if they'd defeated her in combat. If they reach Influence 8 and convince her to leave without a bribe, do the same but grant them an additional 40 XP alongside their other rewards.

FIGHTING WITH IZHKARIAL

MODERATE 14

If combat breaks out, the brine dragon proves to be a dangerous foe. Any surviving fey minions know better than to get involved in the fight; they hang back, letting the PCs face the dragon on their own. The PCs might have the aid of stone bulwarks or Grandmama in this battle, in which case Izhkarial might (at your discretion) command any surviving fey to come to her aid to even the odds. If the harmonic barrier remains in place, the PCs could potentially use that as a defense as well, although once she realizes that the ward only triggers if she attempts to enter the building (through a shattered skylight, for example), Izhkarial switches tactics to attacking the PCs with her magic and breath weapon from outside the building. If she's reduced to 50 HP or less, the dragon roars in frustration, utters a few choice profanities at the PCs, and then says, "Fine, keep your songbird. They're not worth the trouble!" She then flies away, returning to her lair on an isle elsewhere in the Shackles.

IZHKARIAL

CREATURE 16

UNIQUE GARGANTUAN AMPHIBIOUS DRAGON PRIMAL

Variant brine dragon (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 87)

Perception +28; darkvision, scent (imprecise) 60 feet

Languages Common, Draconic, Fey, Thalassic

Skills Acrobatics +29, Athletics +32, Deception +29, Intimidation +31, Nature +28, Performance +29, Society +28, Survival +26

Str +8, **Dex** +5, **Con** +5, **Int** +4, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +5

Items *spacious pouch* (type IV) containing *greater bands of force*, a *singing shortbow* (*Pathfinder Secrets of Magic* 189), and a *major staff of elemental power*

AC 39; **Fort** +29, **Ref** +29, **Will** +28; +1 status to all saves vs. magic

HP 300; **Immunities** acid, paralyzed, sleep

Frightful Presence (aura, emotion, fear, mental) 90 feet, DC 34

Brine Spit ➤ As young brine dragon, but 6d6 damage and DC 34.

Speed 50 feet, fly 140 feet, swim 70 feet

Melee ♦ jaws +32 (acid, magical, reach 20 feet), **Damage** 3d10+16 piercing plus 4d4 acid

Melee ♦ claw +32 (agile, magical, reach 15 feet), **Damage** 3d10+16 slashing

Melee ♦ tail +30 (magical, reach 25 feet), **Damage** 3d12+16 bludgeoning

Melee ♦ wing +30 (magical, reach 20 feet), **Damage** 2d12+16 piercing

Primal Innate Spells DC 37, attack +29; **6th** *hydraulic torrent*; **5th** *control water* (x3), *mariner's curse*; **4th** *hydraulic push* (at will), *mist* (at will)

Brine Breath ♦♦ (acid, primal) Izhkarial breathes a spray of acidic salt water that deals 17d6 acid damage in a 120-foot line (DC 37 basic Reflex save). She can't use Brine Breath again for 1d4 rounds.

Desiccating Bite ♦♦ As adult brine dragon, but 5d6 persistent acid damage and sickened 3

Draconic Frenzy ♦♦ As young brine dragon.

Draconic Momentum As young brine dragon.

AN UNEXPECTED IMPROVISATION

Soon after the PCs finish dealing with Izhkarial and the dragon is dead or has left the island, Oriole emerges from their bedroom. Shortly before the PCs reached the solarium, they finished composing their song and laid down for a nap, letting the room's silence effect expire; they were thus awoken by the commotion. As they open the door, Oriole calls out, "Grandmama, are you fighting with the birds again? I told you, you can't win against seagulls—" before they suddenly stop, taking stock of the scene. They size up the PCs, then says, "You know, darlings, I don't think I invited any of you. Wherever you all came from, I suggest you go back there. Shoo."

Oriole's dismissive reaction is mostly show—they assume the PCs are here for a reason, and as soon as they're told about the fey siege or notice the evidence of fighting that remains behind, Oriole realizes how close they came to disaster. They don't give any outward clue as to how this realization startles them, but a PC who makes a successful DC 37 Perception check to Sense Motive sees through Oriole's carefully maintained expression to note they're relieved that things worked out the way they did.

However the PCs explain their presence, Oriole listens patiently until the PCs make their offer for them to join the production, at which point Oriole interjects with the following.

"Ah yes, that explains it. Well, the remote island should have given you a clue, but darlings, I am retired. The only things the stage holds for me anymore are predatory producers, grueling rehearsals, and selfish managers who crush any actual creativity out of you. I'm tired of it. There's no joy in stage performance. No freedom. Unless you can convince me that your production will be different, I'm afraid you're out of luck, and I'll have to send you on your way in search of another star."

If pressed, Oriole ponders, then presents the PCs a challenge. If they can perform an improvised short play to remind them of the joys of the stage, Oriole will come out of retirement "just this once." They escort the PCs to the unused stage in their theater (area A12), then give the PCs the initial prompt of a dinner party between members of a family bickering over an inheritance, but leave the rest up to their improvisation. Encourage your players come up with fun characters for each of their PCs to play in this improv and to plan out the details of their family and the nature of the inheritance. While they do so, Oriole (with the aid of the estate's *phantasmal minions*) gathers up a collection of props and costumes for the PCs to use. The *phantasmal minions* also set up a table and enough chairs to seat the party on the stage. Give the players no more than a few minutes to talk things over before you, as Oriole, clap your hands and ask the PCs to "take their places!"

This scene plays out over the course of eleven 5-minute rounds. During each round, every player will need to choose one of three specific skill check options to attempt to earn Victory Points (*GM Core* 184) for that round. A PC can opt to not take significant part that round and attempt no skill check if they wish, thereby avoiding a potential critical failure at the cost of not having a chance to earn any Victory Points for that round.

If the PCs caused significant damage to Oriole's house or belongings, they take a -1 circumstance penalty to their skill checks, as Oriole is in a groucher mood. Conversely, if they took care to avoid such damage, such as not destroying the stone bulwarks or divine wardens, they gain a +1 circumstance bonus.

1. SET THE SCENE

OBSTACLE 14

Overcome DC 30 Performance to introduce oneself dramatically, DC 32 Theater Lore to draw upon established tropes, or DC 34 Society to bring verisimilitude to the complexities of inheritance arguments

Oriole sits back and watches as the PCs spend the first round introducing their characters and the nature of the inheritance they're bickering over.

2. OBSCURE ALLUSION

OBSTACLE 14

Overcome DC 30 Theater Lore to reference an appropriate play, DC 32 Art Lore to allude to a famous work of art, or DC 34 any other Lore to draw upon another subject entirely. Oriole asks the PCs to work in an allusion to another literary work.

3. HECKLERS

OBSTACLE 14

Overcome DC 30 Deception to ignore the heckling, DC 32 Intimidation to counter-heckle, or DC 34 Performance to use the heckling to bolster your acting.

Oriole takes the role of heckling the PCs, as some shows may have malcontents.

4. COSTUME CHANGE

OBSTACLE 14

Overcome DC 30 Crafting to create a new costume element, DC 32 Deception to swiftly rearrange your current outfit to something new, or DC 34 Performance to keep the costume but change the context of it in character (for example, someone dressed as a merchant might suddenly reveal they're a criminal dressed in a disguise). Oriole orders a costume change for the PCs.

5. LENGTHY ARIA

OBSTACLE 14

Overcome DC 30 Performance to excel at the challenge, DC 32 Athletics to power through, or DC 34 Medicine to use breath control techniques. Oriole challenges the PCs to perform a demanding aria.

6. DANCE NUMBER

OBSTACLE 14

Overcome DC 30 Performance to put on an elegant dance, DC 32 Acrobatics to incorporate gymnastics, or DC 34 Theater Lore to draw upon an established dance routine. Oriole tells the PCs to include a dance into the next section.

7. UNFAMILIAR LANGUAGE

OBSTACLE 14

Overcome DC 30 Society to recall enough phrases to fake it, DC 32 Deception to mimic pronunciation, or DC 34 Performance to draw upon a known song. Oriole tells each PC to sing in a language they don't know.

8. PROP MALFUNCTION

OBSTACLE 14

Overcome DC 30 Thievery to surreptitiously replace a prop with another, DC 32 Crafting to repair the prop, or DC 34 Performance to work the malfunction into the show. Oriole informs the PCs that their props are malfunctioning, and they must adjust the scene.

9. SET MISHAP

OBSTACLE 14

Overcome DC 30 Performance to use the mishap in the scene, DC 32 Deception to pretend like the mishap was all part of the show, or DC 34 Acrobatics to avoid being inconvenienced by the mishap. Oriole has the PCs smash the table, then proceed with the scene as if the table's destruction was an unexpected accident.

10. STAGE FIGHT

OBSTACLE 14

Overcome DC 27 Deception or Performance to pantomime the scene, or DC 30 Athletics to perform a real duel. Oriole directs the PCs to have a stage combat.



Izhkarial

11. SPECIAL EFFECT

OBSTACLE 14

Overcome DC 30 Arcana, Nature, Occultism, or Religion to create an effect

Oriole requests that the PCs use a magical special effect.

Special A PC who casts a spell of 4th level or higher automatically earns 1 Performance Point.

Reward: Once the improv's 11 rounds have elapsed, Oriole's reaction depends on how many Victory Points the PCs accumulated. Note that Oriole agrees to join the production regardless of how well the PCs did, but those who did well earn more of her support in the form of increased Production Points, as well as potential gifts from the famous singer.

11 or fewer Victory Points: Oriole tears the performance to shreds. At the end of their critique, they ask if this is what passes for theater in Kintargo these days and tell the PCs that they're taking the role just to "remind the city what a real actor can do." Award the PCs 1 Production Point and 40 XP.

12–21 Victory Points: Oriole critiques the performance, but after a moment, tells the PCs that they have some great potential, so they'll take the role—if only to help teach the aspiring performers and guide them to their full potential. Award the PCs 2 Production Points and 80 XP.

22–32 Victory Points: Oriole diplomatically points out a few flaws but indicates they haven't had that much fun in years and thanks the PCs. They agree to take the role and express excitement at the thought of working with the PCs. Award the PCs 3 Production Points and 120 XP.

33 or more Victory Points: Oriole is astounded and praises the PCs' skills, musing that it's been a long time since they've seen that kind of passion and creativity on stage. They tell the PCs the show has reawakened their love of the stage and agree to take part in the production. Award the PCs 4 Production Points and 160 XP.

Treasure: Depending on how well the PCs do, Oriole also rewards them with expensive gifts. If the PCs earned at least 12 Victory Points, Oriole gifts them four greater theatrical mutagens (*Treasure Vault* 61) and a silver tiara set with sapphires worth 4,000 gp (a prop that played a role in a production of *The Huldra Queen*). If they earned at least 22 Victory Points, Oriole also gifts them with a *greater choker of elocution* with characters in Draconic, Empyrean, and Fey, a *wand of vibrant pattern*, two *scrolls of vibrant vibrato* (page 83), and a chess set composed of jeweled glass figurines of opera characters worth 6,000 gp to

commemorate their performance. If they earned at least 33 Victory Points, Oriole is especially impressed and also gives them one of their old costumes: a +2 *resilient greater sonic-resistant breastplate* fashioned to look like valkyrie armor, matching *greater thunderblast slippers* (*Treasure Vault* 151), and an antique Taldan lute worth 10,000 gp.

PRODUCTION POINTS

Throughout *Curtain Call*, the PCs earn Production Points whenever they accomplish something that can increase the quality of their opera's production. Keep track of Production Points the PCs earn publicly so the party can keep an eye on how things are going. The Production Points won't come into play directly until the next adventure, where they'll have a significant impact on the opera's overall financial, artistic, and critical success.

PERSONA TRAITS

In several parts of this adventure, PCs with certain persona traits gain advantages or disadvantages, as detailed in the text. Persona traits are fully detailed in the *Curtain Call Player's Guide*; if you're not using this guide, ignore all references and adjustments in this adventure that involve persona traits.

CONCLUDING THE CHAPTER

Once the PCs have secured Oriole's participation, the no-longer-retired opera singer will be ready to head out to Kintargo the very next day. They invite the PCs to rest and recover in their home; if you like, they can entertain the PCs at dinner, giving you a chance to roleplay Oriole with the party so they can start to get to know them more. Oriole's questions for the PCs are mostly about Fallenta (with whom Oriole has never worked) and about the PC's nemesis. Even now, Oriole is starting to build up ideas on how they want to portray the villain on stage.

If the PCs have a method of swiftly returning to Kintargo, Oriole is more than willing to accompany them. If they are instead planning on returning via ship, Oriole offers an alternative: they will cast *interplanar teleport* to travel to a safe place in Elysium, then again to teleport back to Golarion to some point near Kintargo. If the PCs don't want to accompany them, Oriole shrugs and says they'll spend the next month or so relaxing here while the PCs sail back to Kintargo. They will meet them up north when they arrive.



Chapter 2: Setting the Stage

Once the PCs return to Kintargo with Oriole, the opera star is eager to spend some time exploring the city. When the PCs check in with Fallenta, she's delighted to hear they've secured Oriole to play the villain in the opera, and she says she'll see to arranging the performer's accommodations. The PCs won't have time to sit idle, however, for their jobs as coproducers of the opera now begin in earnest!

First, Fallenta requests the PCs begin securing funding for the opera. She's already sunk much of her own money into the production, so the PCs must find sponsors to subsidize the remaining costs. Once the PCs do so, Fallenta assigns the PCs additional production tasks, although two more responsibilities will appear for them to manage later on.

If a PC volunteers to chip in their own funds, Fallenta is thankful but warns them that producing an opera is expensive. Securing sponsors does more than help to finance a production—it recruits supporters who spread the word. Instead, it might be best for the PCs to keep their funds to themselves; since if there's a last minute cost, that's a better time to come in and help to handle overflow spending.

The PCs should take no more than a month to obtain sponsors and complete their responsibilities. Some of these tasks will see the PCs traveling across the Inner Sea, so it's important they have some method of fast travel. Each partial month beyond the first that it takes the PCs to finish their production responsibilities reduces their Production Points by 1.

KINTARGO

SETTLEMENT 12

CITY

Avant-garde trade hub and capital of Ravounel

Government Mayor (elected leader)

Population 15,960 (80% humans, 6% halflings, 5% hellspawn nephilim, 1% aiuvarins, 8% other)

Languages Common, Diabolic, Elven, Halfling

Religions Calistria, Cayden Cailean, Irori, Sarenrae, Shelyn, Milani, Zon-Kuthon

Threats competitive artists, criminal activity, lingering diabolic elements, political treachery

Trade Port Kintargo is an important trade port. Common items of level 14 or lower are available for purchase, and items above that level can be ordered and will arrive in the city after 1d4+2 days (or on the same day, if the shopper pays an extra 500 gp to have the item shipped via teleportation).

Jilia Bainilus (inspiring female human politician 11) mayor of Kintargo

Shensen (famous female aiuvarin bard 12) leader of the Silver Raven Firebrands (currently abroad on a mission)

Zachrin Vhast (philanthropic male human cleric of Shelyn 10) high priest of Songbird Hall

SECURING SPONSORS

Fallenta has done the work of identifying potential sponsors already, and she presents the PCs with these eight Kintargo locals, all of whom have sponsored theatrical productions in the past. Fallenta happily tells the PCs as much as she knows about each local, though she only has details that are public knowledge. She warns the PCs that some of these sponsors are eccentric and might have their own demands in exchange for their donations, but then notes that it's tradition in Kintargo for sponsors to prove their intention by providing valuable gifts to those they're sponsoring as proof of their commitment. The general idea is that these gifts will eventually feature in some way in the production, although such isn't required.

Note that while levels are given for sponsors in their short stat blocks, in many cases the challenge of securing their support far outpaces their actual level, as detailed in the individual encounters.

APHIGENIA JHALTERO

Daughter of Baron Canton Jhaltero, a noble on Kintargo's Silver Court, Lady **Aphigenia Jhaltero** (female human aristocrat 8) is a patron of the arts and an avid opera fan. She's a vivacious woman with a passion for all things musical, eager to entertain

NAMING THE OPERA

Curtain Call doesn't name the opera that the PCs are helping to produce; it's just referred to as "the opera" in the adventure's text. Yet in your game, this opera absolutely needs a title—and Fallenta is eager to recruit the PCs to help. Allowing the PCs to come up with a title for the opera they all agree on can be one more fun way to give the players ownership over this production. If your group struggles with deciding on a name, one solid option (if the group's previous adventure was a published Adventure Path) is to simply use the name of that Adventure Path as the name of the opera.

proposals of shows to fund. However, she also has a peculiar quirk: she only sponsors a show if its producers win over her "little pet." Fallenta is aware of this detail and warns the PCs, though she doesn't know what Aphigenia's current favorite pet really is. Aphigenia especially adores comedic operas, and the DC of the PCs' Diplomacy and Nature checks decreases by 2 if their opera is comedic.

The PCs can meet with Aphigenia at the Jhaltero Estate in northeastern Kintargo; she receives all visitors in a colorfully decorated parlor, the walls of which are covered with dozens of posters and fliers for previous plays and operas she's helped to produce in the past. Aphigenia is a blond woman clad in a ruffled purple gown. She reclines on an armchair, fanning herself idly throughout the entire meeting.

"My butler tells me you all have a show to produce," the woman says, motioning over a maid bearing a tea tray from the corner. "You absolutely must tell me all about it, my dears. Let's see if your charming venture will benefit from my guidance."

Sponsorship: Aphigenia listens to the PCs' proposal attentively. When they've finished, she tells them their opera sounds "positively divine" but notes also that it's bad luck for her to sponsor a show "without approval from my dear Princess Sweetie—she's such a little connoisseur."

When a maid brings Princess Sweetie into the room, the PCs might be surprised to see the pet isn't a dog or cat, but a strangely adorable monkey-like creature with iridescent wings. A PC who succeeds at a DC 22 Arcana or Nature check to Recall Knowledge realizes this creature is no harmless house pet, but a beast called a skull peeler, known for its hunting habits of hiding in trees before severing its prey's head with its

long tongue and cracking it open to eat the contents.

Aphigenia has no idea of her pet's true nature, as the merchant who sold it to her called it a "faerieling." Princess Sweetie isn't terribly bright, but she's smart enough to have swiftly realized that keeping her disguise as a house pet secures her a ready supply of food. As such, she uses Deception instead of Stealth for her Perfect Camouflage ability to maintain her guise as a cute and harmless house pet. So far, Princess Sweetie has been well-fed enough not to lash out at Aphigenia or any unsuspecting servants, but she's been growing bored and restless.

If the PCs warn Aphigenia about Princess Sweetie's true nature, Aphigenia dismisses their concerns as silly unless the PCs succeed at a DC 34 Diplomacy check. If they do, Princess Sweetie panics and lashes her tongue at the maid holding her cage. A PC who succeeds at a DC 26 Perception check realizes the skull peeler is about to attack, granting a result of the Failure entry below.

To win over Princess Sweetie, a PC must approach the cage held by the maid and attempt a DC 34 Nature check, with the following results.

Success Princess Sweetie is placated and settles back, giving Aphigenia an approving nod.

Failure The PCs realize Princess Sweetie is about to attack the maid; combat begins with Princess Sweetie rolling Perception for initiative.

Critical Failure Princess Sweetie grows impatient and attacks the maid holding its cage with her Snatch Skull ability, resolving the effects of this reaction before rolling Deception for initiative.

At the PCs' level, Princess Sweetie is no threat to them; the maid, though, isn't so fortunate. Use the statistics for a servant (*Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide* 222), but afford the maid the dying condition rather than instant death at 0 Hit Points. As the maid only has an AC of 15 and 9 Hit Points, Princess Sweetie almost certainly knocks her unconscious with its first attack, giving her the dying 1 condition (dying 2 on a critical hit, which is very likely).

To save the maid, the PCs must get Princess Sweetie off her and stabilize the maid before she perishes. A PC might need to succeed at a DC 23 Athletics check to pull the skull peeler off of the maid if Princess Sweetie grapples her, but killing Princess Sweetie is an equally effective solution.

Aphigenia agrees to sponsor the PCs' opera if they impress Princess Sweetie or convince her of its true nature. If they didn't convince Aphigenia that her pet was dangerous beforehand but saved the maid, she also accepts their explanation and agrees to sponsor the production. If they didn't save the maid, however, Aphigenia reacts poorly and blames the PCs for provoking her "dear sweet angel" into murder. She has them swiftly escorted from the property and doesn't sponsor the show.



Aphigenia Jhaltero

PRINCESS SWEETIE CREATURE 6

Variant skull peeler (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 243)

Initiative Perception +17 or Deception +20

Skills Acrobatics +12, Athletics +15, Deception +16 (+20 to pose as a harmless pet)

Treasure: If the PCs obtain Aphigenia's sponsorship, she gifts them an *accompaniment cloak* (*Pathfinder Treasure Vault* 147) and an elaborate silver tea service set worth 3,000 gp.

Reward: For gaining Aphigenia's sponsorship, grant the PCs 60 XP and 1 Production Point.

DAVLU BERNAI

The inexorable **Davlu Bernai** (female human tycoon 9), head of the Bernai Silver Company, is a notable philanthropist who runs a charity dedicated to "improving the morals of Kintargo's downtrodden" and often sponsors performances she deems "uplifting." Although her charity does provide aid, her definitions of "appropriate morals" are rather restrictive, and she's quick to turn her gimlet glare on anyone who suggests she should be more flexible.

Davlu is ready to meet with the PCs in an austere office on the second floor of the Bernai Silver Company warehouse. This room features wall-to-wall cabinets and very little in the way of personality. Davlu is a severe-looking brunette woman in sober dress, seated behind a large desk strewn with paperwork. The office has no chairs for guests to sit at, for Davlu prefers to handle her meetings quickly and efficiently, and "sitting down only invites lollygagging."

"Ah! You'd be my next appointment. The theater producers? I see you're prompt, at least. My secretary's briefed me on your proposal, but I wish to hear more about the show before I commit any funds."

ELDONNA AULAMAXA

An imperious, stately woman, Lady **Eldonna Aulamaxa** (female human aristocrat 8) is head of the Kintargo branch of the Aulamaxa noble family. Though she attempted an opera career—and fancies herself a retired performer—her reviews were decidedly uncomplimentary, and she never achieved the fame of her more acclaimed cousin, Delour. Resentful at her lack of success, Eldonna instead projected her hopes for operatic stardom onto her daughter, Cadenza, and pulls strings to get her daughter cast in roles every chance she gets.

For her part, **Cadenza Aulamaxa** (female human scholar 5) is a shy, reserved young woman who has no desire to be on the stage; she'd prefer to focus on her arcane studies.

So far, she hasn't been able to override her mother's overbearing demands and quietly

accepts each role she's given, performing adequately but not wonderfully. She hopes eventually, if she fails to make a splash on stage enough times, her mother will give up. This plan has been without much luck so far.

Eldonna meets with the PCs in an elegantly appointed drawing room on the ground floor of the Aulamaxa estate. She demands her daughter be in attendance, and both meet the party at a breakfast table replete with tea and pastries. Eldonna is in her early fifties, while her daughter is in her early twenties, but they share the same striking shade of red hair. The older woman looks up, smiling brightly as the PCs arrive.

"Welcome! Please have a seat! I understand you wanted to meet with me regarding a production. This is my daughter, Cadenza. Say hello, dear."

The younger woman nods and murmurs a polite greeting, then quickly glances away.

Sponsorship: Eldonna listens to the PCs' explanation of their show without paying much attention. When they've finished, she agrees to sponsor them: provided, of course, that her daughter receives a prominent role. She selects the highest-Charisma female PC as the role she expects Cadenza to play; if there are no female PCs, she instead chooses a PC she takes a liking to and insists that Cadenza play their love interest (regardless of whether they actually have a love interest or are romantically interested in women in reality).

Davlu listens to the PCs' description of their opera carefully, asking them questions about the plot to make sure it's not "encouraging debauchery." Topics Davlu objects to include excessive violence, casual romantic relationships, risque scenes, bawdy jokes, and "strong language." She approves of stories of heroic deeds and "morally upstanding" protagonists, especially those who serve Abadar or Torag.

Sponsorship: Davlu automatically agrees to sponsor the opera provided it contains nothing she deems "objectionable," sternly reminding the PCs that it's their job to set a good example for Kintargo's citizens.

If the opera contains any themes Davlu dislikes, the PCs can attempt a DC 34 Diplomacy check to convince her to sponsor them, with the following results.

Critical Success Davlu grudgingly allows the PCs to include themes she doesn't like, on the grounds that she trusts them to handle the material tastefully and responsibly.

Success Davlu compromises, and allows the PCs to include one theme she doesn't like in the opera.

Failure Davlu remains firm in her demands; she'll sponsor the opera only if it fits her requirements.

Critical Failure Davlu condemns the PCs as "depraved enemies of decency" and orders them to leave, refusing to provide any funding.

The PCs can deceive Davlu with a successful DC 25 Deception check to assure her that the opera won't be objectionable, but word gets around and she might learn the truth—every week, attempt a DC 16 flat check. On a success, Davlu hears word that the PCs deceived her and demands a follow-up meeting, at which point they can attempt to use Diplomacy as above, but the DC for the check increases to DC 39. If they fail to convince Davlu here, she withdraws her support. Not only do the PCs lose the Production Point they earned from her initial support, but they lose an additional Production Point as word spreads of their deception.

Treasure: If the PCs obtain Davlu's sponsorship, she gives them a standard-grade dawnsilver breastplate emblazoned with the symbol of Abadar and a full set of elegant dawnsilverware worth 2,000 gp.

Reward: For gaining Davlu's sponsorship, grant the PCs 60 XP and 1 Production Point.



Davlu Bernai

IVRAN XERYSIS

Born in Westcrown, Lord **Ivran Xerysis** (male human aristocrat 12) relocated to Kintargo to look after his family's holdings in the city shortly after the Silver Ravens' revolution resulted in Ravounel's independence. Now a member of the Silver Council, Ivran is wealthy and well-connected, and although Kintargan gossip holds that he has the humor of an undertaker and the charm of a wooden post, he's known to donate to artistic endeavors that catch his interest.

Few in Kintargo are aware that Ivran has been helping to fund the Silver Ravens since his arrival in Kintargo, and even fewer know he's actually a member of the group, in a vigilante guise as the "Kestrel Prince." Ivran's standoffish persona is deliberately cultivated to avoid suspicion of being a freedom fighter, though with the revolution over, he's

softened slightly in his unapproachability. His faith as a devout Arshean is an open secret among the higher echelons of society and raises a few eyebrows due to the contrast with his demeanor.

Ivran invites the PCs to meet with him at his family manor in the Greens of Kintargo. The building is modestly sized, compared to the sprawling estates of Kintargo's 14 major aristocratic families, but lovingly and elegantly appointed interior. This meeting takes place in a library and reading room. The shelves on the walls are filled with leather-bound books, and a desk sits near the fireplace at the other side of the room. A taxidermy albino alligator wearing a suit and monocle stands upright in the opposite corner with a tea tray clutched in its scaly claws. As the butler closes the door and takes up a position in front of it, the dark-haired man at the desk continues writing for a moment before setting down his pen. Though he's handsome, he wears an aloof expression.

"So you're putting on an opera," the man says, raising an eyebrow, then glances to the alligator. "Mr. Scaley, give our guests their refreshments, would you?"

With a lurch, the alligator moves and offers out the tray. A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Arcana check to Recall Knowledge recognizes the farcical taxidermy to be little more than a type of animated statue.

Sponsorship: Ivran listens impassively as the PCs describe their opera, seemingly bored. A PC who succeeds on a DC 29 Religion or DC 32 Perception

A PC who succeeds at a DC 29 Perception check to Sense Motive notices Cadenza seems less than enthused about joining the cast. If they challenge Eldonna, she dismisses their concerns, insisting her daughter "was born for the stage!"

If the PCs wish to try to convince Eldonna that Cadenza isn't a great fit for the opera, they can attempt to do so by influencing her over the course of 3 10-minute influence rounds.

ELDONNA AULAMAXA

LEVEL 15

UNIQUE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Female human aristocrat

Perception +26

Will +29

Discovery DC 29 Kintargo Lore, DC 36 Perception, DC 34 Society

Influence Skills DC 29 Performance (to speak to Eldonna about the significant skills required for the part and the potential humiliation if someone isn't up to the task), DC 32 Theater Lore (to use Eldonna's love of the stage to convince her this opera isn't the right vehicle for her daughter), DC 34 Diplomacy, DC 36 Deception, DC 39 Intimidation

Influence 4 Eldonna allows Cadenza to be cast in a smaller part in the chorus.

Influence 6 Eldonna concedes her casting demand but requests that Cadenza attend rehearsals so she can learn from the actors.

Influence 8 Eldonna realizes she's been making her daughter miserable by pushing an opera career on Cadenza without considering the young woman's wishes; she promises to give up trying to make Cadenza a diva.

Resistances Eldonna is rather snobbish, and the DC of skill checks increases by 2 if the PCs are dressed in clothing inappropriate for meeting with a noble (at your discretion) or if any PC insults her or her daughter.

Weaknesses Eldonna is highly susceptible to flattery and sensitive about her failed opera career. Appeals that flatter her or praise her singing talents reduce the check's DC by 2.

Treasure: Along with her sponsorship, Eldonna gifts the PCs an *entertainer's cincture* and several bottles of fine Chelaxian liqueurs worth 3,000 gp.

Reward: For gaining Eldonna's sponsorship, award the PCs 60 XP and 1 Production Point. If they achieve 8 Influence with her and make Cadenza's life better, grant them an additional 40 XP.



Eldonna Aulamaxa

check notices subtle Arshean iconography in Ivran's clothing. If the PCs ask about his unusual alligator waiter, he replies in a deadpan tone, "A gift from a friend," though he cracks a wry smile as he does, likely the first one the PCs see from him. To PCs who seem concerned, he adds that Mr. Scaley is a magical construct, not undead.

After the PCs' pitch, Ivran asks them some questions about the opera's plot and their past deeds. He then issues an unusual challenge: he'll sponsor the opera if one of the PCs defeats his butler, Vorens, in a duel to prove their skills. (In actuality, Ivran has been considering finding a successor or partner, as being the Kestrel Prince along with his other responsibilities is beginning to wear on him, and he's curious if any of the PCs show promise; whether he takes a liking to a PC and attempts to stay in contact with them is up to GM discretion.)

Some PCs might balk at dueling an elderly butler, but Vorens is a capable duelist and scoffs openly at anyone who doubts his skills. If the PCs agree to duel Vorens, Ivran leads them out of his manor to the central courtyard, where a 15-foot-diameter circular clearing serves for combat training, meditation, and in a pinch, duels.

This encounter uses the duels subsystem (*GM Core* 202) with no spells or reach weapons permitted. Vorens concedes a duel if he's reduced below 150 Hit Points, after which Ivran offers him potions to return to full health. As many PCs can challenge Vorens as they wish; Ivran offers the use of a +2 *striking rapier* to any PCs without suitable weaponry. During the duel(s), Ivran occasionally comments on the dueling PC's moves and skills, dryly offering advice if they botch a check; PCs not participating in the duel can attempt a DC 34 Perception check to Sense Motive or DC 32 Warfare Lore check. On a success, they realize that in spite of Ivran veiling his advice to seem offhand, it's actually very sound.

Ivran sponsors the PCs' opera if at least one PC defeats Vorens in the duel, as promised.

VORENS

CREATURE 14

UNIQUE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Male human retired duelist

Perception +23; +2 circumstance bonus to initiative checks

Languages Common, Diabolic, Varisian

Skills Athletics +22, Deception +21, Diplomacy +19,

Intimidation +21, Society +21

Str +4, **Dex** +5, **Con** +2, **Int** +1, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +3

Items +1 resilient leather armor, +2 greater striking rapier

AC 35; **Fort** +21, **Ref** +28, **Will** +24

HP 254

Dueling Riposte ➤ **Trigger** A creature critically fails a Strike against Vorens; **Effect** Vorens makes a melee Strike against or attempts to Disarm the triggering creature.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ➤ *rapier* +27 (deadly d8, disarm, finesse, magical), **Damage** 3d6+10 piercing

Adroit Duelist Vorens is adept at exploiting an opponent's weaknesses in a duel. If he wins initiative in a duel round, he deals an extra 2d6 precision damage with Strikes made before the beginning of his next turn.

Dueling Dance ➤ **Requirements** Vorens wields a one-handed melee weapon and his other hand is free; **Effect** Vorens gains a +2 circumstance bonus to his AC until the start of his next turn.

Treasure: Ivran gifts the PCs a *storm flash* rapier that appears to be made of iridescent crystal yet behaves as if made from metal.

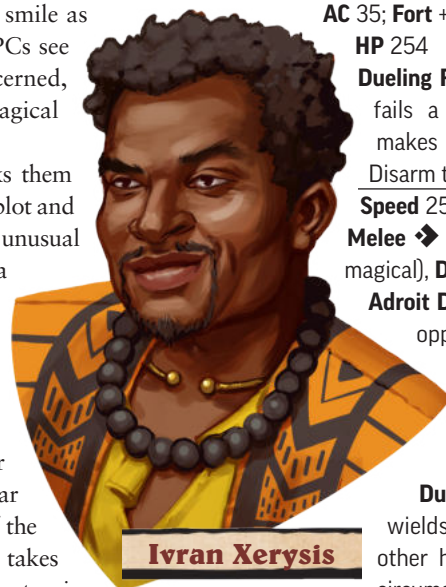
Reward: For gaining Ivran's sponsorship, grant the PCs 60 XP in addition to any XP earned by defeating Vorens. The PCs also earn 1 Production Point.

MIALARI DOCUR

Lady **Mialari Docur** (female elf headmistress 10) is a prominent figure in Kintargo, most known for her academy, Lady Docur's School for Girls. She's highly influential and has a well-known love of the theater, often sponsoring productions. Mialari's favorite style of opera is dramatic, and the DC of all skill checks indicated on page 28 decrease by 2 if the PCs are putting on a dramatic opera.

Unbeknownst to most, Mialari's school doubles as a training ground for her spy network, the Lacunafex. She's noticed a concerning increase in activity from the Ashen Man cult lately as well as additional activity from Norgorberites. She's monitoring the situation while she collects more information; in the PCs, she might see useful additional agents in this regard.

Mialari invites the PCs to meet with her in her office at her academy. Seated in an armchair with a steaming pot of tea on the table in front of her is an elven woman with long red hair. Upon the door opening, Mialari smiles and gracefully gestures to the other chairs.



Ivran Xerysis

"Greetings! I've heard about your opera, so I was delighted when you reached out. I understand you convinced Oriole to come back to the stage; that's quite an achievement. Please, tell me about your show."

Sponsorship: Mialari discusses the opera's plot and themes with the PCs, taking a keen interest in their responses. When they've finished, she asks each of them to demonstrate the talent they're most proud of. Each PC can choose a talent to demonstrate, requiring a DC 34 skill check for a relevant skill.

Regardless of the results of the PCs' skill checks, Mialari agrees to sponsor their opera, but she has an unusual request. While she'll still give the PCs the customary sponsor's gifts, she explains that she doesn't expect these gifts to appear on stage—they're for the PCs to do with as they wish. Instead, she asks simply to have a few lines of text worked into the opera's dialogue—preferably in the context of an aria. Mialari explains that these additions are her way of "advertising" her sponsorship—she feels that adding a few custom lines of text to those productions she helps finance represent a less distracting method than "awkwardly placing product on the stage for all to gawk at."

Mialari says she hasn't yet decided on the exact phrase she wants to include but promises to do so at least a few weeks before the opera's premiere. She's willing to work with the PCs so that the meter and flow of her lines work well with that of the aria, but she insists on the inclusion of certain words and phrases. In actuality, this method is one way Mialari passes along coded messages to her agents. For the past several months, she's had a Lacunafex spy working in deep cover as a lady's maid in the household of Melodia Delronge, a Kintargan noble Mialari suspects of secretly continuing to support House Thrune. Since Melodia is sure to attend a high profile opera like this, and is equally sure to bring along her favored servants (among whom is Mialari's spy), the Lacunafex leader sees the performance as an excellent opportunity to send a message to her spy, and she plans to adjust the message as needed depending on the status of the spy's ongoing mission around the time of the opera's debut.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 32 Perception check to Sense Motive while Mialari makes her request realizes that the message could well be a code. Alternatively, once Mialari works with the PCs to refine the "signature" into the text, a PC who succeeds at a DC 32 Scribing Lore or DC 34 Performance check notices

that it could be a code. A PC who succeeds at a DC 34 Society check to Decipher Writing decrypts the message: "If M.D. unsuspecting, escalate monitoring. Open all correspondence." If the PCs confront Mialari

about this message, she assures them it's nothing to worry about, though if pressed, she indicates she's "keeping an eye on a potential enemy of Kintargo." If the PCs push back or feel uncomfortable about it, Mialari withdraws her sponsorship, noting that "there's always other plays and operas to support," and the PCs lose the Production Point they initially earned for securing her sponsorship. On the other hand, if a PC makes it clear that they support what Mialari is up to, she smiles coyly and says that she's glad they have an understanding.

Treasure: Mialari seals her sponsorship by gifting the PCs a set of *slates of distant letters* and a pair of *spectacles of inquiry* (Treasure Vault 147).

Reward: For gaining Mialari's sponsorship, grant the PCs 60 XP and 1 Production Point.

RICOVIAL CEBARINNE

Opera divas tend to be outsized personalities, and **Ricovial Cebarinne** (male aiuvirin tenor 10) proves no exception. During his career, the mercurial tenor was known for being a perfectionist. His rivalry with Oriole was legendary, and sparks often flew between them—not all of them antagonistic, though the two never fully struck up a romance. When Oriole retired, Ricovial was very publicly scathing about them "giving up," even though he retired shortly thereafter. Theater gossips hold that his heart wasn't in it anymore without Oriole to clash against (though if asked, Ricovial dismisses any such suppositions as preposterous). Now, Ricovial runs a voice training school for aspiring singers out of his lavish estate and dedicates some of his personal fortune toward funding operas he deems worthy of his time.

Ricovial agrees to meet with the PCs in the same sitting room he uses to teach his students out of his estate in Villegre, Kintargo's scholastic center. Instruments and sheet music in glass cases are displayed prominently in this sitting room in an arrangement that might tactfully be described as "cluttered." A flashily dressed aiuvirin man with long dark hair lounges on a divan on the other side of the room. As the door opens, he waves a hand languidly, the ostentatious rings upon it glimmering in the sunlight.



Mialari Docur

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"Yes, yes, you'd be the producers who wanted to meet with me? You know my reputation, if you're here. All right then. Impress me."

Sponsorship: Ricovial listens to the PCs' proposal but feigns indifference. A PC can attempt a DC 32 Perception check to Sense Motive; on a success, they can tell Ricovial is more interested in the production than he lets on. A PC who succeeds at a DC 32 Society or DC 29 Theater Lore check is aware of his and Oriole's history; alternatively, the PCs might have learned of it from Fallenta. If they bring this history up or mention Oriole's involvement in their production, Ricovial scoffs, "Oriole knew they could never outdo me. If you ask me, that's why they gave up the stage."

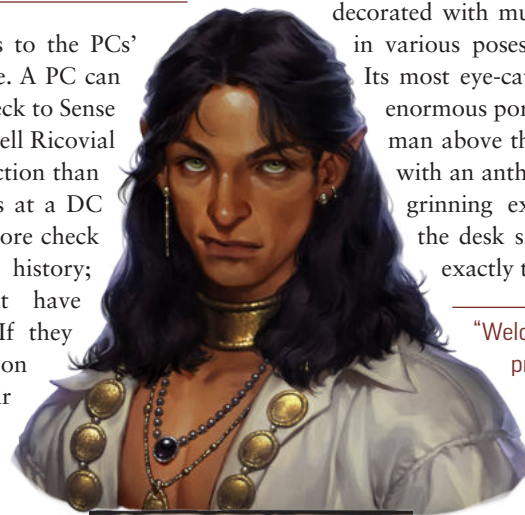
Ricovial agrees to provide funding automatically, but once he learns Oriole is in the opera, he contacts the PCs with a condition: he wants them to cast him in a prominent role in the opera. He indicates he's looking forward to "finally showing that so-called virtuoso what a real stage legend can do" and will accept no other conditions or negotiations. Agreeing to Ricovial's request adds a great deal of drama to the rehearsals as he and Oriole strive to outperform each other, and doing so possibly even gives the PCs an opportunity to matchmake if they wish, as detailed later in the adventure. It's possible to convince Ricovial to sponsor the opera without him playing a part only if a PC can succeed at a DC 40 Diplomacy check—otherwise, he withdraws his sponsorship offer.

Treasure: If the PCs secure his sponsorship, Ricovial gifts them a *platinum fortune's coin* (*Treasure Vault* 114) and a *scroll of missed cue* (page 83).

Reward: For gaining Ricovial's sponsorship, grant the PCs 60 XP and 1 Production Point.

TEVANDIS SASTRIEN

Salmon magnate **Tevandis Sastrien** (male halfling entrepreneur 7) is a prominent Kintargan merchant and philanthropist who's branched out into funding the arts. Recently, inspiration struck him to use his donations to promote his products, and so far he's funded a salmon-themed series of paintings, salmon sculptures, and even—in a venture with somewhat unsettling results—an interpretive dance about the salmon's epic migratory journey upriver to spawn.



Ricovial Cebarinne

Tevandis agrees to meet with the PCs in his second-floor, river-view office in Silver Suppers, his on-the-docks storefront. This wood-paneled office is decorated with multiple silver sculptures of fish in various poses sitting atop small pedestals. Its most eye-catching feature, however, is an enormous portrait of a mustachioed halfling man above the room's desk, shaking hands with an anthropomorphic cartoon fish and grinning exuberantly at the viewer. At the desk sits the man depicted, wearing exactly the same expression.

"Welcome! I'm told you have a proposal for me. Please do have a seat!"

Tevandis listens attentively to the PCs' description of their opera, offering snacks of silver salmon jerky and salmon spread on crackers, all while often exclaiming "Brilliant!" and "Capital!" He's particularly excited by spectacular operas, and PCs with an opera of this type decrease the DC of the Diplomacy check below by 2.

Sponsorship: Tevandis tells the PCs he's happy to fund their production, but there's a catch: he wants his salmon to be showcased in the opera, such as showing the PCs eating it (with prominently branded packaging, of course) and mentioning every so often that "we wouldn't have had the strength to fight without our lunch of Sastrien Salmon!" He even eagerly suggests giving the PCs an ally in the form of a bipedal salmon-costumed character and having an aria dedicated to the fish. Each PC who wishes to talk Tevandis out of the latter two—likely ill-advised—ideas can attempt either a DC 34 Diplomacy check or a DC 34 Theater Lore check to convince Tevandis that this opera isn't the best place for fishy product placement. Each PC can attempt a check to do so once.

Critical Success Tevandis gives up on both ideas.

Success Tevandis gives up on one of the ideas (PCs' choice) but insists on the other.

Failure Tevandis insists on keeping both suggestions to earn his funding.

Critical Failure The discussion with the PCs gives Tevandis a "wonderful idea," and he adds on the demand that their characters wear salmon costumes for at least one scene in the opera.

Treasure: Tevandis gifts the PCs a *ring of swimming*, four dawnsilver silver salmon sculptures worth 500 gp

each, and a case of fine smoked salmon worth 50 gp when he agrees to sponsor their production.

Reward: For gaining Tevandis's sponsorship, grant the PCs 60 XP and 1 Production Point.

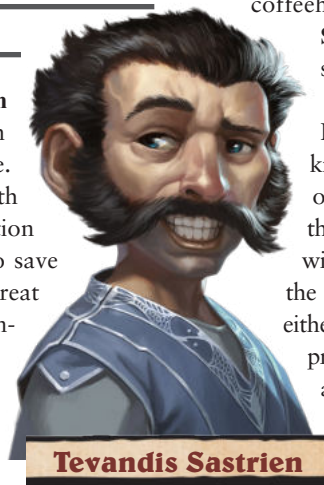
VAIZETH ILVIAK

Though they look the part, **Vaizeth Ilviak** (agender shackleborn nephilim human priest 9) is an atypical Kuthite. They follow a splinter sect of the faith that holds Zon-Kuthon's current condition is a result of him martyring himself to save his sister Shelyn from an unnamed great evil. As the orthodox faith of Zon-Kuthon views such beliefs as heretical, Vaizeth fled their homeland of Nidal. They resettled in Kintargo, where they've become a patron of the arts. They're very enthusiastic about "showing a friendlier side of the faith" by engaging in such philanthropy.

Unlike the other potential sponsors, Vaizeth doesn't own a fancy house, nor do they maintain a storefront or business for their philanthropic pursuits. Much of their wealth quickly gets put back into funding new projects. They agree to meet with the PCs at the Long Roads Coffeehouse, one of Kintargo's most famous cafes, where the priest often spends time discussing theology with other patrons. He waits for the PCs at a corner table—an incongruously dressed person, gaunt, scarred, and clad in all black with spiked metal piercings running all the way up their ears. In spite of their intimidating garb, however, they offer those approaching a friendly smile.

"Have a seat! Fallenta tells me you're seeking donors for an opera production. I may not have the deep Kintargan traditions or influence of some of your other potential sponsors, but I'm happy to do what I can."

Due to their faith's sinister reputation, some PCs might be suspicious of Vaizeth, but a PC who succeeds at a DC 29 Perception check to Sense Motive discerns that their intentions are genuine, if eccentric. If the PCs express curiosity in their beliefs, Vaizeth explains their philosophy and fraught history with the mainstream church. Conversely, if the PCs express suspicion, fear, or hatred of their faith, Vaizeth takes it in stride, apologizes for wasting the PCs' time, and won't sponsor the opera. In this case, the other patrons of the coffeehouse aren't coy about hiding their disapproval of the PCs'



Tevandis Sastrien

knee-jerk reaction, and the proprietor, halfling **Laria Longroad** (female halfling brawler 7) curtly asks the PCs to leave unless they apologize to Vaizeth, who's well established among the regulars at the coffeehouse as being an agreeable person.

Sponsorship: Vaizeth gladly agrees to sponsor the play but stipulates that the PCs must work in a scene with a sympathetic Kuthite priest—they want the world to know not every worshipper of Zon-Kuthon only desires to spread pain. If a PC convinces them this scene doesn't fit with the production with a successful DC 34 Diplomacy check, the PCs can get their backing regardless. In either case, Vaizeth also wants to stop in on the production sometimes as rehearsals proceed, as they're interested in the concept of theater that doesn't involve maiming... though they do have a morbid fascination with scenes of suffering and death.

Treasure: Vaizeth gifts PCs who obtain their sponsorship with two *panaceas* and several illuminated philosophical texts worth a total of 3,000 gp (this collection of texts is 3 Bulk and grants a +2 item bonus to Lore and Religion checks to Recall Knowledge about philosophical topics if the tomes are referenced for an hour per check).

Reward: For gaining Vaizeth's sponsorship, award the PCs 60 XP and 1 Production Point.

CASTING CALL

A show can't go on without actors, and it falls to the PCs to cast the opera's major roles. The number of major roles needed for the opera varies, but at a minimum, the PCs need to cast actors to portray each of them in the opera. Oriole, of course, is already cast as the opera's main villain. This section assumes that only the roles of the PCs need to be cast (and further assumes a standard sized-party of four PCs), but your group might have more PCs than that or might even consider significant NPC allies or foes from their previous adventure important enough to cast as well. You can certainly play out the casting of these additional characters, but for the purposes of this section, the PCs fulfill this responsibility once each of themselves are cast. Fallenta can handle the casting of all other roles.

Depending on which sponsors the PCs have, they might have also agreed to cast Cadenza or Ricovial in a significant role. If they do so, those roles are automatically filled.

Casting Cadenza: If the PCs cast Cadenza, her lack of enthusiasm costs them 1 Production Point unless a

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PC takes a week of downtime (and succeeds at a DC 35 Performance or Theater Lore check) to encourage and train her. A PC with the leader persona trait gains a +2 circumstance bonus to this check.

Casting Ricovial: If the PCs cast Ricovial, each PC can attempt (once) a DC 35 Deception or Diplomacy check to productively spur his and Oriole's rivalry. If at least one PC is successful, the party gains 1 Production Point as both are fired up to outdo each other. Each PC who critically fails, however, causes the loss of 1 Production Point from the divas' feud hindering the rehearsals.

THE AUDITIONS

Fallenta takes care of putting out the casting call and scheduling all of the auditions for a single day. When the PCs are ready to take on this responsibility, they need to set aside a day and be at the Kintargo Opera House to watch the auditions and make their choices.

Eight finalists are detailed in the "Showtime!" article in the previous adventure, "Stage Fright." Follow these steps to resolve the auditions.

Review Portfolios: Allow the PCs to review each of the eight actors' portfolios. Player-friendly versions appear in the "Showtime!" article in the previous adventure, or you can simply give the players a list of the eight actors' names, ancestries, pronouns, and persona traits (but note that any of these actors is capable of portraying any ancestry or gender—makeup, costuming, and other special effects might be required, but those factors are handled separately during other responsibilities). Allow the party to attempt one Discovery check for each actor at this time. Explain to the PCs that actors who possess a persona trait that matches a PC's persona trait is an excellent potential choice to play that PC in the opera.

Select Actors: The party decides which actor will potentially portray each PC; any actors not chosen remain as potential backups for roles.

Audition the Chosen Actors: Run an influence encounter for each of the chosen actors to simulate the audition; the accumulation of Influence in this case determines whether the actor has the chops to play the part or not. Each audition lasts 2 15-minute rounds. If the PCs fail to reach Influence 4 with an actor in 2 rounds, it's apparent that actor isn't right for the part—at this point, the PCs can decide to cast the actor anyway or pass and move on to one of the



Vaizeth Ilviak

THE SONG OF SILVER

One of the key advantages the Silver Ravens had during the course of liberating Ravounel from Cheliox and the rule of Barzillai Thrune was the rediscovery of one of Kintargo's oldest and most powerful defenses against diablerie—the *Song of Silver*. Players in your group might know of this magical song, especially if any of them played the Hell's Rebels Adventure Path; certainly, the song is common knowledge in Ravounel for its key role in helping the Silver Ravens defeat Barzillai Thrune and his agents.

It makes sense to include the *Song of Silver* as a resource for your group in Curtain Call; a magical song is certainly on-theme for this campaign after all! The *Song of Silver* doesn't have a direct impact on the plot, but it can help the PCs during the adventures.

The ritual is detailed on page 84 of this book. As with any ritual, it must be learned before it can be performed, but those who know the *Song of Silver* are hesitant to teach too many how to perform it (as detailed on page 84). If the PCs build up their reputation enough, though, they're able to find a Silver Raven in Kintargo who agrees to teach them the ritual. You can either decide that the PCs automatically earn enough trust in town at any point in the campaign you wish, or you can pick a threshold of Production Points that unlocks access to the *Song of Silver*—25 Production Points is a good value to go with since the PCs are unlikely to reach that threshold until sometime during Chapter 2 of this adventure at the earliest. Alternatively, you could say that as soon as the PCs gain sponsorship of at least half of the potential sponsors, a Silver Raven approaches them with the offer to teach the ritual.

The leader of the Silver Ravens, Shensen, remains out of town during this adventure. She returns to Kintargo in the next adventure, at which point she can teach the ritual to PCs. In this adventure, the PCs encounter the following Silver Raven allies who know the ritual and can teach them the spell: Eldonna Aulamaxa, Ivran Xerysis, Mialari Docur, or Ricovial Cebarinne. If your group played Hell's Rebels, you might have other NPCs established in Kintargo who would make even better teachers for this rare ritual.

To learn the *Song of Silver*, a PC must pay their teacher 140 gp to help fund the Silver Ravens (this payment replaces the normal price to Learn a Spell), then spend 6 hours Learning the Spell followed by a successful DC 33 Occultism or Performance check or a DC 36 Arcana, Nature, or Religion check.

backup actors and audition them for the part instead. (Casting an inappropriate actor earns the PCs fewer XP for this responsibility and potentially could cost them a Production Point but has no other long-term effects on the production; once an actor is cast, they put everything into their role, whether or not they did well in the audition.)

During the auditions, a PC with the leader persona trait gets a +2 circumstance bonus to all Discovery or Influence checks.

OPERA ACTOR

LEVEL 15

RARE **HUMANOID**

Perception +20

Will +23

Discovery DC 34 Perception, DC 32 Society, DC 29 Theater Lore

Influence Skills DC 29 Lore (to examine an actor's strengths—the type of lore varies according to the actor, as listed below), DC 32 Performance or Theater Lore (to gauge an actor's skills), DC 34 Perception, DC 36 Diplomacy

Auselia (scoundrel, wildcard) female elf; (Games Lore)

Lisbend (leader, warrior) genderfluid gnome; (Gladiatorial Lore)

Lux (flirt, scoundrel) nonbinary nephilim human; (Underworld Lore)

Miriam (guardian, underdog) genderfluid halfling; (Labor Lore)

Ormund (scholar, warrior) male human; (Art Lore)

Persechore (guardian, wildcard) female human; (Academia Lore)

Vaum (leader, underdog) male dwarf; (Mining Lore)

Yerrix (flirt, scholar) agender monkey goblin; (Scouting Lore)

Influence 4 The actor is appropriate to play the part.

Influence 6 The actor is perfect for the role. If the PCs reach this level of Influence with at least half of the actors they cast, a sponsor is delighted and soon sends the PCs an additional gift (see *Treasure* below).

Resistances If neither of an actor's persona traits match the persona traits of the PC they're being asked to portray, increase the DC of all Influence checks by 2.

Weaknesses Decrease the DC of all Influence checks by 2 if at least one of the actor's persona traits matches the portrayed PC's persona traits.

Treasure: If the PCs reach Influence 6 with at least one of the actors they cast, one of the PCs' sponsors (your choice) gives them three rare librettos from the Chelaxian Civil War era, autographed by the composers and librettists. Each is worth 3,000 gp. If they reach Influence 6 with at least half of the actors, Kintargo's high priest of Shelyn, Zachrin Vhast, hears

and gifts the PCs one of his church's greatest treasures: a *thorn brush* (page 85).

Reward: Award the PCs 1 Production Point if they cast more appropriate actors than inappropriate actors. For each actor cast in an appropriate role after reaching Influence 4 during the audition, grant the PCs 20 XP. For each inappropriate actor cast (any actor with which the PCs failed to reach Influence 4), grant only 10 XP. No more than 80 XP should be granted in all for this responsibility.

THE PERFECT COMPOSER

Fallenta's operas typically require very talented composers and conductors to orchestrate. She's looked into those who are available to work on the timeline this opera requires, and unfortunately, none of the talented composers and conductors based in Kintargo (or even wider Ravounel) are available for or interested in the job.

As a result, Fallenta tasks the PCs with seeking out a composer elsewhere in the Inner Sea region. She has done a bit of the work already and has narrowed the options down to three suggestions, each of whom can serve as a conductor for the orchestra as well as composer. It falls to the PCs to decide which of the three options they wish to recruit for the job.

Each of the three composers specializes in a different style of opera: comedic, dramatic, or spectacular. The PCs aren't required to recruit the composer matching their opera's style, though it's more difficult to convince a composer to work outside their usual interests.

Each composer has a quirk that might encourage the PCs to recruit someone whom they feel they'd work with better even if they aren't the specialist for their opera's type. Fallenta is aware of each composer's quirks (as listed under Resistances and Weaknesses in the Composer influence stat block on page 34) and gives the PCs this information.

All three of these composers live far from Kintargo. If the PCs don't have a fast method of travel, they need to make overland trips, and depending on how long these journeys take, they might start losing Production Points (remember, each additional month that starts during this process costs 1 Production Point). Once the PCs choose a composer, Fallenta casts *sending* to let the composer know she's creating a new opera and is sending her producers to speak to them about composing the score. Each replies with an affirmation and a location where they'll meet with the PCs.

DRAMATIC COMPOSER

Vaerthilde Listrassa (female human composer 11) has an unparalleled reputation as a composer of dramatic operas. She rarely travels from her home city of Karcau in Ustalav, where she's worked at the Karcau Opera for 30 years as a conductor, composer, and instructor. A devout Abadaran, Vaerthilde prizes discipline, rigorousness, and technical perfection, and more than one aspiring starlet has fled the stage after experiencing her harsh tutelage.

Though her methods are severe, the operas Vaerthilde composes and conducts are triumphs of elegance and emotion, and her reputation as one of the best composers in the Inner Sea is well-earned. She agrees to meet with the PCs at the Karcau Opera House. She's a tall, dark-haired human woman who wears her hair pulled back in a tight bun. When the PCs arrive, she's standing in the orchestra pit of the Karcau Opera House, motioning to musicians seated in the pit. No sooner do they begin to play than she makes an impatient gesture, and they taper off to silence as she snaps at them: "No, no, no! With emotion. This is a death scene, not a wait for one's overdue meal at a restaurant."

When the PCs make themselves known, she glances up to the new arrivals in the theater, frowning. "We'll try again in ten minutes. It seems we have company." Vaerthilde considers the PCs' proposal carefully while they're discussing the opera, asking insightful questions about its themes and plot during the encounter. Proceed with *Influencing a Composer* (page 34).

COMEDIC COMPOSER

The composer who specializes in comedic operas is **Eustaro Seven-Seas Cobblemar** (male gnome composer 11), an eccentric man with a laid-back attitude—sometimes too laid-back, as he takes a hands-off approach toward his work that's vexed many producers. He prefers to "let the music naturally find its way" instead of being too firm in his directions. When his technique works, however, the results cause an audience to weep with laughter from the timing of a musical cue alone.

Eustaro has ranged all over the Inner Sea, but these days he makes his home in the Varisian city of Magnimar, where he's just wrapped up a production at the Triodea, Magnimar's preeminent concert hall. He chooses to meet with the PCs in the Triodea. When the PCs arrive, they find Eustaro to be a boisterously dressed gnome man with an impressive hat, its feather almost as long as he is tall. He greets the PCs from the Triodea's stage, his expression brightening as he realizes who the PCs are.

APPROXIMATE TRAVEL TIMES

Direct distances (for the purpose of teleportation and similar fast-travel magic) and traditional travel times and routes (for groups who lack fast-travel magic) between Kintargo and the various locations the PCs might visit during this chapter are as follows.

Bridespool Fen (Flowers to Dye For) 1,100 miles direct, or 4,350-mile coastal and river ship voyage (56 days)

Karcau (The Perfect Composer) 1,100 miles direct or 4,000-mile coastal and river ship voyage (45 days)

Magnimar (The Perfect Composer) 400 miles direct or 950-mile coastal ship voyage (12 days)

Riddleport (Showstopping Sets) 575 miles direct or 1,250-mile coastal ship voyage (15 days)

Niswan (The Perfect Composer) 2,100 miles direct or 3,700-mile coastal and oceanic ship voyage (40 days)

Western Ravounel Forest (Bird in the Hand) 150 miles direct or 150-mile coastal ship voyage (2 days)

Eustaro is delighted to learn that the PCs are Fallenta's producers and eagerly quizzes them on the nature of the opera she's working on. He's intrigued when the PCs describe their production but wants to make sure it's a suitable creative outlet for him. During the encounter, he asks them questions about their opera's characters, which he believes are the most important components of a show. Proceed with *Influencing a Composer* (page 34).

SPECTACULAR COMPOSER

Those seeking a composer for spectacular operas can score no greater coup than hiring **Kazhiyya Teram** (nonbinary vishkanya composer 11), who's conducted some of the most impressive productions around the Inner Sea. They don't tend to flaunt their ancestry outside their homeland of Jalmeray, as they're aware some can be prejudiced. After a long period of touring, they have returned to the city of their birth, Niswan, and are currently a guest of Thakur Kharswan. Despite their talent, Kazhiyya experiences bouts of severe insecurity, and every production they conduct inevitably involves a crisis where they descend into despair about their work not being good enough, convinced their "inadequacies" will ruin the show. If reassured, though, Kazhiyya puts on a show like no other, with the most fantastical effects the Inner Sea's opera houses have ever seen.

Kazhiyya agrees to meet with the PCs at Thakur Kharswan's private theater—an opulently decorated private venue that's quiet and dimly lit. Kazhiyya is seated in the front row of seats, patiently awaiting the PCs' arrival while they read through and periodically annotate several sheets of music. Regardless of how the PCs approach, Kazhiyya reacts with a start, then hastily stuffs the sheet music into their bag. "Oh! I'm sorry! I didn't see you there. Can I be of assistance?"

While they agreed to meet with the PCs out of respect for Fallenta, they're still hesitant to take on the show, nervously indicating that surely the PCs could find someone better suited for the job. They find it hard to resist the allure of a new production, however; even as they modestly demur, they begin coming up with suggestions for special effects as the encounter proceeds. Proceed with Influencing a Composer below.

INFLUENCING A COMPOSER

In order to convince a composer to sign on to the production, the PCs must at least reach Influence 6 with the composer. A PC with the underdog persona trait gains a +2 circumstance bonus to all Discovery and Influence checks attempted during this responsibility, as they understand more than others how composition is supportive of a production but often is overshadowed by the greater spectacle of the performers or musicians. The PCs have 3 15-minute social rounds (45 minutes total) to meet with a composer and to convince them to join. If the PCs fail to win over a composer, they can attempt again with another composer until they run out of options. All composers use the following Influence stat block, with some variations noted.

COMPOSER

LEVEL 15

RARE HUMANOID

Perception +29

Will +26

Discovery DC 30 Art Lore, DC 36 Perception, DC 34 Society

Influence Skills DC 32 Theater Lore (to impress the composer with knowledge about their work), DC 34 Performance (to delight the composer with your own musical skills), DC 36 Diplomacy, DC 38 Deception, DC 39 Intimidation, plus an additional skill depending on the composer (see Weaknesses below)

Influence 6 The composer agrees to join the production.

Influence 9 The composer agrees to join the production and recruits additional musicians for the orchestra, resulting in a higher Production Point reward.

Resistances The DC of all Influence checks increases by 2 if the composer doesn't specialize in the PCs' type of opera. In addition, each composer has a unique resistance, as detailed below.

Eustaro Seven-Seas Cobblemar hates controlling behavior, and the first time a PC attempts to use Intimidation on him (or simply threatens him) increases the DC of all checks to Influence him by 2.

Kazhiyya Teram tends to panic under pressure, and if the PCs are too fawning or complimentary in assessment of their skills during an Influence check, the DC of the check increases by 2.

Vaerthilde Listrassa disdains those who don't take their jobs seriously, and if the PCs seem too cavalier about their duties while attempting an Influence check, the DC of the check increases by 2.

Weaknesses Each composer has a different personality that makes them particularly easy to influence using a specific skill or Lore.

Eustaro Seven-Seas Cobblemar can be Influenced with a DC 29 Fortune-Telling Lore or Thievery check (to entertain him with a fortune or legerdemain); he also loves food and drink, and gifting him foodstuffs or fine beverages decreases the DC of all Influence checks by 2.

Kazhiyya Teram can be Influenced with a DC 29 Art Lore or Crafting check (to impress upon them the PCs' dedication to artistry). If a PC indicates awareness that Kazhiyya is a vishkanya but treats this detail casually and doesn't seem to mind, the DC of all further Influence checks attempted by that PC against Kazhiyya are reduced by 2.

Vaerthilde Listrassa can be Influenced with a DC 29 Abadar Lore or Religion check (to appeal to her faith); she has also always admired Kintargo's opera traditions, and emphasizing the chance to work in the famous Kintargo Opera House decreases the Influence check's DC by 2.

Treasure: To celebrate their composer's hiring, one of the PCs' sponsors (your choice) gifts them a *major composer staff* (Treasure Vault 131), a *scroll of musical shift* (page 83), a *scroll of take your places* (page 83), and a set of ornate gold opera glasses worth 4,000 gp.

Reward: For hiring their composer, grant the PCs 80 XP. If the PCs reached 6 Influence with the composer they hired, they earn 1 Production Point; if they reached 9 Influence, they earn 2 Production Points. If the PCs fail to hire one of these composers, Fallenta is forced to go with a less talented or less engaged local solution that costs the PCs 1 Production Point and earns them no XP.

SHOWSTOPPING SETS

No opera would be complete without a stunning set to perform on. Fallenta has some ideas for set decorations and backdrops, the specifics of which depend on the scenes and plot of the opera. She provides the PCs with a list of supplies, tools, and specialists required to create these complex set pieces. While many of these items are easily obtained in Kintargo, two elements require special attention.

A PC with the wildcard persona trait has opportunities during this responsibility to have sudden flashes of unexpected insight. Once for each of the two sub-responsibilities below, that character can roll a skill check twice and take the better of the two results as their actual result; this is a fortune effect. When the PC does so, encourage their player to come up with some sort of unexpected comment or development that just falls into place to bolster their efforts.



Tromard Roldheim

PERSPECTIVE PAINTINGS

While some productions use illusion magic to give sets the appearance of depth, Fallenta prefers to a traditional method—one that allows the actors and crew to get used to cleverly painted backdrops during rehearsal. She's already enlisted skilled artists, but some of the colors they need require rare, skymetal-infused pigments.

To obtain the pigments, the PCs must travel to the city of Riddleport in Varisia, which has recently developed a booming trade in skymetals imported from New Thassilon. The city's Gas Forges are one of the few publicly available forges in Avistan with the ability to smelt such high-grade metals, and the dwarven consortium that owns the Forges jealously guards their newfound sources of materials. Still, Riddleport citizens are rarely averse to an under-the-table deal, and skymetals destined for the Gas Forges often find themselves "diverted" to other buyers, to the frustration of the Forges' manager, **Tromard Roldheim** (male dwarf smith 10).

The Gas Forges are located in southwestern Riddleport, not far from the waterfront. The acrid smoke rising from the forges' stacks make it one of the city's ugliest skyline landmarks. The surrounding neighborhood is crammed full of shops, inns, and taverns, though all of the structures have seen better days and are caked with soot from the Gas Forges. To obtain the skymetal pigments the PCs require, they must pursue the following activity.

OBTAIN SKYMETAL PIGMENTS

DOWNTIME

To secure the pigments Fallenta wants, the PCs must work with Tromard and the smiths at the Gas Forges to select the right skymetals, haggle for prices, check for impurities, and even help oversee the process of extracting the pigments. To do so, the PCs must spend a day on-site and attempt one of several skill checks to earn Victory Points.

They can help with the selection process with a DC 32 Nature check, haggle for better prices with a DC 34 Diplomacy check, check for impurities with a DC 39 Perception check, or help with the extraction process with a DC 36 Crafting check. The Gas Forges are busy and in demand, and as such, the PCs have only 3 days to attempt these checks, after which

they'll have to be satisfied with the result, as signified by their accrued Victory Points.

5 or fewer Victory Points The PCs fail to secure quality pigments, forcing Fallenta to augment the backdrops with illusions.

6–9 Victory Points The PCs secure the pigments needed.

10 or more Victory Points The PCs manage to save money, and there are raw materials left over.

Treasure: If the PCs secure 10 or more Victory Points, Tromard is so pleased with the process that he lets the PCs keep the leftover chunks of skymetal, including a chunk of abyssium worth 450 gp, a chunk of adamantine worth 500 gp, a vial containing a mass of liquid djezet worth 600 gp, a chunk of inubrix worth 550 gp, two chunks of noqual worth 600 gp each, and a chunk of siccattite worth 500 gp. Adamantine is detailed on page 253 of *GM Core*, while the other skymetals are detailed on pages 96–101 of *Pathfinder Lost Omens Grand Bazaar*.

Reward: If the PCs fail to secure pigments, they lose 1 Production Point. Grant the PCs 40 XP if they secure the pigments, and grant them 1 Production Point if they do so while saving money.

REPLICA PROPS

The PCs no doubt have distinctive armor, weapons, and items, and they're unlikely to want to leave these sitting around a theater for use as props! To create convincing replicas, Fallenta recommends seeking out the Newt Market in Kintargo, where a skilled forger known as the Blade Witch operates. Without a referral, however, the Blade Witch is skittish about new customers due to

the questionable legality of some of her activities and often vanishes from the market for months if she hears someone is looking for her.

Contacting the Blade Witch: To secure the props, the PCs must pursue the Contact the Blade Witch activity.

CONTACT THE BLADE WITCH

DOWNTIME

A PC wishing to contact the Blade Witch must first spend 4 hours in Kintargo's Newt Market, then attempt one of the following: to ask around requires a DC 36 Diplomacy check; to watch and listen for rumors requires a DC 39 Perception check; to know the procedure to arrange a meeting with the Blade Witch requires a DC 29 Kintargo Lore or DC 32 Mercantile Lore or DC 34 Society check.

Critical Success The PC manages to contact the Blade Witch and arranges a meeting with the nervous, talented forger for later in the day.

Success The PC doesn't make contact, but they make progress. The next time a PC attempts to Contact the Blade Witch, reduce the DC of that check by 5.

Failure The PC fails to make contact with the Blade Witch, and no PC can attempt to Contact the Blade Witch again for 24 hours.

Critical Failure The PC's search for the Blade Witch causes the forger to panic and withdraw from Kintargo—no further attempts to Contact the Blade Witch can be made for 1 month.

Commissioning the Props: Once the PCs contact the **Blade Witch** (female human hellspawn nephilim forger 12), her agents reply to the PCs with instructions on where and when to meet with her. She maintains over a dozen hidden workshops throughout Kintargo. Even for legitimate work like the PCs are asking for, she prefers to keep such layers of security for her safety. The workshop she invites the PCs to is hidden well on the second floor of a tenement in Old Kintargo. She expects the PCs to pay her a visit there within 24 hours—if the PCs don't, they must attempt to Contact the Blade Witch again.

Her dusty workshop contains sophisticated equipment arrayed along the benches. Several shafts of light filter through the boarded-up windows during the day—as a hellspawn nephilim who can see in the dark with ease, she prefers to work after dark using darkvision, relying upon the use of hooded lanterns containing *everlight crystals* when she needs to see in color. As she meets the PCs, she greets them.

"Well! You found me. I guess that means you're pretty good. Here's hoping your money's good, too."



Blade Witch

The Blade Witch tips her hood back, revealing a teenage girl with a reddish hue to her skin and curved, devilish horns. She's been on the street since she was a child and learned to make her own living, breaking into Kintargo's workshops at night until she obtained her own. The Blade Witch is intrigued by the PCs' job—she doesn't normally get to work on high-profile jobs that are also completely legal, and while the idea of seeing her work on stage intrigues her, she asks the PCs to not credit her with the work. She's content with the payment and the satisfaction of a job well done, but the amount of work she puts into it depends on how the PCs treat her in this meeting. To get her to agree to the job, a PC must undertake the Commission Props activity.

COMMISSION PROPS

AUDITORY CONCENTRATE EXPLORATION LINGUISTIC

During the course of the half-hour meeting, the PCs work with the Blade Witch to talk about deadlines and deliverables, payments for services, and details for the number and type of props needed for the opera. Each PC involved can attempt one of the following checks to earn Victory Points: a DC 34 Diplomacy check to settle on payments, a DC 32 Performance or Theater Lore check to work out the details on the props, or a DC 36 Society check to arrange deadlines. The Blade Witch bristles at anyone who mentions her age or fiendish heritage, tartly remarking that "the things I make don't care what I am!"; any PC who offends her in this way takes a -4 penalty to their check.

0 or fewer Victory Points The PCs either insult the Blade Witch or make her worry that they're trying to entrap her for a previous illegal job, and she refuses to take on the job and cuts ties with the production.

1-2 Victory Points The Blade Witch agrees to the job.

3 or more Victory Points Not only does the Blade Witch agree to do the job, but the PCs inspire her and the resulting props are among her best work.

Reward: If the Blade Witch refuses and cuts ties, the party loses 1 Production Point from a combination of the wasted time and the requirement to go with a less-talented prop maker. If she agrees to the job, grant the PCs 1 Production Point and 40 XP; if they inspire her by earning 3 or more Victory Points, they instead earn 2 Production Points.

BIRD IN THE HAND

In addition to Fallenta's tasks, Oriole eventually has a request for the PCs. Though they aren't intentionally trying to be difficult, like many performers, Oriole is superstitious. During most of their previous productions, they kept a pet during the show's run for good luck: a rare bird known as a twilight oriole, named for the distinctive blue-purple color of its plumage. Soon before their retirement, their pet twilight oriole passed away (a heartbreaking event that Oriole still won't admit played heavily into their decision to retire), and now that they're coming out of retirement, they feel the need to have a new twilight oriole nearby to inspire them and bring them luck.

While twilight orioles are found in Ravounel, they're quite rare. The closest known nesting grounds for these songbirds is the Ravounel Forest, a dense woodland with very few settlements. Rumors of malevolent creatures in the woodland keep most foresters wary of delving too deeply into the woods. This woodland's twilight orioles mostly dwell in the western half of the forest, so Oriole suggests the PCs begin the hunt there for their new pet.

During this responsibility, a PC with the guardian persona trait not only helps to protect the other PCs during the search, but also works to make sure the twilight oriole is captured humanely; this PC gains a +2 circumstance bonus to all skill checks attempted during this responsibility.

Searching for a Nesting Ground: Once the PCs reach Ravounel Forest, the hunt for a twilight oriole nesting ground can begin. This hunt plays out in exploration mode, during which a PC can take the Search exploration activity to hunt for signs of the elusive bird. During this Search, the PC can attempt a DC 32 Survival check, a DC 34 Nature check, or a DC 36 Perception check to earn Victory Points toward the hunt. Each period spent hunting takes 8 hours, and once the party accrues 5 Victory Points, they find signs of a twilight oriole and can move on to try to capture it.

Daily Complications: Though there's little in the forest that poses a significant threat to the PCs, the hazards of the terrain can still make their task difficult. At the start of each day the PCs spend searching for a nesting ground, attempt a DC 10 flat check. On a failure, choose one of the following complications for the PCs to face that day.

Bad Weather A sudden rainstorm brings high winds and the threat of flash floods. The PCs can avoid the effects by sheltering for a day, but if they Search for a nesting ground, increase all DCs by 5, and each PC who fails a check takes 8d6 bludgeoning damage (DC 30 basic Reflex save) from a fallen tree, a tumble in a flood, or a fall down a muddy slope.

Bandit Activity Bandit activity in the region has left wildlife skittish; increase all DCs to Search for a nesting ground by 2.

Hungry Predators This part of the woodland is the territory of hungry predators like bears, pumas, or wolves. The animals are no threat to the PCs, but unless someone in the party can scare the predators off quickly with a DC 30 Intimidation or Nature check, the resulting combat spooks the wildlife and increases all DCs to Search for a nesting ground by 5.

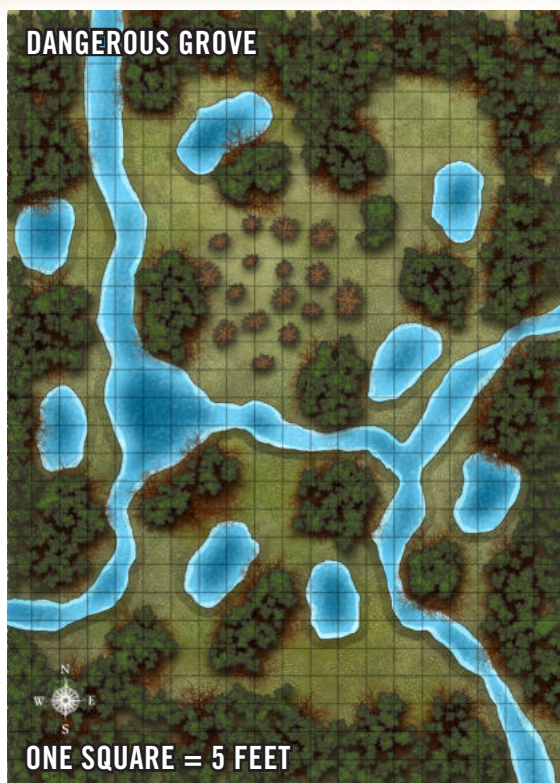
Capturing a Twilight Oriole: When the PCs isolate a twilight oriole nesting ground, each PC can attempt one of the following checks over the course of an hour to try to capture one of the rare birds: a DC 32 Nature check to compel a bird to approach and be taken willingly, or a DC 34 Survival check to create a trap to catch a bird alive, or a DC 36 Athletics check to catch a bird without hurting it. Alternatively, a PC who has wild empathy or can speak with animals can instead attempt a DC 34 Deception, Diplomacy, or Intimidation check to capture a twilight oriole. Spells or traps can also aid in catching the creature, potentially removing the need for a skill check, provided they don't harm the bird. If at least one PC captures a bird, they're ready to return to Oriole, but if all of the PCs fail at the task, they must start over from the beginning by searching out a new nesting ground.

Treasure: If the PCs return with Oriole's new pet, the performer is delighted. The twilight oriole seems to be equally taken with Oriole as well and immediately begins singing, obviously quite pleased with its new living arrangements. Oriole draws upon their resources over the course of the next few days, and 1d3 days after the PCs deliver the bird to them, they gift the PCs a *true staff of healing* in thanks.

Reward: If the PCs obtain a twilight oriole, award them 1 Production Point and 80 XP.

FLOWERS TO DYE FOR

Fallenta tells the PCs she's hired a renowned seamster named Fenton Vilorgo to provide the opera's costumes and masks. Fenton has a reputation for being exacting, often redoing costumes multiple times until he's satisfied, but the results are well worth it. One of the dyes Fenton wants to utilize for Oriole's primary costume requires a rare alchemical ingredient diffused from the Sarkorian lily, a delicate flower that many believed went extinct in the wild, for it only grew in the land of Sarkoris—a region that spent over a hundred years devastated as the demonic Worldwound.



Fenton reveals (as does any PC who succeeds at a DC 32 Nature or DC 34 Herbalism check to Recall Knowledge) that Sarkorian lilies have been flourishing in certain parts of Sarkoris now that the Worldwound has been closed, yet they're still far from being fully replenished, and the dyes distilled from the flower's petals are still impossible to find for sale. In order to secure enough flowers to produce the dye he wants, the PCs must travel to one of the few areas in Sarkoris where the lilies grow, harvest a handful of flowers, and return before they wither.

The most likely place to find Sarkorian lilies, Fenton explains, is in a swamp known as Bridespool Fen—a once-toxic marsh in the southwestern portion of the region that's slowly been recovering as the flow of the nearby Sarkora River has leached away and diluted the fen's toxins.

During this responsibility, a PC with the warrior persona trait gains a +1 circumstance bonus to attack and damage rolls as their artistic convictions bolster their battle prowess.

Finding the Lilies: When the PCs arrive at Bridespool Fen, they're faced with a swampy tangle of overgrown hillocks and muddy troughs. Fenton's research is accurate, but it will take time for the PCs to seek out a bed of Sarkorian lilies in the fen. Run the search in exploration mode. Navigating the fen is difficult—run each “round” of this exploration in 4-hour chunks.

Every 4 hours the PCs spend exploring the fen, a PC who Searches for that time can attempt a DC 32 Herbalism Lore check, DC 34 Nature or Survival check, or DC 36 Perception check; on a critical success, they find a grove of Sarkorian lilies; on a success, they locate a grove of the rare plants growing around an ancient human skeleton, but they also find trouble!

DANGEROUS GROVE

MODERATE 15

Use the map on this page for this encounter. Dark green areas on the map are greater difficult terrain comprised of thorny undergrowth that's also hazardous terrain—a character who moves through these areas takes 4d6 piercing damage (DC 30 basic Reflex save) from the thorns. The creeks are only a foot deep and count as difficult terrain when wading through them, while the ponds are 10 feet deep and filled with muddy water that causes creatures within the water to become concealed and for all creatures outside the water to become concealed to creatures in the water.

Creatures: While demons no longer rule this region, and the influence of the Outer Rifts has dwindled, it hasn't yet fully restored to nature. When the PCs discover a suitable lily grove, they also find it to be occupied by an entire grove of dangerous corrupted plants and some stranded demons. These three demons are powerful omoxes who have been lingering in the fen here, polluting and wallowing in the sloppy ponds. A few dozen tangled, mostly dead trees grow in the area as well—and four of them are in fact undead trees known as corpseroots. The omoxes initially destroyed or corrupted the beds of lilies they found but soon realized that by leaving these groves alone to thrive, they work as lures—the PCs are far from the first and likely won't be the last to brave Bridespool Fen to seek out the rare plants!

The corpseroots stand quietly, rooted in place near the lily grove, and attack as soon as the PCs draw near by engaging them in melee combat. The omox demons lurk in the nearby pools, and when the fighting starts, they rise up from these bogs to hurl slime balls, using Liquid Leap as needed to keep the PCs at distance. The corpseroots and omoxes fight until destroyed.

OMOXES (3)

CREATURE 12

Pathfinder Monster Core 79

Initiative Stealth +26

CORPSEROOTS (4)

CREATURE 11

Pathfinder Book of the Dead 81

Initiative Stealth +18

Treasure: The PCs can gather enough lilies for Fenton easily enough once they've dealt with the monsters. Harvested lilies remain viable for dye extraction for 3 days—if the PCs are going to need more time before they return to Kintargo to deliver the plants to Fenton, they need to preserve the flowers with a successful DC 30 Herbalism Lore or DC 30 Nature check attempted as part of a 1-hour preservation process.

The skeleton that lies in the middle of the patch of flowers are the remains of a long-dead champion who became lost and died in the fen. The bones are still clad in a *bastion of the Inheritor* (Treasure Vault 14) and an *earthglide cloak*, and clutch a +3 *greater striking cold iron holy longsword*. Tarnished but fully functional *bracers of devotion* (Treasure Vault 148) adorned with Iomedae's symbol dangle on skeletal arms.

Reward: For gathering the lilies, grant the PCs 1 Production Point and 40 XP.

ASTOUNDING EFFECTS

The production will certainly need special effects, particularly if the PCs hope to produce a spectacular opera, but regardless of the details, Fallenta wants to have at least one particularly astounding special effect take place during the opera—one realized with as little illusion magic as possible. She asks the PCs to design the special effect using their own talents, hoping to take advantage of their high-level resources but also to give the opera an extra element of legitimacy. The specifics of the effect depend on the opera's plot and the PCs' ideas, but it should be visually impressive and dramatically tied to an important scene in the production.

This responsibility uses the research subsystem (GM Core 190). Although there's no set time limit to completing the research, finishing more quickly helps to avoid losing Production Points from additional months, so it's in their interest to work efficiently.

A PC with the scholar persona trait gains a +2 circumstance bonus to skill checks attempted during this responsibility.

The PCs can research their special effect sequence in three different ways. Each of the three options below represent a day's work pursuing the research.

Book Research: The PC studies various techniques of previous effects work; **Maximum RP 5; Research Checks** DC 32 Theater Lore or DC 34 Arcana, Nature, Occultism, or Religion to comprehend the theories.

Consulting Experts: The PC seeks experts in the field and works with them to learn their techniques; **Maximum RP 5; Research Checks** DC 32 Diplomacy to coax out trade secrets, or DC 34 Society to seek out the proper people and impress them with your plans.

UNSETTLING GRAFFITI

The PCs were introduced to the cult of the Ashen Man in the previous adventure, and they might now and then find graffiti messages scrawled on walls or in alleys in Kintargo in a wide range of handwriting styles and languages. None of these messages were placed by NPCs in this adventure, and attempts by the PCs to track down the perpetrators should fail—these red herrings serve to keep the unsettling sense of doom lurking at the periphery of events in Curtain Call, not to lead the PCs toward specific encounters. If you find that this graffiti is too distracting, you should stop placing it or allow the PCs to catch some low-level vagrants who have been creating the graffiti after “having right peculiar dreams.”

Experimentation: The PC spends time experimenting with methods of achieving the desired effects; **Maximum RP 5; Research Checks** DC 32 Performance to integrate things in a theatrical way, or DC 34 Crafting to build workable prototypes.

ASTOUNDING EFFECTS

RESEARCH 15

UNIQUE

Research Checks book research, consulting experts, or experimentation

4 Research Points The PCs isolate a particularly efficient method of researching and can pick one of the three categories of research checks available for that method. All further research checks using that method have their DCs reduced by 2, but the DCs for the other two methods (which are now less applicable) have their DCs increased by 2. The PCs can opt to ignore this opportunity entirely.

8 Research Points The PCs devise a workable effect, but it's not without risk. If they wish to utilize this effect, all further research checks during this responsibility that succeed become critical successes, but all checks that fail become critical failures.

12 Research Points The PCs develop a workable effect. They can call it quits here and their effect will be astounding enough to satisfy Fallenta, or they can continue to research to push the boundaries of what's possible. If they do this, they run the risk of disastrous malfunctions—each time they fail a research check going forward, they lose 1 Production Point from workplace injuries, damage to the set or props, or from expensive supplies wasted on failures. This increases to a loss of 2 Production Points on a critical failure. The PCs can opt to cease research at any point before reaching 15 Research Points and go with the workable but not truly astounding effect.

15 Research Points The PCs create a truly astounding effect that will surely dazzle the audience.

Treasure: Once word gets out about the effects the PCs have planned, one of their sponsors is extremely impressed. In admiration, this sponsor gifts the party with an *amplifying aeon stone*.

Reward: For building their special effect, grant the PCs 80 XP and 1 Production Point, or 2 Production Points if they create a truly astounding effect.

A SCANDALOUS AFFAIR

Though not on the PCs' initial list of responsibilities, at some point while they're completing their tasks, a complication arises. The timing of this event is at your discretion, as long as it happens after the PCs have cast their actors in Casting Call (page 31).

One morning when the PCs gather near the Kintargo Opera House (or another site associated with the production), they find a heated argument occurring at its entrance: one of their actors has been accosted by two other people. The specific actor is up to the GM, depending on whom the PCs have cast in a main role, but it shouldn't be Oriole. When the PCs arrive, read or paraphrase the following to set the scene.

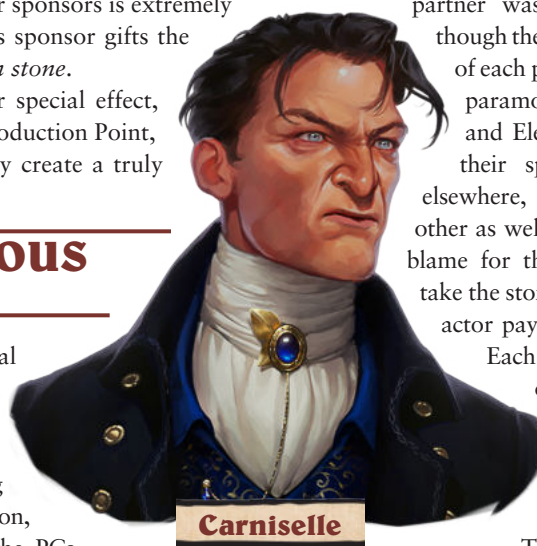
A man and woman, dressed more to attend a show at the theater than squabble outside it, have cornered a familiar actor near the stage door, their words cutting over one another in their furor.

"—had no right to seduce him, you miserable thieving cat!" the woman snaps, glaring daggers between the wincing actor in front of her and the man at her side.

"And you have no right to complain!" the man retorts. "Not after what I caught you two up to, but perhaps we should take this somewhere—"

"Ha!" the woman cuts in sourly. "Afraid of looking like the fool you are?"

The couple then descends into bickering while the actor looks trapped—if the PCs don't engage, the actor beckons for assistance. If the PCs do, the couple introduces themselves as Alathero and Elengia Carniselle. It's difficult to get a straightforward explanation from them, as they keep devolving into arguing with each other and the actor, but eventually the PCs can piece together the reason for the argument.



Apparently, the actor was involved in romantic trysts with each member of the couple separately. The actor insists that both Alathero and Elengia told them their partner was fine with the arrangement, though the actor never realized the partner of each paramour was in fact their other paramour. For their part, Alathero and Elengia declare they had no idea their spouse was seeking attention elsewhere, and they're furious with each other as well as the actor, whom they both blame for the situation. They threaten to take the story (even more) public unless the actor pays them back for the deception.

Each spouse demands hush money of 1,000 gp. As the actor can't afford that, the production would have to foot the bill if they don't want a scandal on their hands.

The PCs can mediate the situation by influencing the Carniselles enough to calm Alathero and Elengia down. The Carniselles use a single influence stat block below, with individual resistances and weaknesses (depending on which spouse the PCs speak to), as well as an additional Influence skill, noted for both. When a PC attempts to Influence the couple, they must always indicate which of the two they're primarily addressing before attempting the check.

A PC who has the flirt persona trait gains a +2 circumstance bonus to all checks to Discover and Influence during the encounter, as they've likely had experience mediating this sort of conflict before.

The PCs have a total of 3 5-minute rounds to influence Alathero and Elengia before they storm off.

THE CARNISELLE SCANDAL

LEVEL 15

UNIQUE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Scandalized and argumentative couple

Perception +19

Will +22

Discovery DC 32 Kintargo Lore, DC 36 Perception, DC 34 Society

Influence Skills DC 29 Shelyn Lore (to mediate the couple's spat), DC 32 Arcana (when speaking primarily to Alathero, to find camaraderie in his hobby of magical studies), DC 32 Intimidation, DC 32 Performance (when speaking primarily to Elengia, to impress her with tales of the stage), DC 34 Diplomacy, DC 36 Deception

Influence 4 The Carniselles blurt out their weakness in a moment of honesty during the argument.

Influence 6 The Carniselles begin to calm down and are willing to let the matter pass, reducing their demand to 500 gp each in hush money.

Influence 8 The Carniselles realize the fault for cheating lies with their partner and not the actor, and they rescind their demand for payment. The couple thanks the PCs for mediating, indicating they've realized they should try to get their relationship on a better footing and then perhaps attempt a genuine open relationship instead of hiding things from each other.

Resistances Alathero's family is much less well-off than Elengia's, and he's prickly toward anyone who tries to assert their station over him or seems arrogant. Such an approach increases any Influence check's DC against him by 2. Elengia is especially unforgiving of lies right now, and a PC who fails a Deception check against her increases the DC of all their subsequent Influence checks against her by 2.

Weaknesses Alathero began his affair with the actor because he feared Elengia was growing bored of him and would leave him anyway. Diplomacy or Shelyn Lore checks focusing on his relationship with his wife reduce the DC by 2. Elengia began her affair with the actor because she's always been enthralled by the stage and wanted a taste of that lifestyle. Diplomacy or Shelyn Lore checks playing to this angle reduce the DC by 2.

Personalities fiery, impetuous, prideful (Alathero) or charming, refined, shrewd (Elengia)

Treasure: The actor thanks the PCs profusely for helping to extract them from the conflict and promises to be more discrete in the future. A day later, one of the opera's sponsors makes it clear that they're quite thankful that the PCs retained the actor in question as the sponsor is a fan—that sponsor gifts the party with a *major trickster's mandolin* (Treasure Vault 137) and four vials of *greater bravo's brew*.

Reward: For mediating their actor's romantic entanglements, grant the PCs 80 XP. If they did so without having to pay hush money, grant the party 1 Production Point. If the PCs fail to placate the Carniselles and refuse to make their payment, the couple storms off, and in the following days, stories spread about the actor being a home-wrecker and the PCs as being "enablers of the decay of love." The opera loses 1 Production Point while combating the bad press. Additionally, if the PCs have Davlu Bernai as a sponsor, she pays an angry visit to the opera house, threatening to withdraw her funding



Elengia Carniselle

(demanding the return of her gifts or an equal amount of gp, and the PCs reduce their Production Points as appropriate) unless the PCs fire the "immoral" actor and replace them with someone less scandalous.

SABOTAGE!

At some point while the PCs handle their responsibilities, things begin to go wrong. The timing of this event is at GM discretion, but the PCs should've addressed at least five production responsibilities beforehand, and after rehearsals have begun (see Rehearsal Events starting on page 45). This responsibility begins when the PCs arrive at the Kintargo Opera House to aid with that day's rehearsals, at which point they're met by a frustrated Fallenta who hurries over to them and lets them know about an unfortunate development—someone has sabotaged the production!

"Thank Shelyn you're here! We've had an unplanned disassembly, surprise sundering, general resultant mayhem—in short, we have a problem. There's been a malfunction on stage. Fortunately, no one was seriously hurt, but I fear this was no mere accident. Nefarious deeds have haunted this theater of late. Skulduggery! Shenanigans! Hmm... you never hear of a lone shenanigan, have you noticed that? No matter! We have more important matters to deal with."

Fallenta leads the PCs to the stage as she speaks, and as they draw near, she indicates a broken jumble of set machinery, coils of rope and fallen sandbags, and a collapsed backdrop. Several crew members are tending one another's minor wounds.

Fallenta explains that some strange incidents have occurred over the past few days. At first, they were minor and easily written off: props being mislaid, personal items going missing, set machinery not working as smoothly, and so on. Just yesterday, a stagehand noticed some of the ropes for the stage machinery were dangerously frayed. Fallenta had them replaced without thinking too much of it, but now she's concerned that deliberate sabotage is at work. She asks the PCs to look into it before the culprit—if there is one—does any more damage.

The investigation soon becomes more involved (as detailed on the following pages), but the initial stage of examining the broken machinery and the stage—a first step Fallenta suggests if the PCs don't hit on the idea themselves—gets things going.

INVESTIGATE THE DAMAGED SET

CONCENTRATE | EXPLORATION

A PC spends an hour investigating the damaged machinery and the surrounding rooms for evidence of sabotage or (as Fallenta pointed out) shenanigans. To do so, the PC must first select one of the two areas as their focus. The PC then attempts a DC 34 Perception check or the specific site's additional skill option.

Damaged Machinery The PC can examine the damaged machinery with a DC 32 Crafting check instead of a Perception check. On a success, the PC confirms that the damage to the machinery was done by a masterful hand that very nearly hid all evidence of tampering.

Adjoining Rooms The PC can examine the adjoining rooms with a DC 32 Survival check instead of a Perception check. On a success, they discover evidence that the door in the basement (area **K20**) that provides an exit to the loading ramp (area **K21**) has been picked recently. On a critical success, the PC also discovers a dropped lockpick etched with a symbol that looks like a spiderweb.

Dropped Lockpick: If the PCs discover the lockpick, a PC who succeeds at a DC 32 Underworld Lore check, DC 34 Kintargo Lore or Thievery check, or DC 36 Society check to Recall Knowledge realizes a Kintargan gang called the Silken Thread uses this style of lockpick. If the PCs spotted the spiderweb symbol on the lockpick, these DCs decrease by 5. If the PCs don't find the lockpick, a crew member discovers it and brings it to the PCs' attention the next day.

Reward: Grant the PCs 10 XP if they find evidence of sabotage and 10 XP if they discover the dropped lockpick on their own.

THE SABOTEURS

The masterminds behind the sabotage are worshippers of Norgorber, yet they've taken steps to ensure their hand in the matters stays well-hidden. After the PCs' actions in the previous adventure caught the eye of Vyre's Norgorberites, the cult has been keeping an eye on them from afar; this sabotage attempt is as much retaliation for the PCs' previous actions as it is testing how they might respond to more serious attacks.

Rather than carry out the work themselves, the Norgorberites approached a local Kintargan cult the PCs have brushed up against as well in the previous adventure—the cult of the Ashen Man. These cultists were paid to carry out the sabotage. They used some of the funds provided to them to purchase equipment from the Silken Thread, then began with minor thefts and interference before escalating to more serious sabotage. They have a hideout in an abandoned building south of Salt Gate in Old Kintargo.

RUNNING THE INVESTIGATION

The PCs' investigation uses the infiltration subsystem (GM *Core* 196) as they search through the city's criminal circles. The PCs begin the infiltration with 1 Edge Point if they found the lockpick, or 2 Edge Points if they identified its source. A PC with the scoundrel persona trait gains a +2 circumstance bonus to all skill checks to overcome obstacles and complications during this infiltration.

As the PCs pursue the investigation, creative solutions to obstacles should be rewarded. Use of class abilities, spells, and magic items might provide a circumstance bonus or even help to skip an obstacle. The players should feel as though they're investigating a criminal underworld that would've been dangerous to them earlier in their adventuring careers, but now, most of these individuals are no longer a serious threat to them. The important thing is creating a narrative of their investigation, so if certain obstacles don't make sense given the PCs' approach, or if you feel the PCs have done enough for a satisfying story, feel free to substitute or omit obstacles as needed.

AWARENESS POINTS

The PCs can accrue a maximum of 15 Awareness Points (AP) before the infiltration fails. In addition to failing obstacles or drawing unwanted attention, the PCs automatically accrue 1 AP at the end of each infiltration round—each round is 1 day.

5 Awareness Points: The Ashen Man cult becomes suspicious that the PCs are on to them. Increase the DCs for obstacles by 1. The first time the PCs reach this tier, the Look, It's...! complication occurs.

10 Awareness Points: The first time the PCs reach this tier, the Watch Sweep complication occurs.

15 Awareness Points: At this point, the Ashen Man cultists realize the PCs are onto them and disband, each fleeing the city in a different direction, never to return. If the PCs haven't solved the mystery by this point, they might never learn who was behind the shenanigans, but no further sabotage occurs since the Ashen Man cultists have abandoned the task entirely.

PREPARATIONS

Fallenta encourages the PCs to find the saboteurs before someone gets seriously hurt, giving them limited time to prepare before the investigation, which should begin on the same day the PCs learn about the saboteurs. *Retrocognition* is particularly useful during preparations. If a PC casts this spell at the Kintargo

Opera House, they experience all of the emotions and activities of the various rehearsals that have taken place there, including a vague sense of unease as two hooded figures move through the theater, hear the fraying of ropes and loosening of screws, and smell the strong scent of ashes. This automatically earns the PCs 1 Edge Point.

PREPARATION ACTIVITIES

Several of the standard preparation activities listed on pages 199 of *GM Core* will help the PCs get ready for the investigation. It takes a day for a PC to pursue a preparation activity; remember that each day that passes, the PCs also gain 1 Awareness Point, so each day the group spends preparing leaves them less time to complete their investigation. The following preparation activities might be of use to the PCs. If they come up with other ideas, use the DCs below as a guideline.

Bribe Contact To bribe a contact in Kintargo's criminal circles requires a DC 36 Society check or a DC 39 Diplomacy check.

Gain Contact To gain a contact in Kintargo's criminal circles requires a DC 34 Underworld Lore check, a DC 36 Society check, or a DC 39 Diplomacy check.

Gossip A PC can seek out rumors with a DC 36 Diplomacy check. On a critical or regular success, the inside information the PCs gain is that the Silken Thread gang has been particularly active in the region of the Kintargo Opera House lately.

Secure Disguises The growing publicity for the opera makes it difficult to hide the PCs' identities. A PC can disguise themselves for the investigation with a DC 34 Deception check, a DC 36 Performance check, or a DC 39 Crafting check.

Special If the PCs obtained sponsorship from Ivran Xerysis or Mialari Docur, their sponsor hears of the sabotage and sends a cryptic message offering to put them in touch with "an acquaintance." If the PCs agree, the DC of one check (two checks if the PCs obtained both sponsors) to Gain Contact decreases by 5, and the PCs can gain information from Bribing this Contact without the requisite payment.

INVESTIGATIONS

Once the PCs are ready to begin their investigation, they must begin with the Contact the Silken Thread obstacle, moving on to a subsequent obstacle as indicated. Each day the investigation proceeds, each PC can attempt to overcome the current obstacle once—all of these are group obstacles. Before they

can even begin the investigation, the PCs must learn about the link to the Silken Thread, either via the lockpick discovered at the Kintargo Opera House or by succeeding at a Gossip preparation activity.

CONTACT THE SILKEN THREAD OBSTACLE

Requirements The PCs have learned of the Silken Thread's possible involvement through Gossip or after discovering and successfully examining the dropped lockpick.

Infiltration Points 3 (group); **Overcome** DC 32 Thievery, DC 34 Deception, DC 36 Society, or DC 39 Diplomacy

The PCs seek out and speak to the gang known as the Silken Thread to confront them about their activities in and around the Kintargo Opera House. Upon overcoming this obstacle, the PCs learn that the Silken Thread recently sold supplies (including the lockpick discovered by the PCs) to a small group of humans dressed in dusty gray robes and who kept muttering strange phrases like "Our hearths are cold," "The sky is dying," and "Time eats us all." Silken Thread agents were curious and followed the group after they made the purchase, hoping to learn more, but lost sight of them soon after they entered the alleyways of southern Old Kintargo and split up. The Silken Thread strongly suspects the group has a hideout in that district.

SEARCH OLD KINTARGO OBSTACLE

Requirements The PCs have discovered the cultists' hideout is in Old Kintargo after they successfully Contact the Silken Thread.

Infiltration Points 5 (group); **Overcome** DC 32 Kintargo Lore, DC 34 Society, DC 36 Perception, or DC 39 Survival

Once the PCs have narrowed down the hideout's location to Old Kintargo, they can search the district for it. If they successfully overcome the obstacle, they determine that the group of strangers have set up a hideout in an abandoned building south of Salt Gate.

CATCH THE CULTISTS OBSTACLE

Requirements The PCs successfully Search Old Kintargo.

Infiltration Points 4 (group); **Overcome** DC 32 Stealth, DC 34 Athletics, DC 36 Acrobatics, or DC 39 Intimidation

The PCs confront the Ashen Man cultists in their hideout. If they overcome this obstacle, they round up the cult members for questioning; proceed to Interrogations on page 44. If the PCs fail to overcome this obstacle within 2 days of beginning it, the cultists abandon Kintargo as if the infiltration had reached 15 Awareness Points.

COMPLICATIONS

LOOK, IT'S...! COMPLICATION

Trigger The PCs reach 5 Awareness Points for the first time.

Overcome DC 34 Stealth, DC 36 Deception, or DC 39 Diplomacy

An opera fan recognizes one of the PCs (selected randomly) during their investigations, and that PC must either convince them they're mistaken, quickly sign some autographs without attracting attention, or slip away from the situation. If the PC fails to resolve this complication, they accrue 1 AP (or 2 AP on a critical failure).

RENEWED SABOTAGE

COMPLICATION

Trigger Every fourth day begins while the saboteurs are still active.

Overcome DC 34 Theater Lore, DC 36 Performance, or DC 39 Perception

After lying low for a few days, the saboteurs strike again. This time, the sabotage damages valuable set pieces, and a single PC (chosen by the party) must attempt to overcome the complication. On a failure, the PCs lose 1 Production Point (or 2 Production Points on a critical failure).



Ashen Man Cultist

WATCH SWEEP

COMPLICATION

Trigger The PCs reach 10 Awareness Points for the first time.

Overcome DC 36 Diplomacy or DC 39 Society

A Norgorberite informant monitoring the PCs' movements leaks information to the city watch indicating they have ties to the criminal syndicates, triggering a raid on one of the PCs' residences (chosen randomly from PCs who weren't selected for the Look, It's...! complication). Although the PC eventually convinces the watch of their innocence, the attention drawn by the raid causes them to accrue 1 Awareness Point if they don't successfully overcome the obstacle (2 Awareness Points on a critical failure).

OPPORTUNITIES

The PCs can take advantage of the following opportunity only once during the investigation.

FAN FAVORITE

OPPORTUNITY

Trigger A PC critically succeeds at any check to overcome an obstacle. That PC can take advantage of this opportunity immediately. If they do, this opportunity won't repeat, but if they don't, the opportunity can trigger again from a later critical success.

A fan of the triggering PC hears of the production's troubles and wants to help, though they're not particularly skilled at subterfuge. If the PC wishes to accept the fan's assistance, that PC can attempt a DC 32 Deception, Thievery, or Underworld Lore check to coach them on what's needed.

Critical Success The fan's assistance decreases the DC of the next skill check that PC attempts to overcome an obstacle by 2.

Success As critical success, but the DC decreases by 1.

Failure The fan provides no assistance.

Critical Failure The fan is detrimental to the investigation and increases Awareness Points by 1.

INTERROGATIONS

If the PCs successfully resolved the Catch the Cultists obstacle before reaching 15 Awareness Points, they round up the Ashen Man cult, as the cultists pose no combat threat to them. Under interrogation, the cultists admit they were paid by a man who wore a Skinsaw mask to sabotage the production, though they weren't told why and have no further information. If the PCs don't make the connection between "Skinsaw mask" and Norgorber worshipper (as any PC who's at least an expert in Religion should), the cultists do so. In any event, the cultists promise to disband and leave the city to avoid further repercussions from the PCs.

Treasure: Most of the equipment at the cult hideout is of little value, but they've gathered a fair amount of treasure that they're more than willing to offer the PCs in return for lenience or mercy. These valuables include a *greater clandestine cloak*, a *ring of climbing*, and two major elixirs of life—all of these items were given to the cult by the Norgorberites. The cult also offers their cashbox of remaining funds, which contains 1,200 gp.

Reward: For catching the Ashen Man cultists, grant the PCs 60 XP.

REHEARSAL EVENTS

Rehearsals for the opera can begin as soon as the PCs hire their actors—if they dawdle on this first responsibility, Fallenta pushes for its completion so that rehearsals can begin. Once the actors are chosen and hired, Fallenta takes over the day-to-day of working with the actors and crew to organize rehearsals, including the selection of assistant directors among the crew, but she makes it clear to the PCs that they're welcome to provide any aid they can and wish during this time.

You can assume that the day-to-day work of rehearsals happens off-screen without PC involvement, with the exception of the following three events.

EVENT 1: COSTUME CONSULTATION

While the PCs don't interact directly with the production's seamster and costumer, Fenton, until they take on *Flowers to Dye For* (page 37), he's among the first of the specialists brought onboard by Fallenta, and as soon as possible after the PCs hire their actors—likely even on the first day of rehearsal, Fenton calls the PCs into the Kintargo Opera House for a consultation in the costume storage area (area K26 in the opera house's basement).

Fenton has already converted this storage area into a proper seamster's workshop with racks of clothes, mannequins, and tables full of partially stitched garments forming a veritable maze around the room. As the PCs arrive, a reedy, dark-haired man emerges from behind a mannequin to greet them in a sonorous voice, then he places several sheets of paper on which costume designs have been drafted upon a nearby table.

"Ah, you're here! Come in, come in. So nice to be formally introduced to you all in person, and might I say, it's been an honor to be included in this production. As you can see, I've taken the liberty of drawing up a few sketches for your costumes, but I wanted to get your input before finalizing the design. If you would?"

Fenton eagerly accepts the PCs' feedback, jotting their ideas down as they look over his sketches. Though Fenton is the final villain the PCs will face in this adventure, the man is also a skilled liar, and they shouldn't yet learn there's anything more sinister about him than being a touch obsequious. Fenton's stats, should you need them, appear on page 90; note that while Fenton is a summoner, he doesn't manifest his wax eidolon while he's in Kintargo, so he doesn't bear the sigil representing this connection at this time.

As the PCs give Fenton feedback, allow any PC who's particularly passionate about the costumes to attempt a DC 32 Crafting, Performance, or Theater Lore check. Any PC who succeeds impresses Fenton, and he takes pains to integrate their feedback immediately—while he's a villain, he also appreciates keen observations, and the PCs' feedback should persist to the final production.

After the discussion concludes, Fenton thanks the PCs and sends them on their way, telling them he hopes they'll be satisfied with the final costumes.

Reward: If at least one PC gives Fenton good feedback, grant them 40 XP. If at least one PC critically succeeds at providing feedback, their advice is significantly helpful—grant the PCs 1 Production Point.

EVENT 2: GHOST STORIES

Since Barzillai Thrune's death at the hands of the heroes who liberated Ravounel, rumors around Kintargo have persisted that portions of his damned soul still haunt the place. These rumors do have some basis, as undead scraps of sentience known as remnants of Barzillai have occasionally manifested throughout the region in the years since, a side effect of his failed ritual to become a *genius loci*.

The Kintargo Opera House, where Barzillai lived during his tyrannical reign, is a particular focus of such stories, with performers and patrons occasionally reporting they smell mint or brimstone, hear the sound of spilling grain or the baying of a hound, or even spot a ghostly figure in heavy armor. Some believe that the opera house is haunted by a poltergeist-like fragment of Barzillai's soul, although thus far, no investigations have detected undead activity.

During the first few weeks of rehearsals, however, the cast and crew report several strange sightings and occurrences. Oriole in particular reports things have been moved around in their dressing room, and some of their personal effects have gone missing. Some of the other actors indicate they've spotted a ghostly armored figure in the rigging loft above the stage. Crew members who have stayed late report hearing a

man's voice muttering in Diabolic, though when they go to investigate, no one is there. Spooked by these strange incidents, the members of the production ask the PCs to look into things.

In fact, the "haunting" is no undead remnant at all, but Fenton using the stories to cover his tracks and create distractions to derail investigations after his planned abduction of Oriole takes place. He's been using his *major staff of phantasms* to trick the cast and crew members into seeing supernatural phenomena. He's also been stealing Oriole's possessions, as he intends to use them in his ritual to steal their voice.

The following are a few potential avenues of investigation, but you should adapt to your players' ideas if they have other methods they wish to use. Feel free to add additional haunting incidents over the next few days if the PCs' investigations lag.

Questioning the Cast and Crew: The cast and crew describe the incidents noted above, their accounts largely in accord with one another. Fallenta hasn't seen anything unusual, but an actor of your choice mentions seeing a ghostly figure of Barzillai standing on the catwalk and gesturing angrily, though he didn't speak. Refusing to be scared off by "a dead tyrant," the actor tried to move closer to investigate, but as they approached, the "ghost" disappeared.

Searching the Catwalk: If the PCs spend an hour Investigating the catwalk, where sightings of the ghostly figure have been common, they can attempt a DC 34 Perception or DC 32 Survival check.

Critical Success As success, but the PC identifies the residue as smears of ashes.

Success The PC spots a faintly smudged humanoid footprint on the other side of the catwalk from where the actor claims to have spotted the figure.

Failure The PC doesn't find anything.

Oriole's Dressing Room: Oriole asks the PCs to investigate their dressing room. During a half-hour investigation, the PCs make a disturbing discovery: a crumpled up piece of paper in the corner with a dissected human figure drawn on it, recognizable as Oriole, with some anatomical notations focusing on the shape of the figure's neck and face. This paper is one of Fenton's notes regarding extracting Oriole's voice, and he inadvertently dropped it while in the room. It's clear this discovery doesn't fit with the legend of Barzillai's spirit. Each PC can attempt a DC 36 Crafting or DC 39 Perception check upon studying the drawing.

Critical Success The drawing has been done with an unusual water-soluble marking pencil, commonly used in theaters when making props or clothing so that the

marks can be washed off before the prop or costume goes onstage. The PC knows that many of these pencils are always available backstage or in the basement, especially in the prop and costume rooms. Even if the PCs express concern to Oriole, they refuse to be "babysat," indicating they have dealt with stalkers in the past and are perfectly capable of taking care of themselves.

Success The drawing has been done using an odd type of pencil.

Failure No additional information.

Looking for Undead: If the PCs use magic or class abilities to search for undead in the opera house, they find no traces of any undead activity.

Staking out the Opera House: The PCs might decide to hide out in the opera house at night in hopes of witnessing this haunting themselves. If they make this plan known among the cast and crew, Fenton hears of it and doesn't attempt any haunting hoaxes that night, which might make the PCs suspicious that the haunting isn't a true ghost. If they keep the plan to themselves, they encounter the *illusory creature* of Barzillai as noted below; this gives more PCs a chance to attempt the save against the illusion.

FENTON'S RESPONSE

The night after the PCs begin investigating, Fenton chooses the PC he believes will be most susceptible to his illusion spells. He waits until they're alone in the opera house, then uses his *major staff of phantasms* to cast *illusory creature* heightened to 5th rank to create the image of a ghostly Barzillai Thruene coming after them while hiding invisibly elsewhere within range of the spell. The "ghost" doesn't directly attack but menaces the PC before disappearing. If the PC disbelieves the illusion, they identify it as such; they can identify the specific spell with a DC 26 check to Identify Magic.

Whenever Fenton creates these illusions, he makes sure to disguise himself too so that he appears to be a typical Ashen Man cultist: a human dressed in red and gray hooded robes. He further augments this outfit by smearing real ashes on himself so that any trace he leaves behind accidentally (such as the smeared footprint the PCs might find while searching the catwalk) further bolster the deception.

Red Herring: If the PCs are getting close to realizing the "haunting" is caused by mortal hands, Fenton changes tactics. He plants the following clues around the opera house, each of which the PCs can find with a successful DC 25 Perception check: hidden graffiti daubed outside the theater with the mark of the Ashen Man (messages like "Your hearth is cold" or "Have you

seen Him?" or "Your skies will die"), traces of ashes left behind at the scenes of the incidents, and a scrap of red or gray fabric snagged on a beam in the catwalk. A PC who critically succeeds at this check realizes the clue was oddly easy to find.

RESOLVING THE INVESTIGATION

Regardless of the PCs' methods, they should find enough clues to prove (or at least suspect) that the "haunting" is no ghost. If the PCs spotted the clues tied to the Ashen Man cult, they might lay the blame on that group, though depending on their findings, some might be suspicious that there's more to the story. Once the PCs make their findings known, the incidents cease, as Fenton realizes his strategy has failed and doesn't want to push his luck—he stops all of these tactics at once and doesn't resume them.

It's possible the PCs might even discover that Fenton is the culprit. In this case, if they confront him, he initially tries to shift blame but knows that he can't risk the PCs suspecting he has deeper and more sinister plots. If the PCs press, he appears to cave in and admits that he's the one who was doing the hauntings, dressing as an Ashen Man cultist to help hide himself. He "admits" that he did all of it to get a chance to watch the PCs in action as they solve a mystery, so that he could use those observations to make the costumes he's working on for the actors "more accurate." He apologizes, then promises to be good going forward.

This admission is a falsehood—if he fails to Lie to the PCs or they otherwise don't buy his story, he grows standoffish and says, "I don't work for you. I work for Fallenta. Go talk to her if you have a problem with me." Fallenta, if consulted, is on the PCs' side and approves the firing of Fenton, but in the meantime and in the first chance he gets, Fenton flees the scene entirely.

Regardless of how he "admits" to the haunting, if the PCs confront him with the drawing found in Oriole's room or accuse him of stealing the performer's things, Fenton denies all of it—a DC 43 Perception check to Sense Motive can see through the deception, of course. If the PCs press on this matter, he deflects as above by telling them to take up their concerns with Fallenta before he makes his escape.

Reward: For proving the theater isn't haunted, grant the PCs 80 XP. If Fenton is fired or runs off and Fallenta

has to hire a new costumer, the complication of having to hire a new and likely less-talented costumer at this late of a stage costs the party 1 Production Point.

EVENT 3: COMPOSER CRISIS

As the rehearsals begin to incorporate music at some point after the PCs hire a composer, the quirks of their choice become apparent, resulting in a crisis.

To resolve the crisis, the PCs must either succeed at a DC 36 Diplomacy check to get their composer to cooperate, or they can attempt an easier skill check more suited toward solving that composer's crisis. Each PC can attempt once to solve the crisis; only one success is needed to do so.

Eustaro has been staying out too late carousing, and he and Fallenta get into a disagreement over his showing

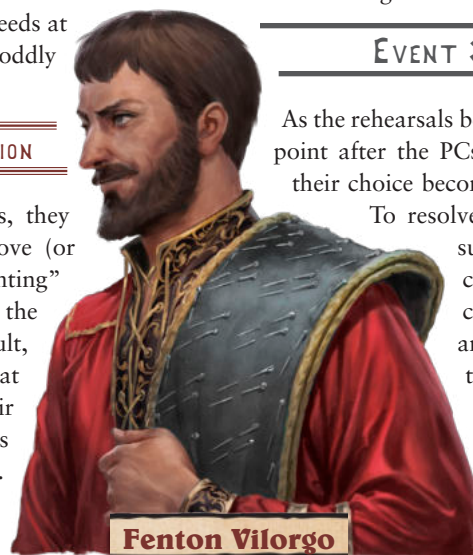
up to rehearsals late. A PC can attempt a DC 32 Medicine check (to give him a foolproof hangover cure) or a DC 34 Society check (to direct him toward locations that close earlier in the evening).

Kazhiyya has grown despondent over their perceived inability to achieve their vision for the performance and have locked themselves in their quarters, refusing to come out. A PC can attempt a DC 32 Performance (to inspire them) or DC 34 Theater Lore check (to remind them of their past successful productions).

Vaerthilde has severe and exacting style has been wearing on the cast members, and many of them are complaining about her perfectionism. A PC can attempt a DC 32 Intimidation check (to scold the cast into doing as she wishes) or a DC 34 Religion check (to appeal to her Abadaran principles).

Treasure: If the PCs successfully resolve the crisis, their composer gives them two *captivating scores* (*Treasure Vault* 84) as an apology for causing them trouble. If at least one PC critically succeeded at their check, the composer also gives the PCs one of their greatest treasures—a suit of *major library robes* (*Treasure Vault* 15) inscribed with *canticle of everlasting grief*; this item takes 2d6 days to arrive, though, as the composer has to arrange for it to be delivered from a distant home via teleportation.

Reward: Award the PCs 80 XP for successfully mediating the crisis. If no PC succeeds at a check to do so, the composer wastes valuable rehearsal time and rumors of the troubled production spread, causing the party to lose 1 Production Point.



Fenton Vilorgo



Chapter 3: All In!

For all the unexpected complications and tricky responsibilities the PCs have to navigate during this adventure as producers of an opera, nothing quite compares to the complete disaster poised to take place in this chapter—the abduction of one of their stars, the diva Oriole.

This abduction should take place soon after the PCs reach 17th level—likely after they’ve completed most of their responsibilities. When you’re ready to begin this chapter, the PCs receive an urgent summons from Fallenta, who has grave news. Read or paraphrase the following to get things started.

Fallenta taps her fingers against her desk, her mouth set in a worried frown. Without preamble, she announces,

“We have a serious problem: Oriole is missing. Last night, they stayed late at the theater to practice after the rest of the cast and crew had left—not unusual in and of itself. But they haven’t shown up this morning, and their dressing room’s been torn apart. I dispatched folks to check their accommodations, and no one there has seen them since yesterday.

“This is a disaster for the production, of course, but I’m even more worried about Oriole’s safety. I don’t know whether someone is trying to sabotage our show or was targeting them personally, or if they’ve simply stormed off for reasons of their own, but please, find them. Do whatever you have to do. I’ll keep rehearsals going and prepare an understudy just in case, though I hope it won’t be necessary.”

Singer,
Stalker,
Skinsaw
ManChapter 1:
Siege of
SongsChapter 2:
Setting the
StageChapter 3:
All In!Chapter 4:
Stitcher's
RedoubtAdventure
Toolbox

What Happened: Having finished refining his ritual, Fenton moves on with his plans to steal Oriole's voice. He ambushed Oriole in their dressing room as they were preparing to leave the theater around midnight. Oriole wasn't expecting an attack, especially from the opera's costumer, and Fenton subdued them before they could cast any spells to defend themselves. He then returned to his lodgings in Kintargo, where he and his jorogumo allies in Vyre had prepared a *teleportation circle* (Player Core 2 270), and teleported to Vyre with the unconscious diva in tow.

It shouldn't take long for the PCs to learn that Fenton is missing as well, assuming the costumer is still employed by the production. If the PCs don't think to take a head count of the staff, then Fallenta informs them of Fenton's absence before the day is out. If Fenton was fired from the production or fled as a result of earlier developments, then the PCs should instead learn that actors or set crew noticed the costumer lurking about the opera house, and that he responded with "I'm just here to pick up some of my tools I left behind"; an excuse that no one believed.

KINTARGO INVESTIGATIONS

Some avenues of investigation for the PCs are detailed below. If your players have other ideas, you should seed similar clues along their path, using the noted DCs here as guidelines.

ORIOLE'S DRESSING ROOM

Oriole's dressing room is a mess. Clothing racks are overturned, the mirror on the dressing table is broken, and accessories are strewn about the room. A PC who Searches the room for 10 minutes and succeeds at a DC 30 Perception check finds spots of blood on the floor. On a critical success, the PC also spots a faint, smudged handprint in a chalky substance on the dressing table. Any PC trained or better in Crafting or Theater Lore recognizes the substance as tailor's chalk.

A PC who also succeeds at a DC 30 Survival check after this search spots faint wheel marks, about a foot apart, on the floor. The trail leads out of the dressing room and through the backstage door, where a clothing rack sits abandoned against the wall and the trail fades.

QUESTIONING THE CREW

The rest of the cast and crew had left the theater by the time Oriole disappeared; if asked, the last time anyone

saw them was on stage, rehearsing one of their arias. Most of them have little useful information, but as the PCs ask around, it becomes a great opportunity for them to realize Fenton is missing. If the PCs inquire about the costumer, Fallenta mentions that Fenton made some unusual purchases of rare incense, metals, and purified chalk, which he indicated he needed to distill into dyes; a PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Arcana or Occultism check recognizes these items as materials for a *teleportation circle*.

FENTON'S LODGINGS

Once the PCs realize Fenton is also missing, they might wish to follow up there. While there's no clues awaiting discovery in his workshop in the Kintargo Opera House (unless the PCs never found the sketch he dropped in Oriole's dressing room in the previous chapter—in this case, they should find that forgotten sketch now), moving on to search his lodgings is a logical next step. Fallenta can suggest this course of action if the PCs don't hit on it, and she can even give them the address: a modest tenement in Old Kintargo that caters to medium-length stays called Abalone House.

When the PCs arrive at Abalone House, a frustrated landlord named **Hoster Moonti** (male halfling landlord 6) can be convinced to allow the PCs access to Fenton's room with a successful DC 25 Diplomacy or Intimidation check, or a bribe of at least 25 gp—otherwise, the PCs must sneak into the tenement. Fenton's room isn't locked, and an investigation reveals it's been abandoned with nothing remaining but basic furniture. A PC who spends 10 minutes Searching the room and succeeds at a DC 33 Perception check spots the residual outlines of a ritual circle on the floor, and a PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Arcana or Occultism check identifies the circle as a now-inactive *teleportation circle*. On a critical success, the PC also identifies the circle's destination as Vyre, though the magic has faded too much to allow for a more specific destination.

USING MAGIC

Divination magic can give the PCs valuable insight. If they cast *retrocognition* in Oriole's dressing room, they witness the struggle between Oriole and Fenton, ending in him knocking Oriole out, concealing the performer in a clothes rack, and wheeling it out the door. Using *object reading* (Player Core 2 248) on any of the items in Oriole's room or the clothing rack outside gives the PCs a strong sense of intermingled fear (from Oriole) and triumph (from Fenton) as well as a brief mental flash of Vyre's skyline.



Locate won't work, as Oriole is far beyond that spell's reach and over a body of water to boot, and Fenton is immune to most divination effects thanks to Norgorber's blessing. As a precaution, Fenton also casts *hidden mind* on Oriole every morning, which attempts to counteract any scrying or divination effects targeting them, with a counteract modifier of +31. If not counteracted, *scrying* shows Oriole in the basement of Fenton's hideout, where the PCs can spot coupons to shops in the Opal Market and gambling chips from Vyre casinos scattered on a table.

Sending can also aid the PCs. Fenton tries to keep Oriole unconscious at all times, but the magical contact of a *sending* spell jars them awake enough to respond. Oriole knows Fenton attacked them and that they're in Vyre, but not their specific location. Depending on what the PCs ask, Oriole might give them additional details about where they're currently imprisoned (including some vague descriptive details of area C14, but nothing specific the PCs can use to actually locate them).

Dream message can send one-way communications to Oriole; the PCs know the message was received (and

thus get confirmation that Oriole is alive) but won't be able to receive any helpful information in return.

While *pinpoint* won't work on Fenton due to his blessing from Norgorber, casting it to locate Oriole (and assuming the spell isn't counteracted by Fenton's *hidden mind* spell) reveals that they're currently located in Graymire Textiles in Vyre. This knowledge can let the PCs skip much of the content of this chapter and proceed directly to Chapter 4, but since that chapter's encounters assume 17th-level characters, you should encourage the PCs to at least follow up on other leads to research what they're getting into and playing through most of this chapter, perhaps using Fallenta as an in-world vector to deliver this advice.

RETURN TO VYRE

Once the PCs realize Fenton and Oriole are in Vyre, Fallenta tells them that Vyre's Nightcrown Playhouse, a theater there known for its impressive productions, is where she first learned of Fenton. She recommends visiting this location as a starting point, as Fenton might still have connections in the Vyre theater scene.

Reward: Once the PCs determine that Fenton and Oriole are in Vyre, grant the party 80 XP.

VYRE INVESTIGATIONS

Vyre and Kintargo are 70 miles apart, with trade and passenger ships alike departing for either port daily. A typical journey between the two cities costs a mere 8 sp and generally takes about 18 hours to complete; ships typically depart late afternoon, sail through the night, and arrive at their destination the next morning. Since time is of the essence and the PCs have been to Vyre already, teleportation is perhaps a better way to travel to the notorious city.

Once the PCs arrive in Vyre, tracking down Fenton is easier said than done. Asking around too directly is rebuffed, as the residents value Vyre's promise of anonymity; general attempts to Gather Information about Fenton in Vyre likewise fail to turn up anything useful. Nightcrown Playhouse is the expected initial lead for the PCs, so at the very least, try to encourage the PCs to visit this location rather than giving them direct information about Fenton if they persist.

VYRE

SETTLEMENT 16

CITY

Hedonistic settlement of secrets, vice, and hidden agendas
Government Council (five self-selected monarchs)

Population 17,300 (76% humans, 8% halflings, 4% hellspawn nephilim, 3% aiuvorins, 3% dromaars, 2% gnomes, 2% elves, 1% dwarves, 1% other)

Languages Common, Diabolic, Elven, Halfling, Shadowtongue

Religions Norgorber

Threats corrupt officials, criminals and thieves, gang violence, monsters in the sewers

Diversity through Secrecy People in Vyre don't often question the appearances, faiths, politics, or goals of one another, so long as the public peace is maintained. Characters never suffer penalties to checks in Vyre based on prejudices or the like, gain a +4 circumstance bonus to all checks to Impersonate (since the people of Vyre tend not to want to see under any proverbial masks), and gain a +2 circumstance bonus to all checks to Make an Impression in public areas.

Delaraius Solzakarr (scheming male human priest of Norgorber 20) King of Keys, warden of Dunrock, and high priest of Norgorber

Manticce Kaleekii (hedonistic female hellspawn nephilim witch 19) Queen of Delights, manager of Opal Market

Mera Bantikere (irreverent female halfling swashbuckler 16) Queen of Blades, owner of the Final Throw

Pirreta (manipulative female lunar naga sorcerer 18) Queen of Blood, madam of the Heavenly House

Simandu (secretive female jorogumo rogue 19) Queen of Whispers, mistress of Dunrock Dungeon

NIGHTCROWN PLAYHOUSE

The Nightcrown Playhouse is located not far from Vyre's large Opal Market. Here, the PCs find a production of a notoriously violent play called *The Gnome's Desert* in very early stages of rehearsals. Fenton's reference is two years old, but the PCs have three potential avenues of investigation: the actors, the crew, and the theater manager. Each PC can attempt a skill check to put a group at ease during the course of an hour of chatting, but their busy schedule means that the PCs can only attempt to do so for up to 2 hours a day.

Actors: A PC can ingratiate himself with the actors and catch some gossip with a DC 35 Diplomacy, DC 33 Performance, or DC 30 Theater Lore check. If they succeed, one of the actors remembers Fenton from a prior production and comments that he often went drinking at the Pigeon & Pike Tavern several blocks away. The actor suggests someone at the tavern might know him better since he kept to himself at work.

Crew: If a PC can win over the crew with a DC 33 Crafting or DC 35 Diplomacy check, a costuming assistant mentions Fenton often frequented two shops in the Opal Market for supplies: Atrolli's Fine Wigs and Yaidaro Fabrics. She indicates perhaps one of those proprietors has seen him if he's back in town.

Theater Manager: Berina Sendil (suspicious female human theater manager 12) is reluctant to talk to the PCs about former employees, requiring a DC 40 Deception, DC 37 Diplomacy, or DC 35 Intimidation check before she gives out any information. If the PCs succeed, Berina tells them she hasn't seen Fenton since he left the Nightcrown's internal troupe years ago but gives them the address she has on file for him (a second-floor room at a tenement called the Pelican's Nest), though she warns them it's two years out of date.

The PCs can lure Berina away with a distraction, requiring a DC 33 Deception check to Create a Diversion, then sneak into the office with a DC 35 Stealth check. A PC who spends 1 hour searching through the theater's disorganized records finds Fenton's address on file.

While in Berina's office, allow all PCs present a secret DC 30 Perception check. On a success, they spot Fenton, his hand on the shoulder of an aiuvorin woman with glasses and long dark hair, in a cast and crew portrait from a production three years ago. If asked, Berina identifies the woman as Niallana Spirio, a talented alto, though she tells them Niallana joined a traveling Vudrani production after that show wrapped and hasn't

returned to Vyre since. (In truth, Niallana was a victim of Fenton's first attempt at his ritual; page 90.)

LEAD 1: PIGEON & PIKE TAVERN

The Pigeon & Pike Tavern is a sprawling dive located at the eastern end of Opal Market. The PCs can find two clues here.

Asking Around: A PC who spends an hour gossiping here and succeeds at a DC 33 Deception or DC 35 Diplomacy check finds an old tavern regular who remembers Fenton's name. He comments that Fenton used to stop by with a singer "who lived on Beech Street." If the PCs investigate Beech Street, located near the tavern, few of the residents are willing to discuss others' business; a PC who spends another hour there and succeeds at a DC 33 Diplomacy check or DC 35 Intimidation check learns that Fenton often visited an opera diva who lived on this street, a woman named Niallana, though no one has seen her around for a few years.

Sculptures: A PC who succeeds at a DC 35 Crafting or DC 37 Perception check spots some decorative sculptures around the tavern signed by "F. Vilorgo" and "T. Monniva." If they ask around, the bartender tells them the sculptures were done by "Therandis Monniva and his student Fenton" and indicates Therandis owns a wax museum in the Sanctuary neighborhood.

LEAD 2: ATROLLI'S FINE WIGS

The proprietor, **Auda Boviniker** (grumpy female human wigmaker 9) is reluctant to speak of her customers, but the PCs can win her over with a successful DC 35 Deception, DC 37 Diplomacy, or DC 33 Intimidation check after 10 minutes of chatting. If so, she admits that Fenton was a regular, but she hasn't seen him in two years. The last time he stopped in, he commissioned a long black wig, though he never returned to pick it up; she's long since sold the wig to another customer.

LEAD 3: YAIDARO FABRICS

Leskon Vrill (nonbinary human tailor 10) runs Yaidaro Fabrics. Here, the PCs can spend a half hour chatting with Leskon; on a successful DC 35 Diplomacy or DC 33 Intimidation check, they get Leskon to recall Fenton—he and his teacher, Therandis Monniva, were frequent customers. They haven't seen Fenton in a few years but can direct the PCs to Therandis's wax museum.

LEAD 4: THE PELICAN'S NEST

Fenton's prior address is a second-floor room in the Pelican's Nest, a tenement perched on a cliffside overlooking Vyre River in Southmarket. The landlady of the Pelican's Nest is one "Auntie" **Jaula** (intimidating female human 10). Upon mention of Fenton's name, Auntie demands to know if the PCs know where he is, as he never paid his last month's rent when he moved out two years ago. The apartment has long since gained a new tenant, and Auntie refuses to let the PCs investigate it; even if they sneak in, there's no trace of Fenton left there.

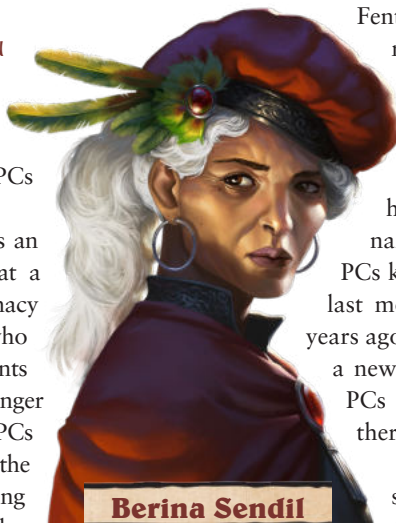
Before the PCs leave, however, Auntie shoves a box at them, telling them to "take this creepy junk he left behind with you." Inside the box are several eerie-looking masks. A PC who succeeds at a DC 33 Crafting, DC 35 Society, or DC 30 Vyre Lore check recognizes the maker's mark on all of the masks as that of Masque Saverra, a shop in Old Vyre.

LEAD 5: MASQUE SAVERRA

Masque Saverra is owned by an unusually tall and thin dwarf who goes only by the nickname of **Longfellow** (nonbinary dwarf mask-maker 11). No check is required after speaking to them for a few minutes for them to tell the PCs that they haven't seen Fenton in several years, although they do recall Fenton's last purchase: a full-face mask depicting a feminine visage. Fenton mentioned it was for a "special performance" when Longfellow inquired about what he needed the mask for. They suggest the PCs check with Fenton's former sculpting teacher, Therandis Monniva, who owns a wax museum in the Sanctuary neighborhood.

MONNIVA WAXCRAFTS

As the PCs investigate, they should discover that Fenton once studied under a man named Therandis Monniva. This man is likely their best lead to Fenton's whereabouts, as the seamster appears to have few real social ties. The single-story but sprawling stone edifice of Monniva Waxcrafts looms above the street in the western part of the Sanctuary neighborhood, its arched windows decorated with elaborate carvings. A wooden sign on the door reads in Common, "Welcome! Tours, 1 sp per visitor, group rates by request, lessons offered by appointment. Ring for assistance."



Berina Sendil

Singer,
Stalker,
Skinsaw
ManChapter 1:
Siege of
SongsChapter 2:
Setting the
StageChapter 3:
All In!Chapter 4:
Stitcher's
RedoubtAdventure
Toolbox

Just inside, a counter with a ticket box sits near the doorway, a velvet rope blocking off the rest of the room on either side. A small brass bell is mounted on a stand next to the ticket box. Beyond the rope, the lights are dimmed save for the spotlights on the maze of wax statues arrayed around the large display room, each depicting a variety of famous historical figures, actors, and rulers of the Inner Sea.

Therandis Monniva (talented male human sculptor 14) runs the Waxcrafts. He's currently in a back room working on a marble sculpture of the goddess Casandalee for a mysterious patron in the Broken Lands, but he quickly comes to greet the PCs if they ring the bell. He's a spindly, middle-aged man clad in red robes and silvery goggles.

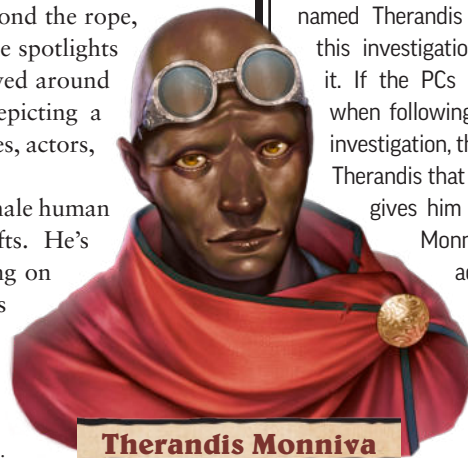
"Welcome!" he says as he steps forward to greet the PCs. "I'm Therandis Monniva, artist and curator. Are you here to see the museum? Or perhaps you'd like to learn the art for yourselves?"

Therandis is a skilled sculptor who offers private lessons for a small fee. Several years ago, he took Fenton on as a student. He didn't know then and doesn't know now that Fenton is a Norgorberite or anything about his less savory activities, but he grew uncomfortable when he discovered horrific anatomical drawings concealed in Fenton's workbench. When confronted, Fenton claimed they were simply for reference, but something about his manner alarmed Therandis, and he dismissed Fenton from his tutelage.

Ever since, Therandis has feared that something involving his former student might come back to haunt him. When the PCs mention his name, Therandis assumes the worst and immediately turns to flee through the building, out the back door, and through the streets of Vyre.

If the PCs wish to continue speaking to Therandis, they have to chase him down using the chase rules (GM Core 192). When the chase begins, Therandis takes full advantage of his knowledge of the mazelike interior of his museum, and as a result, he begins the chase one obstacle ahead of the PCs. If the Norgorberites warned him, he instead begins two obstacles ahead of the PCs in the chase.

Therandis goes first each round and automatically clears his current obstacle to move one forward, using his lifelong knowledge of Vyre to move quickly through the city. If he ever gets to a position that's five ahead of the PCs' obstacle, he gets away from the PCs automatically.

**Therandis Monniva****WHERE TO NEXT?**

The leads should ultimately direct the PCs to a man named Therandis Monniva. He's a key element of this investigation, and the Norgorber cult knows it. If the PCs ever critically fail any skill check when following up on a lead in this stage of the investigation, the Norgorberites take note and warn Therandis that the PCs are on to him. This warning gives him time to reorganize the displays in Monniva Waxcrafts to give him a greater advantage at the start of the chase detailed in that encounter.

Reward: Grant the PCs 80 XP once they learn of Therandis's name and his association with Fenton.

SHOWROOM SCULPTURES**OBSTACLE 16**

Chase Points 2; **Overcome** DC 38 Athletics to barrel through the mannequins, DC 40 Perception to spot a path through

Therandis knows the path through his museum well (and begins the chase one or even two obstacles ahead of the PCs), but the PCs must navigate a complicated maze.

PICK UP THE TRAIL**OBSTACLE 16**

Chase Points 3; **Overcome** DC 38 Diplomacy to secure information from passersby, DC 35 Survival or DC 40 Perception to follow Therandis's trail

Therandis disappears into the crowd after fleeing out the back door of the museum.

HERETIC'S ROW CROWD**OBSTACLE 16**

Chase Points 3; **Overcome** DC 40 Acrobatics to weave through the crowd, DC 35 Religion to find shortcuts in surrounding churches' architecture

Nearing the throngs of worshippers gathered on Heretic's Row, the crowd grows nearly impassable.

HELLKNIGHT PATROL**OBSTACLE 16**

Chase Points 3; **Overcome** DC 40 Diplomacy to justify their pursuit of a fugitive, DC 35 Stealth to sneak past

A Hellknight patrol grows suspicious of the PCs running through the streets.

TREACHEROUS ROOFTOPS**OBSTACLE 16**

Chase Points 3; **Overcome** DC 40 Acrobatics to balance across the roofs, DC 35 Athletics to climb walls and jump gaps (a PC who can fly automatically bypasses this obstacle and earns the group 1 Chase Point)

Therandis's trail leads over the rooftops.

STRAY DINOSAURS

OBSTACLE 16

Chase Points 3; **Overcome** DC 40 Intimidation to control and direct the crowds to make way, DC 35 Nature to calm the dinosaurs

A pack of velociraptors being forced to perform in a street carnival break loose after Therandis opens a cage as he races by; the dinosaurs quickly incite a panic.

EXPERIMENTAL BACKLASH

OBSTACLE 16

Chase Points 2; **Overcome** DC 35 Crafting to quickly reinforce sections of alleyway about to collapse, DC 40 Perception to spot damaged areas and avoid them.

An alchemist on the fringes of the Opal Market causes an accidental explosion as he flees from escaped dinosaurs, causing burning debris and crumbling walls. A PC who fails this check takes 10d6 bludgeoning damage from falling debris (DC 35 basic Reflex save).

CRIMINAL OPPORTUNITY

OBSTACLE 16

Chase Points 2; **Overcome** DC 40 Intimidation to shoot them off, DC 35 Thievery to flash signs to the criminals to let them know you shouldn't be messed with

A group of thieves spot the PCs and block their path, demanding payment for passage.

MUNKCHUFF'S QUAY

OBSTACLE 16

Chase Points 2; **Overcome** DC 40 Society or DC 35 Vyre Lore to know the best route through

The boardwalks of Munkchuff's Quay are tough to navigate; Therandis steals a skiff and rows out into the harbor.

KEELWRACK HARBOR

Therandis escapes.

Therandis Hides: If Therandis reaches Keelwrack Harbor, he escapes by hiding aboard a nondescript ship called the *Maya Dae*. At this point, the chase ends—inform the PCs wherever they're at that they've lost the trail. Divination magic can help locate Therandis (but note since he's on a ship moored in the harbor, *locate* won't work, as he's surrounded by water); alternatively, each PC can attempt to pick up his trail via Gathering Information or Tracking him. Each attempt to do so takes 2 hours, is a DC 35 check, and earns Victory Points—if the PCs can earn 6 Victory Points before 6 hours pass, they discover Therandis hiding aboard the *Maya Dae*; otherwise, the ship sets sail and he escapes.

If the ship sails, the PCs are likely to hit a dead end in their pursuit of Fenton. You should build a new encounter or method for the PCs to learn of the Final Throw if Therandis escapes.

Therandis is Captured: If the PCs capture Therandis, he drops to his knees and begs for mercy.

"All right, all right! You win! What do you want? I never should have taken that man in; all it's caused me is grief. What's he done? Or... You're not... friends of his, are you?"

Now that the PCs have cornered Therandis, he relates his history with Fenton. He was unaware Fenton was back in Vyre and is alarmed to learn this detail. Therandis doesn't know where Fenton is currently hiding out (he assumes he's back at his old apartment if the PCs ask him to guess), but he knows who might. One of Fenton's usual gambling haunts in Vyre was the Final Throw, a casino in the Cradle neighborhood. If anyone in Vyre has kept track of Fenton's whereabouts, it'd be the person to whom he owes the most money: the Final Throw's owner, Mera Bantikere. Therandis suggests the PCs seek her out for information.

Treasure: Therandis begs the PCs not to tell Fenton who tipped them off; if they agree, he leads them back to his museum and opens up a safe to buy their silence by giving them a *greater crafter's eyepiece* and a *truesight potion*.

Reward: For catching Therandis and learning what he knows, grant the PCs 120 XP.

THE FINAL THROW

The Final Throw is a notorious gambling hall, part circus and part casino, known for its outlandish games and entertainments. This ornate stone building is impossible to miss; the stained glass dome atop it is visible across Vyre. When the PCs enter the Final Throw, read or paraphrase the following.

Immense gilded wooden doors, carved with a pattern resembling stacks of coins, open onto the Final Throw's gambling floor. The tables arrayed around the vast room are crammed with patrons enjoying all manner of games.

In the middle of the gaming floor is a raised stage, covered with a metal dome resembling a birdcage. A metal sculpture of a dragon perches atop the cage, gears lining its sides and its eyes two glittering sapphires.

A row of closed doors on the eastern wall of the enormous hall each bear a silver plaque that reads, "Reserved." Past the gaming floor stands a sweeping marble counter of an impressive bar, the shelves behind it showcasing an array of liqueur and wine bottles. A staircase blocked off with a velvet rope curls upstairs and out of sight behind the bar.

The PCs are free to look around; the Final Throw offers numerous popular games from around the world. A PC can Earn Income here using Games Lore of any Task Level they wish, up to level 20.

Owner **Mera Bantikere** (irreverent female halfling swashbuckler 16) isn't on the floor, but the casino staff are easily identifiable in their masquerade masks. If the PCs ask the staff about meeting with Mera, they're informed she's a very busy woman, and she'll only speak to them if they can "make it worth her while." To gain an audience, the PCs must take part in three challenges to entertain the Final Throw's patrons. Mera meets with them regardless of how well they do as long as they participate in the entertainment, but the employees mention that those who perform can earn impressive prizes.

These challenges all take place on the Final Throw's main stage. Once the PCs agree, the casino employees waste no time in announcing to the floor that a special show is about to begin. They quickly usher the PCs up onto the stage through an opening in the cage-like dome, where they're joined by a pair of blue-skinned figures clad in bright red robes, their faces veiled. Each of these figures holds a small metal rod in one of their four arms, and their feet end in two gnarled claws.

"Helloooooo, Vyre!" one of them says, their voice echoing through the room as they raise the metal rod to their mouth. "I hope we've all been enjoying our time at the Final Throw?" A cheer goes up from the casino patrons.

"We've got quite the show for you today!" the other figure announces, throwing two of their arms out wide. "Some of our new patrons have agreed to undertake the Gauntlet!" They pause to let the cheers die down, then nod. "We're your hosts, the Crown..."

"...and the Star," adds the other. "So, without further ado, I give you... your entertainment!"

The **Crown** and the **Star** are powerful (level 13) witchwyrd (*Bestiary* 2 294) who serve as announcers and referees for the Final Throw's events. The two sought refuge in Vyre after being exiled from their former home in Katapesh for running afoul of the Pactmasters, and they've taken to their new jobs with enthusiasm, each adopting as their new names one of the suits from the Harrow deck. The Crown typically serves as the voice of the pair, announcing special events and commenting on them as they play out, while the Star usually serves as the more quiet observer, referee, and arbiter of rules when needed, but both are equally adept at either role.

Once the two have finished their introductions, they call upon the PCs to do so as well, encouraging the PCs to make a big deal as they introduce themselves to the cheering crowd that swiftly gathers around the Final Throw's central stage. Once that's done, the challenges can begin!

FINAL THROW CHALLENGES

All three of the challenges the PCs face take place on the Final Throw's main stage—an immense mechanized platform capable of adopting a wide range of different configurations as needed by whatever event is taking place. When inactive, the stage is a wood-floored oval platform that measures 100 feet long by 80 feet wide, all surrounded by an immense cage that creates a "ceiling" of 30 feet above; the map for the stage is on page 60.

In between each challenge, the PCs are allowed 10 minutes to rest and recover.

CHALLENGE 1: DEAL WITH THE DEVIL

"First up," the Crown says, gesturing to the gaming tables with a flourish, "our competitors face an old Final Throw favorite doing what he does best. Today's first game is three-devil draw. Let's see if our new friends can outdo the Final Throw's best dealer! Let's give a warm welcome to... Silverhand Salvo!"

The mechanisms of the stage whirl, and platforms rise from the floor bearing an elegant card table, several fancy chairs, and a man in a stylish suit, its lapels embroidered in red. Each of his fingers sports a gaudy ring. The crowd erupts into cheers and whistles as he bows, tossing a wink to his competitors.

The challenge might seem easy enough to the PCs, but Silverhand Salvo is no mortal man. In fact, he's a powerful gambling devil who, decades ago, got into a bet with the Final Throw's then-proprietor and lost. As a consequence, he was bound to the casino until he bankrupts 10,000 mortals within its walls. Though annoyed at this outcome, Silverhand at least appreciates the comfortable circumstances and the opportunity to gamble with gullible mortals. Most of the Final Throw regulars know of Silverhand's nature and enjoy watching him beat unsuspecting tourists. While he's still almost a thousand bankruptcies away from freedom, he doesn't play his part with any less aplomb.

SILVERHAND SALVO

CREATURE 14

UNIQUE MEDIUM DEVIL FIEND

Variant male gambling devil (page 86)

Perception +26; greater darkvision

Languages Common, Diabolic, Epyrean; telepathy 100 feet
Skills Accounting Lore +25, Deception +28, Diplomacy +26, Games Lore +29, Intimidation +28, Thievery +28

Str +5, **Dex** +6, **Con** +4, **Int** +5, **Wis** +6, **Cha** +8

Items jewelry worth 5,000 gp, +2 greater striking unholy sword cane

AC 36; **Fort** +22, **Ref** +26, **Will** +28

HP 255; **Immunities** fire; **Weaknesses** holy 15; **Resistances** physical 15 (except silver), poison 15

Risk Aura (aura, divine, mental, misfortune) 30 feet. As gambling devil, but DC 31.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ sword cane +28 (agile, concealable, finesse, magical, unholy), **Damage** 3d6+11 piercing plus 1d4 spirit

Melee ♦ fist +26 (agile, finesse, magical, unholy), **Damage** 3d4+11 bludgeoning

Ranged ♦ thrown coin +28 (magical, unholy), **Damage** 3d6+8 bludgeoning plus 1d6 precision

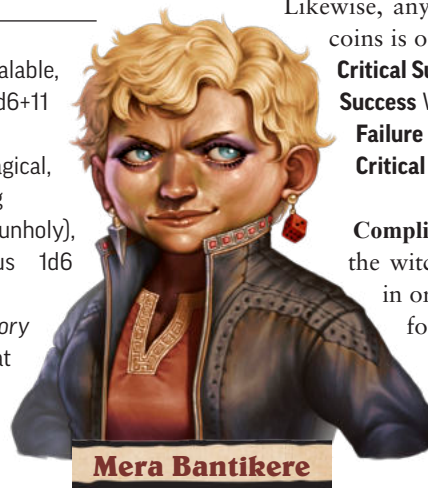
Divine Innate Spells DC 34; **7th** *illusory creature*; **6th** *truesight*; **5th** *ill omen* (at will), *illusory object*, *translocate*; **4th** *translocate* (at will); **Cantrips** (7th) *figment*

Rituals *diabolic pact* (Monster Core 364)

Change Shape ♦ As gambling devil.

Double Down ♫ (divine, fortune) As gambling devil.

Produce Gold Coins ♦ As gambling devil.



PLAYING THREE-DEVIL DRAW

Three-devil draw is a popular bluffing card game in Vyre. As this game is part of the show, all participants are allotted the same amount of gold coins to gamble with; the PCs can't add their own funds to the pot. The participants' gambling funds and performance in the game are represented by these coins, which are kept under an upside-down cup decorated with three devil faces except when coins are added or withdrawn from the stash. Each participant begins the game with five coins under their cup, and the game is played out over the course of 5 1-minute rounds, during which each PC and Silverhand Salvo do the Three-Devil Draw activity.

The PCs are allowed to benefit from items that grant bonuses to skills, but not spellcasting. Note also that the PCs are also within reach of Silverhand's Risk Aura—at the start of each of the game's 5 rounds, each PC must attempt a DC 31 Will save to avoid being affected by this aura for that round.

THREE-DEVIL DRAW

CONCENTRATE **EXPLORATION** **MANIPULATE**

Every round, participants must attempt a DC 33 Games Lore check, a DC 35 Deception check, or a DC 37 Perception check to determine their performance during that round. Alternatively, a participant can attempt a DC 35 Thievery check to cheat, but if they fail, the Star spots the cheating and

that PC immediately loses a coin (or two coins, if the result of the Thievery check was a critical failure). A PC caught cheating three times is out of the game.

Likewise, any character who loses all of their coins is out of the game.

Critical Success Win 2 gold coins.

Success Win 1 gold coin.

Failure Lose 1 gold coin.

Critical Failure Lose 2 gold coins.

Complications: At the end of each round, the witchwyrds introduce a complication in order to “spice things up.” There are four complications in all, as detailed below.

End of Round 1: Drinking Game Each participant must down a shot of potent absinthe, requiring a successful DC 35

Fortitude save to avoid becoming stupefied 1 for the following round.

End of Round 2: Showy Shuffling The witchwyrds challenge each player to show off their skills as the round ends and the cards must be shuffled for the next round. A PC can attempt showy shuffling with a DC 33 Thievery, DC 35 Games Lore, or DC 37 Performance check. If the PCs roll more successful checks than does Silverhand, the party earns 1 Entertainment Point.

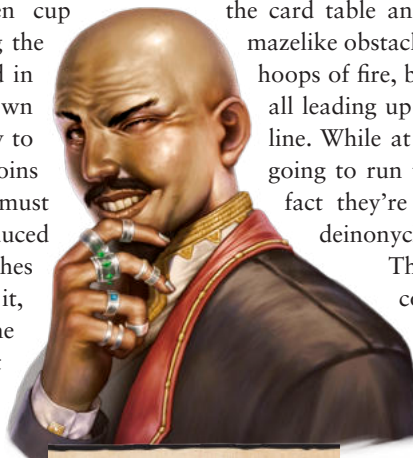
End of Round 3: Trivia Round Each participant must answer a trivia question asked by the Crown, requiring a DC 30 Games Lore, DC 35 Society, or DC 40 Deception check to answer their question correctly. If half or more of the PCs fail this check, the resulting jeers and mockery from the crowd during the following round grant Silverhand a +2 circumstance bonus to all skill checks during that round.

End of Round 4: Pass the Mirrors The witchwyrds pass out dozens of small hand mirrors to the crowd, then instruct them to use the mirrors to try to catch reflections of each participant's hand. During the next round, each character must succeed at a DC 33 Thievery or DC 37 Stealth check to manipulate their cards so that their hand isn't revealed. A PC who fails a check shifts the result of their next round's play of Three-Devil Draw down by one degree of success.

Silverhand Cheats: Silverhand's gambling talents allow him to keep an accurate count of each PCs' coins as the game progresses. He's particularly cagey in how he adds or withdraws coins from under his

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cup, doing so by dragging the cup to the table edge to let the proper number of coins fall into a palm or to give himself an opening to deposit that round's winnings through the gap between cup edge and table edge before returning the cup to play. At the end of any round in which a PC's total coins exceed his own total by 4 or more, he uses his ability to Produce Gold Coins to add 5 gold coins to his total. Each time he does so, he must Palm an Object to place the produced coins under his cup. If a PC catches him cheating and calls him out on it, he chuckles in delight and tosses the false coins aside, claiming, "Just part of the fun—I knew you'd spot me!" The Star gives him a glare but allows the game to proceed, after which Silverhand no longer cheats but does grow frustrated with the PCs.



Silverhand Salvo

Spotting the Devil: There are several ways the PCs might notice that Silverhand is more than he seems. A PC who fails to resist his Risk Aura knows something strange is going on and can attempt a DC 32 Religion check to realize that Silverhand is the source of this misfortune effect. *Truesight* also allows a PC to see through his Change Shape to perceive his true form.

If the PCs frustrate Silverhand, such as by catching him cheating, or if he knows he's losing to one of them by the third round, his frustration lets slip hints about who he truly is. His eyes occasionally flash red; he might give off a momentary scent of brimstone or make comments in conversation that hint at his true nature. At the end of any round where Silverhand is frustrated, PCs can attempt a DC 38 Perception check to realize he's a devil in disguise.

If they realize what Silverhand is and point it out, he laughs and reverts to his true form with a bow; this earns the PCs 1 Entertainment Point.

Reward: If a PC wins the game, the party earns 2 Entertainment Points. For each additional PC who scored above Silverhand, they earn 1 additional Entertainment Point, up to a maximum of 5 Entertainment Points. Regardless of the winner, grant the PCs 120 XP for playing.

CHALLENGE 2: BEST IN SHOW

"That was quite the display!" the Crown exclaims.

"Our guests certainly know how to put on a show," the Star responds.

"That they do," the Crown agrees. "Now, let's see if they're as good at animal wrangling as they are at card wrangling!"

The PCs and Silverhand are ushered off the stage. Silverhand takes up a front-row seat in the crowd while the stage's hidden gears grind, whisking away the card table and replacing it with a complicated mazelike obstacle course of climbing walls, burning hoops of fire, balance beams, and spinning floors, all leading up to a large trampoline at the finish line. While at first the PCs might expect they're going to run this obstacle course themselves, in fact they're expected to each lead a trained deinonychus through the course!

This "pet show" is half parkour course and half circus and uses the solo chase rules (*GM Core* 192), as only one PC takes part in this challenge. That PC must overcome the course's six obstacles by accompanying the

provided deinonychus—a somewhat cranky creature named Coral—through the six obstacles. The use of magic to aid the deinonychus through the obstacles is prohibited, but a PC can use magic on themselves—*speak with animals* is a common choice for this fan-favorite challenge.

While ordinarily such an obstacle course would pose little challenge for high-level PCs, handling a recalcitrant deinonychus makes things more difficult, resulting in exceptionally high DC checks. However, before attempting an obstacle, the PC can attempt a DC 25 Nature check to Command an Animal to get Coral to cooperate. A PC who can cast *speak with animals* can instead attempt an equal DC Diplomacy check for this or for any Nature check in the obstacles below.

Critical Success The obstacle DCs are reduced by 10 for that round.

Success The obstacle DCs are reduced by 5 for that round.

Failure No effect.

Critical Failure Coral snarls and attacks the PC. She rolls initiative and makes one jaws and two talon strikes against the PC, who's considered off-guard for these attacks. It's unlikely that Coral will hurt the PC, and she calms down at the end of the round unless the PC fights back, in which case Coral continues the combat another round. If the PC calms Coral, they can attempt that round's obstacle but all DCs are increased by 5.

CORAL

Female deinonychus (*Monster Core* 97)

Initiative Perception +7

CREATURE 2

Chase Obstacles: To get through the course, a PC must overcome the following six obstacles in order; the PC has 10 rounds to complete the course.

CLIMBING WALL

OBSTACLE 16

Chase Points 1; **Overcome** DC 40 Athletics to scramble up the wall in tandem with Coral, DC 45 Nature to convince Coral to drag a Medium or smaller PC up and over the wall (this inflicts 2d6+3 piercing damage to the PC)

A 20-foot-high climbing wall, pitted with handholds, begins the course.

FIRE HOOPS

OBSTACLE 16

Chase Points 1; **Overcome** DC 45 Acrobatics or DC 40 Circus Lore to jump through the hoops with Coral

Three flaming hoops hover in the air between the climbing wall and the balance beams on the other side; both the PC and Coral must leap through the hoops to land on the balance beam beyond.

Special A PC who fails this check falls 20 feet to the floor below, taking falling damage as Coral watches them scornfully from the wall. On a critical failure, Coral falls as well. They must then overcome the Climbing Wall obstacle again to re-reach the Fire Hoops.

BALANCE BEAM

OBSTACLE 16

Chase Points 1; **Overcome** DC 40 Acrobatics to cross the beams, DC 45 Nature to keep Coral calm while she's being carried

The PC must walk across a balance beam that leads down to the ground, all while Coral is balanced on their shoulders.

Special A PC who fails this check falls, but Coral manages to scramble to safety. A critical failure results in a 20-foot fall for both PC and Coral. After a fall, the PC and Coral can proceed to the next obstacle.

SPINNING DISK

OBSTACLE 16

Chase Points 1; **Overcome** DC 45 Acrobatics to cross the spinning floor, DC 40 Perception to time your and Coral's movements across the disk

An erratically spinning horizontal disk in the floor rotates below the balance beams, and the PC must lead Coral across the spinning disk to the far side.

GIANT TRAMPOLINE

OBSTACLE 16

Chase Points 1; **Overcome** DC 40 Circus Lore to use the trampoline, DC 45 Nature to help guide Coral's actions

A large trampoline awaits at the far side of the spinning disk—the PC and Coral must use the trampoline to set up an impressive final flourish.

FINAL FLOURISH

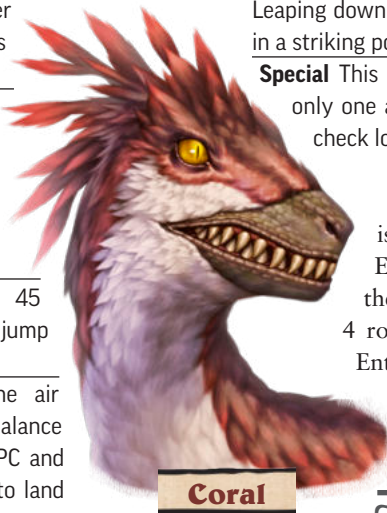
OBSTACLE 16

Chase Points 1; **Overcome** DC 45 Nature to get Coral to do a flip on the dismount from the trampoline, DC 40 Performance to make an impressive dismount

Leaping down from the trampoline, Coral and the PC land in a striking pose.

Special This obstacle marks the end of the course and only one attempt is possible, but a PC who fails this check loses 1 Entertainment Point.

Reward: The first time each obstacle is overcome, the party earns 1 Entertainment Point. If the PC makes it to the end of the obstacle course with at least 4 rounds remaining, they earn 2 additional Entertainment Points. If the PC and Coral manage to complete the course in time, grant the party 120 XP; otherwise, they earn only 60 XP for the partial success.



Coral

CHALLENGE 3: SHOWDOWN MODERATE 16

"Hope our competitors aren't too tipsy!" the Crown exclaims. "Because we've got a special surprise to end the show tonight, folks, don't we? Our final challenge is a face-off against Steampuff in combat. Not all contestants get this chance, and none have won this final challenge yet, but perhaps these folks might be the first! What do you think?"

In answer, the crowd roars in excitement.

The PCs are led off the stage one final time while the mechanisms grind once more. This time, patches of grinding razor-sharp gears rise up around the stage (in all the dotted rectangle areas labeled **B2** on the map on page 60), while a brightly colored spinning wheel folds out and extends from the platform on which the Crown and the Star have been presenting the challenges at area **B1**. The Crown calls on a volunteer from the audience, and in short order, they select Silverhand Salvo to do the honors of spinning the so-called Wheel of Fates to give this final challenge a bit more excitement.

Creatures: The Crown ushers the PCs back into the cage, explaining that during their "exhibition fight" with Steampuff, they can use anything at their disposal inside the cage, and that there's no need for them to hold back—Steampuff certainly won't, she warns! The Crown also tells the PCs that Silverhand will be spinning the wheel each round to change the hazards and dangers the PCs have to face—the grinding gears on the stage being but the first of these potential hazards. Furthermore, the Crown tells the PCs not to worry about "spillover" from the cage—the bars during this challenge prevent dangerous area effect

attacks from spilling out into the crowd (an effect like a *wall of force* comes into being between the bars that blocks such effects, keeping things like *fireball* and breath weapons safely on stage). The Crown waits for the PCs to take up any position they wish in the cage, and once they're ready, she pulls a nearby lever to close the PCs into the cage once again—and opens the roof to let Steampuff swoop down!

Steampuff is in fact the dragon “sculpture” that sits atop the cage—a powerful clockwork dragon. When the fight begins, the bars at the top of the cage slide open to allow Steampuff to swoop down to begin the fight, rolling Acrobatics for initiative. As warned by Crown, Steampuff fights until destroyed. While the clockwork dragon does avoid obvious threats, canny PCs can use the ever-changing hazards on stage to their advantage.

Note that Steampuff doesn't self-destruct once reduced to 0 Hit Points.

STEAMPUFF

CREATURE 17

Elite clockwork dragon (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 6, 51)

Initiative Acrobatics +31

Hazard: This fight begins with several banks of whirring, razor-sharp gears grinding away within each of the areas on stage shown by black dotted rectangles (areas **B2**).

Each round, Silverhand gives the Wheel of Fates a spin. The timing of the spins results in the stage's hazardous areas changing at the start of each round of combat, with the previous hazards withdrawing into the clockwork mechanisms hidden under the stage while new hazards emerge. If the wheel spin results in a hazard not changing, then the stage remains static that round, but if the hazard changes, any character occupying a space where a hazard is receding into the stage or emerging must attempt a DC 32 Reflex save to avoid being knocked prone.

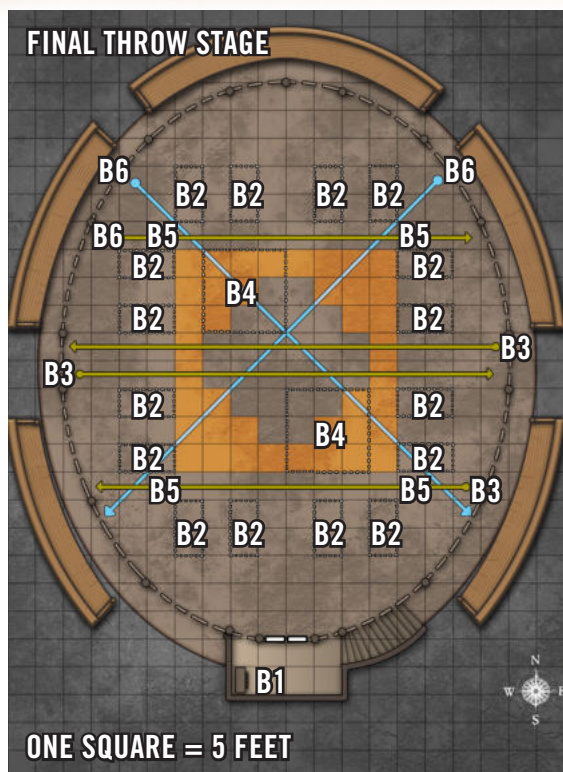
The Wheel of Fates isn't a standard hazard—disabling it isn't an option during the fight, as the machinery is complex and largely inaccessible to those inside the cage. At the start of a round, roll on the following table.

WHEEL OF FATES

d8	Effect
1	Razor-sharp gears emerge from the floor inside each of the dotted rectangles (areas B2). A creature that begins its turn in one of these areas, or that enters one of these areas during its turn, takes 3d10+18 slashing damage (DC 34 basic Reflex save).

- What appear to be rifle barrels emerge from the squares marked as areas **B3**. At the end of the round, these rifles fire 50 copper coins at a high rate of fire along each of the paths noted by yellow arrows. Any creature in one of these lines takes 3d10+18 bludgeoning damage (DC 34 basic Reflex save); a creature that has the misfortune to be in the path of multiple lines takes damage from each separately.
- The floor in the dotted squares marked as areas **B4** slides back to reveal pits of mud; these areas are treated as greater difficult terrain.
- A red-hot nozzle emerges from the squares marked as areas **B5**. At the end of the round, the four nozzles each spray a 20-foot cone of fire in the area indicated by the shaded orange area; all creatures in this area take 3d12+18 fire damage (DC 34 basic Reflex save).
- The currently active hazard retracts into the stage, but nothing appears to happen until the end of the round, when spikes launch out the floor throughout the stage. All creatures standing on the ground at the end of the round take 3d12+18 piercing damage (DC 34 basic Reflex save).
- Nozzles open along many of the bars built into the cage and spray a transparent form of laughing gas into the area. At the start of each creature's turn during this round, that creature must attempt a DC 34 Will save. On a failure, it becomes slowed 1 this round as it spends some of its time laughing (slowed 2 this round on a critical failure). This gas has the mental, poison, and sleep traits.
- Electrodes emerge from the squares marked as areas **B6**. At the end of the round, these electrodes launch bolts of lightning along the paths indicated by blue arrows. Any creature in one of these squares takes 3d10+18 electricity damage (DC 34 basic Reflex save); a creature that has the misfortune to be in the path of multiple bolts of lightning takes damage from each separately.
- Lucky spin! The currently active hazard retracts into the stage, but no new hazard emerges this round.

Reward: During this battle, particularly showy or impressive actions can earn the party Entertainment Points. A PC can earn a maximum of 1 Entertainment Point per round. A critical success or a critical failure at a Strike, saving throw, or skill check automatically earns a PC their 1 point for the round, but a PC can



also attempt to earn their 1 point by attempting either a DC 30 Gladiatorial Lore, DC 35 Performance, or DC 37 Acrobatics check as an action to add a spectacular flourish. On a success, they earn their 1 point for the round, but on a critical success, they earn 2 Entertainment Points (this is an exception to the normal limit of earning only 1 Entertainment Point per round).

As exciting as a fight against Steampuff might be, the audience quickly grows bored if the battle drags on. Starting on the 6th round of combat, the PCs can no longer earn Entertainment Points. Starting on the 7th round of combat, and repeating again at the start of every round thereafter, the PCs lose 1 Entertainment Point as the crowd grows increasingly impatient to see the PCs either win or lose.

In addition to earning XP for the fight, grant the PCs an additional 40 XP if they earned at least 4 Entertainment Points during the fight.

HITTING THE JACKPOT

If the PCs survive this final challenge, the Crown cries out, “And that’s a jackpot for our contestants! What a show, folks! Time for the winners to claim their prizes!” The audience applauds for a few moments as the stage resets, and then the card table the PCs used in the first challenge rises back up from the center of the stage—

only this time, the table is heaped with treasure!

Treasure: The PCs’ rewards depend on how well they did during the show, though feel free to modify the specific items given if desired. These awards are cumulative, so if the PCs earned 26 or more Entertainment Points (EP), they win all of this treasure!

Bronze (9 or fewer EP): The PCs win a *dragonclaw scutcheon* (Treasure Vault 92), a *dragonscale cameo* (Treasure Vault 93), and a *dragontooth trophy* (Treasure Vault 93), along with a 7th-rank *wand of fireballs* and assorted gems worth a total of 5,000 gp. (The three dragon-themed talismans are all associated with fortune dragons and force damage.)

Silver (10 to 14 EP): The PCs win a +3 *greater striking standard-grade dawnsilver rapier*, a 7th-rank *wand of shadow blast legerdemain* (Treasure Vault 140), and assorted gems worth a total of 10,000 gp.

Gold (15 to 19 EP): The PCs win a +3 *greater striking greater astral shortbow*, a pair of *greater daredevil boots*, and assorted gems worth a total of 15,000 gp.

JACKPOT! (20 or more EP): The PCs win a *sinew-song* (page 84), a *necklace of allure*, a high-grade adamantine buckler, a *true staff of healing*, and assorted gems worth a total of 20,000 gp.

MEETING WITH MERA

After the PCs gather their winnings, the Crown and the Star thank the PCs for providing the entertainment. As the crowd in the Final Throw returns to their own interests, the two witchwyrds lead the PCs up a flight of spiral stairs into the Final Throw’s tallest tower, eventually reaching Mera’s office.

A gilded desk, carved with cavorting angels and devils, sits in one corner of this opulent office. Across from it is a bar with an obsidian counter, its glass shelves displaying an array of brightly colored liqueurs.

Mera sits at the desk. When the PCs enter, she greets them as follows.

“You put on quite the show out there. My patrons do love a spectacle, as do I. I suppose now I’ll have to get Steampuff fixed up, but it was worth it, watching you do your thing. You certainly went through a lot to earn some of my time, so please, have a seat! Can I get you a drink? I’m eager to hear what you want from me!”

In truth, Mera isn’t only a casino magnate, but one of the five Masks of Vyre, the Queen of Blades. Recently, she’s noticed unusual levels of activity from the Norgorberite cults in the city: more rituals, more

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disappearances, and more meetings among the faithful. More troubling, her usual methods of intelligence gathering have failed to turn up anything substantial on what the cult is up to. Mera isn't used to being in the dark about things, and it makes her uncomfortable; when the PCs visit, she spots an opportunity to obtain new informants and perhaps a chance to take the cult of Norgorber down a few notches.

Mera offers the PCs drinks from the bar, then listens intently to their questions. Feel free to answer as you wish—Mera is quite informed about Vyre, but if they bring up Fenton, her expression sours. She tells the PCs that Fenton has been a regular at the Final Throw for years, but despite that, he's far from one of her favorites. Fenton enjoys gambling but isn't particularly good at it, and he's racked up quite a debt to the Final Throw. On his latest visit, he put up the deed to Graymire Textiles as collateral, promising that he just landed an incredible job and would have enough money to pay off most, if not all, of his debt soon enough. Comparing notes with Mera, the PCs should be able to easily confirm this "incredible job" was the costumer position Fallenta offered him for the opera.

Mera goes on to warn the PCs that Fenton is a bad seed—despite his secrecy, Mera has dug up some concerning information about his faith: he's a devoted worshipper of Norgorber's aspect as Father Skinsaw, a patron of pattern killers and bloodthirsty murderers alike. She's never seen any evidence of Fenton being a pattern killer or a bloodthirsty murderer, but she notes that in Vyre, worship of Father Skinsaw is never an idle choice. Those who venerate the god of murder in such a way always have sinister motives.

While Mera indicates that she'd prefer to keep Fenton in her debt, she's also pretty fed up with him and gives the PCs the address to Graymire Textiles—an old building located in Vyre's Southmarket neighborhood—and bluntly states, "If Fenton gets in over his head, well... let's just say his debt dies with him; whatever you find in Graymire is yours to keep, as far as I'm concerned, and good riddance!"

Mera also shares her suspicions about the cult of Norgorber. She warns the PCs to be careful, as the Norgorberites are well represented among Vyre's leadership, but she also shares her concern that they have something significant planned. She asks the PCs to let her know if they learn anything about the cult's activities, offering to pay handsomely for such information.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 40 Perception check to Sense Motive realizes she seems to speak of the other Masks of Vyre with a fair amount of familiarity, and she's unusually well-informed about the city's inner workings. A PC who succeeds at a DC 40 Society or DC 37 Vyre Lore check recognizes Mera's dagger earring as incorporating symbology from the Queen of Blades' regalia.

If they bring up the subject to Mera, she simply laughs, stating, "If I was one of the Masks, I could hardly tell you, now could I? After all, I'd like to see you survive your trip here."

Reward: Grant the PCs 40 XP for finally meeting with Mera.



Steampuff



Chapter 4: Stitcher's Redoubt

Graymire Textiles was the brainchild of Yalvos Graymire, a Chelaxian business magnate who founded the factory sixty years ago as a “modern, fully integrated textile works.” Fascinated by the mechanical contraptions of Alkenstar, he commissioned designs for mechanized looms and other machinery to use in his new venture. Unfortunately for Yalvos, the imported machinery proved staggeringly expensive to maintain and was frequently a death trap for workers unfamiliar with the equipment, eventually making it almost impossible to recruit employees. Graymire Textiles went bankrupt only five years after its founding, with Yalvos himself not far behind. A PC who succeeds at a DC 26 Vyre Lore check, DC 34 Crafting check, or DC 36 Society check to Recall

Knowledge knows all of this information; otherwise a DC 31 check to Gather Information over 2 hours reveals this lore.

The factory sat abandoned until Fenton, looking for a site to practice his less-than-savory activities, acquired the property on the cheap not quite a year ago. He left most of the ground-floor machinery intact to maintain the building's abandoned facade, but he also added his own traps and guardians to protect his lair.

GRAYMIRE TEXTILES

Ceilings inside are 20 feet high unless otherwise noted. The rooms on the first floor are unlit except for areas C3–C5, which have dim light from the boarded-up

windows during the day, as do all rooms on the second floor; the basement is lit with *everlight crystals* set in sconces. The exterior door in area **C5** is boarded shut and requires a DC 30 Athletics check to Force Open (alerting the creatures in areas **C2** and **C5**).

C1. MILL YARD

Low 17

Past a rusted metal fence, its gates broken and swinging open, is an overgrown courtyard. The wrought iron letters above the gate read, "GRAYMIRE T-XTILES," with the missing E dangling below the others. A blocky brick building casts shadows over the weed-choked yard, its exterior stained with soot and its windows boarded. Three doors lead into the building to the north, east, and west. What appears to be a discarded mannequin, clad in filthy leather armor and almost overgrown with weeds, lies slumped in the northeast corner of the yard.

All the doors leading into the building from the mill yard are locked (good locks) and require a DC 30 Athletics check to Force Open, though breaking them alerts the creatures in area **C2**.

Creatures: While there are no dangers lurking in the empty mill yard, the entire exterior of Graymire Textiles is watched over by a stealthy group of immense Leng spiders. Drawn in from the nightmare realm of Leng in the Dimension of Dreams by Fenton's presence, the four huge arachnids were delighted with his cruel outlook and settled in among the nooks and crannies of the abandoned building's rooftops. The four spiders avoided spinning their webs, since that would draw too much attention to a location that, though seemingly abandoned, was still nestled in the heart of a thriving city. Instead, the creatures lurk invisibly, watching and waiting for anyone to wander close enough to snatch up and eat.

If the Leng spiders spot the PCs approaching Graymire Textiles, they quietly creep along the roof, watching and waiting for them to attempt entry into the building. As the PCs do so, either here, via the stuck warehouse doors to area **C2**, or via the back door into area **C5**, the spiders attack, rolling Stealth for initiative. Two Descend on a Web to engage in melee while the others remain on the roof to use spells or web bolas against the PCs. The Leng spiders fight until two of them are slain, at which point the remaining two cast *mislead* and then flee across rooftops to elsewhere in Vyre. Whether or not they return, healed, to this building's rooftops is up to you to decide.

While these Leng spiders are smaller than most of their kind, they are a bit more dangerous and have slightly different innate spells.

ROOFTOP GUARDIANS (4)

CREATURE 14

Variant elite Leng spiders (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 6, 157)

Initiative Stealth +28

Occult Innate Spells DC 35; **7th** *dispel magic*, *interplanar teleport* (to Leng or the Universe only), *warp mind*; **6th** *mislead*, *phantasmal calamity*; **4th** *charm* (×3), *unfettered movement*; **2nd** *invisibility* (at will); **Cantrips** (7th) *detect magic*; **Constant** (7th) *fly*, *truespeech*

Treasure: A closer inspection of the "mannequin" in the corner of the yard reveals it to be the long-dead skeleton of a prior explorer entangled in the weeds. Though much of their equipment has rotted away, their +2 *greater resilient major shadow leather armor* is still intact (if filthy), and a set of *greater obsidian goggles* are still set across the skull's brow.

C2. WAREHOUSE

TRIVIAL 17

The narrow shelves of this chamber stretch from floor to ceiling. Painted letters above a door to the north read "Showroom," while to the east, a metal plaque labeled "Factory Floor" is affixed to a door that's partially open. To the west are additional doors, labeled "Office" and "Counting Room," respectively. A pair of large doors further north in the west walls bear no label at all. A ragged hole in the roof above opens to the sky.

Once the factory warehouse, this room is now held by the Leng spiders, who come and go through the hole in the roof. The double doors leading out to the west are jammed shut but can be Forced Open with a DC 35 Athletics check (but note the Hazard below).

Hazard: Fenton placed a trap on the double door leading outside, which triggers if the proper password, "a note for the Skinsaw," isn't uttered while opening the door. If the trap triggers, all creatures aboveground are alerted to the presence of intruders.

DIVA'S DOOR

HAZARD 17

UNIQUE MAGICAL TRAP

Stealth DC 43 (master)

Description A loud aria in a soaring tenor issues from the door, sending soundwaves outward.

Disable Performance DC 38 (legendary) to cancel out the aria's soundwaves with another, Thievery DC 43 (master) to pick apart the arcane energies, or *dispel magic* (9th rank, counteract DC 36) to counteract the trap

Resounding Aria 2 (occult, sonic) **Trigger** A creature opens the warehouse's double door without uttering the password; **Effect** All creatures within area **C2** take 6d12+37 sonic damage (DC 38 basic Fortitude save); a creature that critically fails is permanently deafened.

Curtain
Call

ADVENTURE PATH

Singer,
Stalker,
Sk saw
Man

Chapter :
Siege o
Songs

C pter 2:
Setting the
Stage

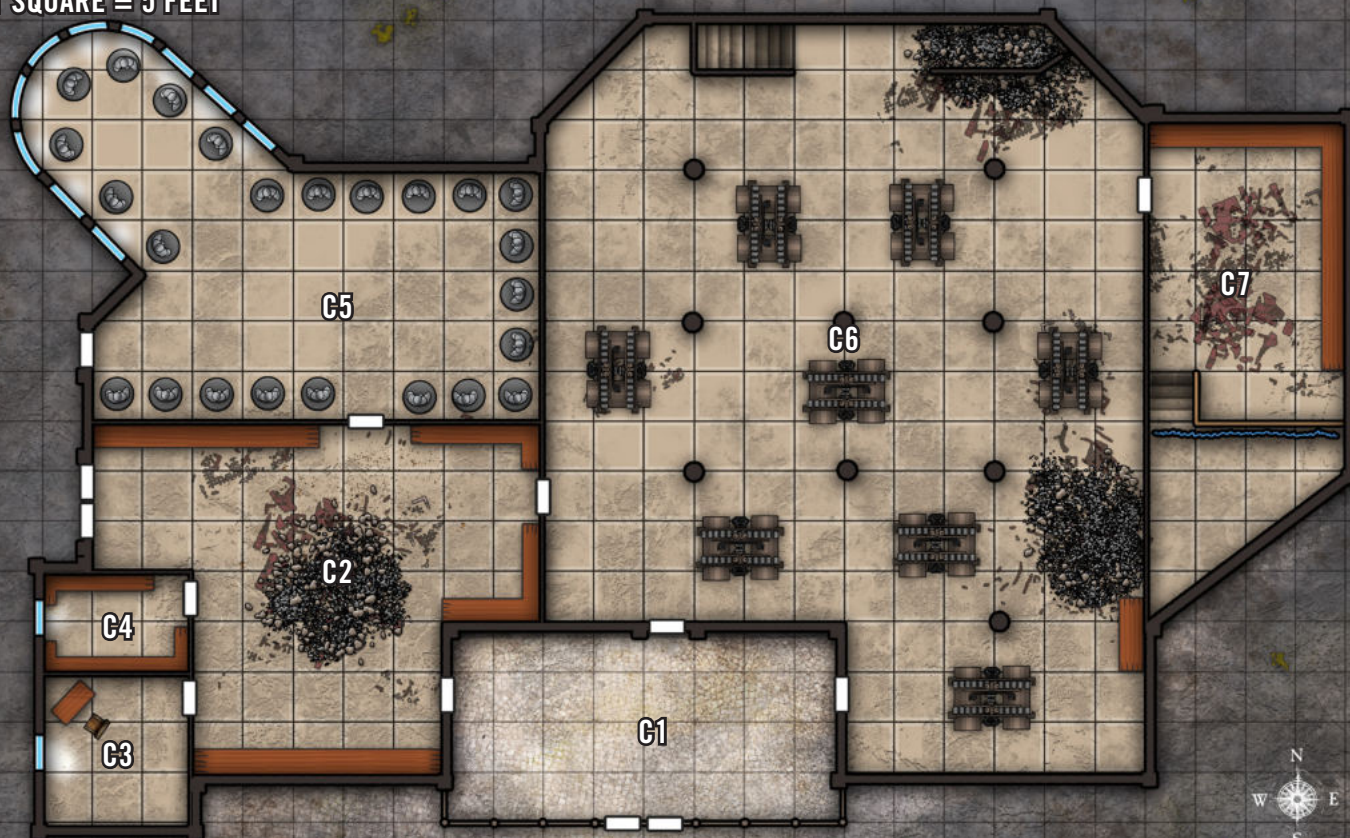
Chapter 3:
All In!

Chapter 4:
Stitcher's
Redoubt

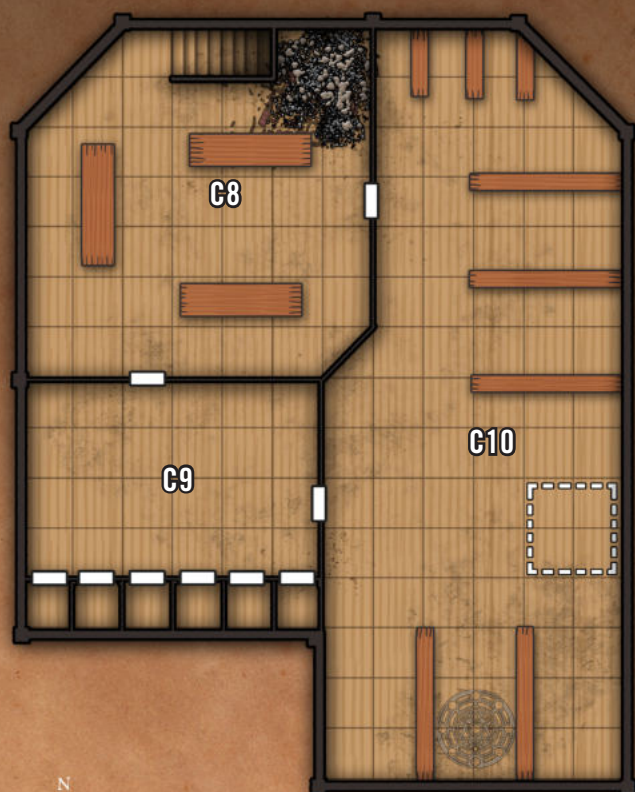
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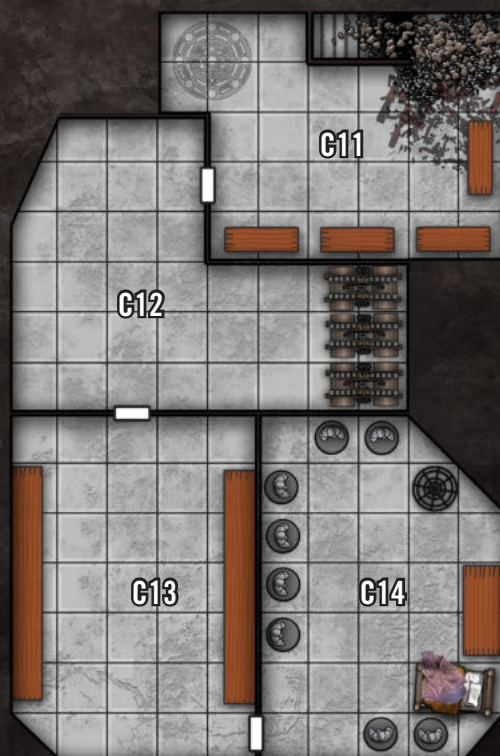
GRAYMIRE TEXTILES
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



GROUND FLOOR



UPPER FLOOR



BASEMENT

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Saw
Man

Chapter
Siege of
Songs

Chapter 2:
Setting the
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Chapter 3:
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C3. OFFICE

Low 17

A decaying rolltop desk sits in the corner, a tarnished nameplate atop it reading "Valvos Graymire, Owner/Operator." To the south, a pair of dusty, gray hammocks that appear to be made from spiderwebs sag from the walls.

The ceiling in this room is 10 feet high. Little remains of the paperwork once stored here.

Creatures: The office is occupied by two jorogumo disciples of Norgorber, whom Fenton's recruited as guardians and consultants. They spend most of their time relaxing here, awaiting increasingly infrequent invitations from Fenton to discuss occult theories. If they have advance warning of the PCs' approach, the jorogumo retract their spider legs and climb into the web-hammocks, pretending to be helpless victims. If the PCs fall for the trick and approach, the jorogumo use Deception for their initiative when they attack.

If the PCs are fooled, they identify themselves as Kosk and Valarue, and claim to be victims caught by "the horrible spiders on the rooftops." They beg the PCs to escort them out of the building to somewhere safe, bribing them with "the spiders' treasure" hidden behind the desk if they think it'll help. As soon as they can get any PC alone, a jorogumo ambushes them.

JOROGUMO DISCIPLES (2)

CREATURE 16

RARE MEDIUM HUMANOID

Variant jorogumo (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 141)

Perception +27; darkvision

Languages Aklo, Common, Fey; *truespeech*

Skills Acrobatics +29, Athletics +30, Crafting +27, Deception +31, Diplomacy +31, Occultism +27, Performance +29, Religion +29, Stealth +29

Str +6, **Dex** +5, **Con** +5, **Int** +3, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +7

AC 39; **Fort** +25, **Ref** +27, **Will** +29

HP 315; **Weaknesses** cold iron 10; **Resistances** poison 15

Darting Legs ⤴ As jorogumo.

Speed 30 feet, swim 30 feet

Melee ⬥ jaws +30, **Damage** 3d12+14 piercing plus jorogumo venom

Melee ⬥ claw +30 (agile), **Damage** 3d8+14 slashing

Ranged ⬥ web +25 (range increment 60 feet), **Effect** Web Trap

Occult Innate Spells DC 37; **8th** *suggestion*, *summon animal* (spiders only); **7th** *outcast's curse* (×3); **6th** *mind probe*, *suggestion* (×3); **3rd** *charm* (at will), *mind reading*



Jorogumo Disciple

(at will); **Constant (8th)** *speak with animals* (spiders only), *truespeech*

Change Shape ⬥ (concentrate, occult, polymorph) As jorogumo.

Jorogumo Venom (incapacitation, poison) As jorogumo, but DC 37.

Skilled Poisoner When the jorogumo disciple successfully Strikes an off-guard creature with their jaws, that creature takes a -2 circumstance penalty to its initial save against the poison.

Sneak Attack The jorogumo's Strikes deal an additional 2d6 precision damage to off-guard creatures.

Spider Legs ⬥ (concentrate, occult, polymorph) As jorogumo.

Web Trap As jorogumo, but DC 37.

Treasure: Stored behind the desk is a small cache of items the jorogumo have taken from prior victims, including two *ghost dust talismans*, a *greater accolade robe*, and a *greater skeleton key*.

C4. COUNTING ROOM

Dusty file cabinets line the walls of this small room. A boarded window divides the shelving on the west wall, below which lie the remains of a broken desk.

The factory's old counting room can provide a defensible place for the PCs to hole up once they've taken care of the Leng spiders and jorogumo in areas C1 and C3. The ceiling is 10 feet high. An examination of what's left of the records shows that the costs to maintain the factory's complicated machinery rapidly sent its finances into the red.

Treasure: A PC who Searches the room for 10 minutes and succeeds at a DC 35 Perception check spots a cracked pair of glasses lying on the floor near a filing cabinet. These were once Niallana's; if the PCs took note of her appearance in the Nightcrown Playhouse portrait, they immediately recognize the distinctive feather-etched silver rims. With some cleaning, the elegant frames are worth 500 gp.

C5. SHOWROOM MODERATE 17

An alcove jutting out from this large room contains a once-grand bay window. A raised display platform along the window showcases several mannequins dressed in rotting extravagant garments. An exterior door to the west is boarded over, and a gold plaque above another door to the south reads "Warehouse."

This was the showroom for the finished products using Graymire's cloth, and the mannequins' clothing was clearly once very fine before time took its toll. The masks on the mannequins are Fenton's addition, both to confuse those trying to tell the mundane mannequins from the dangerous ones, and because he appreciated the aesthetics.

Creatures: While there might appear to be two dozen mannequins in this room, four of them are much more than that: masque mannequins, malicious constructs infused with the spark of a murder victim's soul. The mannequins to the left and right of the door to area C2 are two of these malicious creatures. A third stands nearest the door leading out to the west, while the fourth stands directly north of the southern door. The masque mannequins wait until the PCs are spread out and at least one PC is within reach before attacking. They fight until destroyed but do not pursue foes out of this room.

MASQUE MANNEQUINS (4) CREATURE 15

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Initiative Stealth +29

Treasure: Although the mannequins' clothes are now moldering and worthless, the 20 masks worn by the mundane mannequins are of exquisite make and

worth 300 gp each. Additionally, one of the masque mannequins wears a golden locket engraved with the initials N. S. This locket is worth 2,500 gp, and was once Niallana's; a PC who examined the portrait in Berina's office at the Nightcrown Playhouse recognizes it automatically.

C6. FACTORY FLOOR MODERATE 17

Though this room is cavernous, the eight gigantic clockwork looms make it feel claustrophobic, since they're difficult to see around. To the north, two sets of stairs lead up and down, although the flight leading down has collapsed into rubble. A sign above the intact stairs, reading "Mending Room," hangs from two rusted chains. Its counterpart above the collapsed stairs, reading "Opening Room," swings from a single broken chain. A rusted machine, connected to several large wheels, sits against the southeast wall. Just north of the machine lies a pile of broken timbers and rusty chains below a ten-foot-square opening in the ceiling twenty feet above.

The door to area C7 is nailed shut, but can be pried open easily from this side with 10 minutes of work, or it can be Forced Open with a DC 35 Athletics check.

The northwest stairs lead up to area C8; the other stairs once led down to area C11, but Fenton collapsed them and filled the area in with rubble to make it impossible to pass through physically, limiting access to the basement to magical travel only.

The rusted machine and pile of rubble and chains are all that remains of a lift that once allowed transport of supplies up to and from the storage room above. The hole in the roof leads to area C10.

Hazard: Fenton's first major project upon moving into the factory was to repair the looms and then, taking inspiration from the graffiti, modify them into a deadly magical trap. Two very well-hidden bypass locks are found near the doors to area C2 and C7. A PC who Seeks near either door and succeeds at a DC 41 Perception check discovers one of the locks, but without the ring of keys Fenton carries, using either to bypass the traps requires a successful DC 45 Thievery check to Pick the Lock.

CLOCKWORK LOOMS (8) HAZARD 13

UNIQUE COMPLEX MAGICAL MECHANICAL TRAP

Stealth DC +27 (master)


Description The looms spring to life, sending skeins of spidersilk yarn between them that attempt to ensnare nearby creatures and pull them into the machinery.

Disable DC 46 Thievery (master) to shut down all eight looms at once by activating either of the bypass locks

once either lock is located (this check is automatically successful if Fenton's keys are used), DC 37 Thievery (master) twice to shut down a single loom by deftly removing critical components, or *dispel magic* (7th rank, counteract DC 33) to counteract a single loom

AC 34; Fort +26, Ref +20

Loom Hardness 22; HP 90 (BT 45); Immunities critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

Weaving Clatter  **Trigger** A Small or larger creature ends their turn in area **C6**; **Effect** The looms suddenly begin to grind and churn, filling the room with the squeal of metal on metal. All eight looms roll initiative.

Routine (1 action) Each loom takes one of two possible actions on its turn, depending on if it's currently restraining a creature or not.

Not Restraining a Creature: If a loom isn't restraining a creature, it launches a tangle of yarn at a random creature in the room that isn't currently restrained. That creature must attempt a DC 37 Reflex save. If there are no non-restrained targets for the loom to attempt to grapple, it takes no actions this round.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature is entangled, and becomes clumsy 1 until the end of the looms' next turn.

Failure The creature is tangled in the yarn and becomes clumsy 2 until the end of the loom's next turn—or if it already has the clumsy condition, it becomes restrained (see critical failure).

Critical Failure The creature becomes restrained. A restrained creature can Force Open the tangle of yarn or Escape with a DC 37 check.

Restraining a Creature: If a loom has restrained a creature, it instead fires more lines of yarn at the restrained creature and then drags that creature (if the creature is Medium or smaller) 20 feet toward itself. (If it's restraining a Large or larger creature, it can only drag the creature 5 feet toward itself). If this dragging causes a creature to become adjacent to the loom, the loom pulls the creature into its grinding gears and inflicts 5d12 bludgeoning damage and 5d12 slashing damage to the creature (DC 37 basic Reflex save). The creature is then placed in an adjacent square and is still restrained by that loom.

Reset A loom deactivates if no Small or larger creatures are in area **C6**, resetting in 1 minute unless disabled or all looms are broken.

C7. THEATER Low 17

This storeroom sits nearly empty. Debris litters the floor, crisscrossed at various points by dried trails of hardened wax. A raised stage has been constructed out of wood to the south.

Creatures: The backlash caused by Fenton's failed attempt to capture Niallana's voice resulted in the creation of two separate undead, each bearing a portion of Niallana's soul. The smaller fragment ended up here, in a waxen effigy. This effigy is shaped like a humanoid woman, wearing long white opera gloves, with a porcelain mask of a lady's face affixed to its head. If the PCs saw the portrait in Berina's office at the Nightcrown Playhouse, they automatically recognize this figure's similarity to Niallana.

Instead of the wax statue obtaining Niallana's voice as Fenton had planned, her voice was nearly destroyed when it was torn from her body. A fragment of it did end up in the effigy, but all it can do is shriek wordlessly, in a disturbing parody of an aria. Disgusted with the results but still wishing to study them for his next attempt, Fenton locked the waxen effigy up here. When he began preparations for the ritual with Oriole, Fenton magically linked the effigy to Facade, intending to eventually drain the effigy of its residual magic as a source of additional power.

The effigy can recognize various objects associated with Niallana, such as the glasses found in area **C4** or the necklace from the mannequin in **C5**, both of which can trigger the creature's memento vulnerability. If the PCs reunite the waxen effigy with the silent stalker in area **C9**, the waxen effigy collapses as the remainder of Niallana's soul joins the stalker. Reuniting Niallana's soul weakens Fenton's eidolon Facade, as detailed in area **C14**.

WAXEN EFFIGY CREATURE 18

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Initiative Perception +29

Treasure: The waxen effigy wears a *greater gasping lament* (page 85) on her throat, a gift from Fenton to Niallana. Niallana initially turned the item down, but after her death, Fenton placed it on the effigy's neck out of spite.

Reward: If the PCs reunite Niallana's soul by bringing the waxen effigy and silent stalker together, grant them XP as if they had defeated both undead in combat, plus an additional 40 XP.

C8. MENDING ROOM Low 17

The three long tables in this room bear faded measuring markings, but now hold a variety of torture implements. A pile of broken machinery occupies the northeast corner, and next to it, a set of stairs lead down. One door leads to the east and another to the south, signs affixed to each reading "Finishing Room" and "Design Room," respectively.

PUTTING NIALLANA TO REST

Niallana's soul is reunited if the waxen effigy (area C7) and the silent stalker (area C9) come into physical contact, even if one of the two undead creatures are destroyed. If they're in the same area, both move to do this as soon as they're able. Once they come into contact, both undead creatures sigh in relief and then collapse as they're destroyed, but Niallana's soul doesn't immediately move on—it remains long enough to aid the PCs in their fight against Fenton (area C14).

If both undead are destroyed separately before this happens, Niallana's soul remains in limbo as long as Fenton lives, but does not come to the PCs' aid. Once Fenton is slain, her soul can move on to the afterlife. This earns the PCs 20 XP instead of 40 XP, as they didn't directly aid in the rescue of her soul.

The ceiling is 10 feet high here. The stairs lead down to area C6.

Creatures: Today, this is a workroom for a quartet of jorogumo Skinsaw cultists Fenton recruited. The cultists are busy at work here, toiling over the ravaged remains of a dead half-elf street performer splayed out over the southernmost table as they follow Fenton's theories on haunts and seek new methods of creating them intentionally. At his direction, the cultists have been refining a haunt he created by ritually slaying aspiring singers within this room, in keeping with his interest in the theater. The jorogumo react to the PCs' arrival with impatience that's swiftly replaced with excitement as they realize that trespassers have delivered fresh new stock, and they attack at once.

ELITE JOROGUMO (4)

CREATURE 14

Pathfinder Bestiary 3 6, 141

Initiative Perception +28

Haunt: This haunt doesn't trigger from the presence of the jorogumo in the room, nor does it harm them in particular. In the round that this haunt occurs, the jorogumo are slowed 1 as they take time to observe how their sinister project interacts with the intruders.

SPECTRAL OPERA

HAZARD 17

UNIQUE COMPLEX HAUNT

Stealth +33 (master)

Description A spectral cast of singers in opera costumes emerges from the walls, keening a mournful and terrifying chorus.

Disable DC 46 Performance (master) to disrupt the song with another tune, or DC 43 Religion (expert) to calm the spirits

Haunting Melody 2 (auditory, emotion, fear, mental, occult) **Trigger** A nonworshiper of Norgorber enters the room; **Effect** The tormented spirits rise, and their chorus deals 6d12+33 mental damage to any within the room who don't worship Norgorber. Affected creatures must each attempt a DC 37 Will save.

Critical Success The creature is unharmed.

Success The creature takes half damage and is frightened 1.

Failure The creature takes full damage and is frightened 2.

Critical Failure The creature takes double damage. It becomes frightened 3 and fleeing for 1 round.

Treasure: The surgical implements on the tables are made of dawnsilver and are worth 2,000 gp.

C9. DESIGN ROOM

MODERATE 17

This room has been gutted, its original furnishings long since removed with only faint marks on the floor to show where tables and chairs once sat. Along the southern wall stands a row of locked metal cages, much newer looking than their surroundings. To the north is a door with a crumbling sign reading "Mending Room," and a sign on another door to the east reads "Finishing Room."

Fenton repurposed the factory's old design room into holding cells for his victims. Though the cages currently hold no living prisoners, not all of them are empty. The westernmost cage is locked—a PC who succeeds at a DC 35 Thievery check can Pick the Lock, or it can be Forced Open with a DC 40 Athletics check (the only key to this cage is on Fenton's key ring).

Creatures: Fenton's methods are cruel and sadistic enough that even when he's not trying to intentionally engineer haunts, his victims often rise as tormented undead. He's placed several of these tormented here to serve as guards for the westernmost cage's inhabitant—Niallana's undead remains. When she was killed, her body and the portion of her soul not siphoned by the waxen effigy rose again as a unusual type of silent stalker. Fenton was intrigued, and he imprisoned the silent stalker partly as a trophy and partly to study her fragmented soul.

Upon the PCs' entry, the tormented immediately move forward to attack the PCs. They work to avoid letting anyone approach Niallana's cage, both because they know Fenton wants her to stay imprisoned (and the tormented wish to avoid angering their tormentor further by letting intruders meddle with his plans) and

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Setting the
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Toolbox

because they know that Niallana's silent aura renders their *Scream in Agony* ability useless.

Once she spots the PCs, Niallana begins to thrash in her cage, shrieking silently as she sees a chance to escape. She attempts to *Siphon Voice* from a PC each round, using her remaining action to attempt to *Force Open* her cage door while the tormented fight the PCs. If she manages to steal a PC's voice, she demands to be set free at once—if asked why, she spews venomous threats and anger about Fenton, making it obvious that she wishes to murder her murderer. Any attempt to stand in her way results in the silent stalker attacking a PC until she can progress toward her confrontation with Fenton.

Her possessions from the first floor and the waxen effigy's mask can trigger her self-loathing, if used, in which case her need to murder Fenton changes to a need to seek out the rest of her soul in area C7.



Niallana

TORMENTED (4)

CREATURE 14

Impalement tormented (*Pathfinder Book of the Dead* 152)

Initiative Perception +27

NIALLANA

CREATURE 15

UNIQUE MEDIUM UNDEAD

Variant silent stalker (*Pathfinder Book of the Dead* 141)

Perception +26; darkvision, sense murderer

Languages Common (can't speak)

Skills Athletics +31, Performance +29, Stealth +28

Str +8, **Dex** +5, **Con** +3, **Int** +0, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +6

Sense Murderer (detection, occult) As silent stalker.

AC 36; **Fort** +24, **Ref** +28, **Will** +26

HP 275, void healing; **Immunities** death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, sleep; **Resistances** physical 15 (except slashing)

Silent Aura (aura, illusion, occult) 10 feet. As silent stalker.

Self-Loathing (emotion, mental, visual) As silent stalker, DC 40 Will.

Undying Vendetta (emotion, occult) As silent stalker.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ claw +29 (agile), **Damage** 3d8+16 slashing plus Grab

Constrict ♦ 3d8+8 bludgeoning, DC 36

Siphon Voice ♦♦ (curse, occult) Niallana attempts to steal the voice of a living creature within 30 feet. The target must attempt a DC 36 Fortitude save. As long as a creature is voiceless due to this effect, Niallana's silent aura is suppressed, and she can speak in the voice of the affected creature.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The target becomes voiceless until the end of Niallana's next turn. A voiceless creature can't speak, create vocal sounds, or take auditory actions (including supplying verbal or command components).

Failure As success, but the duration is 1 minute.

Critical Failure As success, but the curse duration is permanent.

Reward: If the PCs reunite Niallana's soul by bringing the waxen effigy and silent stalker together, grant them XP as if they had defeated both undead in combat, plus an additional 40 XP.

C10. STORAGE MODERATE 17

Drag marks on the floor of this large room show where heavy machinery was hauled away. Shelf-lined alcoves fill the eastern and southern portion of this room, within which lie heaps of moldering cloth. A ten-foot-square opening lies in the floor to the southeast.

The ten-foot-square hole in the floor drops 20 feet into area C6.

Hazard: After he learned the *teleportation circle* ritual, Fenton collapsed the stairs in area C6 in order to prevent physical access to his underground workshop and transition fully to the use of magic to come and go from it. While he uses his *wand of translocate* to come and go while he's out and about in Vyre, he decided to create his first *teleportation circle* here to create a more permanent link with the basement. He theorized that, since the distance between this room and the basement was so short, he could repurpose the ritual's magic to create a much longer-lasting *teleportation circle*, but his theories were only partially right. While the resulting circle was indeed a permanent creation (unlike most 9th-rank *teleportation circles*, which last only a month), it proved to be something more akin to a trap than a reliable method to enter the basement—and even resulted in the transformation of some of the jorogumo he'd recruited to aid him.

Since then, Fenton's been relying on shorter-duration *teleportation circles* or his wand to come and go, and tossed a few sheets of cloth over the top of the *teleportation circle* here (which is located in the middle southern alcove). The result is something that's equal parts hazard and a legitimate (if dangerous) way to enter Graymire Textile's basement.

DISTORTION CIRCLE

HAZARD 19

UNIQUE COMPLEX MAGICAL TRAP

Stealth +37 (expert) to notice the softly glowing magic circle shimmering from under the moldering sheets; noticing the circle if the sheets are pulled aside has a DC of 0

Description A softly flickering circle of runes pulses and periodically distorts the air above it before a raw red wound in reality splits open to disgorge demons and lash out with tendrils of acidic blood.

Disable DC 47 Thievery to erase key runes from the circle, defeat all four summoned demons in combat, or *dispel magic* (9th rank, counteract DC 36)

Summon Demons ⤿ (arcane) **Trigger** A creature approaches within 10 feet of the distortion circle; **Effect** The distortion circle begins glowing with red light, shining through any cloth covering it might still have over it, and then summons four seraptis demons into the room. The demons appear in pairs at the entrances to the alcoves to the left and right of the distortion circle's alcove, and they then roll initiative. The demons do not pursue foes from this room, and vanish if the trap resets or if the trap is disabled. The summoned demons can use 3 actions each round and can use reactions, unlike most summoned creatures. The distortion circle then appears to open into a bloody toothy mouth and rolls initiative.

Routine (1 action) On its initiative, the trap extends a tongue-like appendage covered with sharp teeth. The tongue snaps like a whip, firing a volley of sharp teeth at a non-demon target in the room. The trap can precisely sense the location of all viable targets in the room, and teeth fired from the tongue penetrate the many wooden shelves (although a character with at least one shelf between it and the trap gains greater cover).

Ranged ⚡ tooth volley +33 (magical, range 90 feet), **Damage** 4d10+13 piercing plus 2d6 persistent bleed

Reset The distortion circle deactivates (and any summoned demons vanish) at the end of any round in which no viable targets for the tongue to attack are in area C10. The trap then immediately resets (and is ready to summon a new batch of four demons).

SERAPTIS DEMONS (4)

CREATURE 15

Pathfinder Monster Core 80

Initiative Perception +25

Reward: Once the distortion circle is disabled, it can no longer summon demons or lash out with its tongue, but the magic in the circle lingers for 24 hours before fading away completely. During this time, a PC who succeeds at a DC 31 check to Identify Magic understands how the lingering magic works, as well as the risks involved.

The circle flickers as a visual cue that its magic remains in place but is somehow malfunctioning. Any creature that moves to be fully within the circle during this 24 hour period before it completely deactivates must attempt a DC 35 Will save. If the creature remains in the circle, the creature must attempt this save again at the end of each of its turns.

Critical Success The creature is aware that the circle attempted to teleport them, and can, as a free action, allow themselves to be teleported to area C11.

Success As success, but the teleportation is disorienting, causing the creature to become off-guard until the end of its next turn.

Failure As success, but the creature cannot opt out of being teleported.

Critical Failure As failure, but the creature experiences what seems to be decades of floating in a dark void in the brief instant of the teleportation, and takes 10d10 mental damage as a result (DC 38 basic Will save).

C11. PROCESSING ROOM

Low 17

Tables are pushed against the soot-covered stone walls of this room to the south and east. Each holds an array of knives, scalpels, and other surgical equipment; their surfaces are spattered with old bloodstains. A large pile of rubble spills out of an alcove to the northeast, and a softly glowing magical circle shimmers redly on the floor of an alcove to the northwest. A door to the west bears a faded sign reading "Spinning Room."

This was once the room where packages of raw cotton were opened and processed, but Fenton's given the term another meaning now; it's here where he does most of his work.

The glowing magic circle on the floor is where characters who teleport using the distortion circle in area C10 appear. It's also where Fenton prefers to place new *teleportation circles* (such as the one he recently had linked to his temporary home in Kintargo), but no such circle is currently active—PCs who use the distortion circle find it's a one-way trip.

Creatures: When Fenton's practice attempt to create a *teleportation circle* resulted in the partial success found in area C10, the jorogumo assistants he'd sent to this room to serve as secondary casters bore the brunt of the ritual's backfired energies. The two assistants were twisted, duplicated, and then fused back together, becoming four amalgamites. Their minds have become as warped as their bodies, and they now view Fenton as their father, ruler, and god, and have pledged to watch over this room forever as long as he makes sure they have food and water. Appearing as an even more

unsettling tangle of spider limbs and human bodies, these amalgamites have no true memories of their past selves and truly believe they've dwelled here forever. The amalgamites attack any intruders on sight, and pursue them relentlessly through the basement; they fight to the death.

FENTON'S FAITHFUL (4)

CREATURE 14

Variant elite amalgamites (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 6, 14)

Initiative Perception +25

Occult Innate Spells DC 35; **7th** *vision of death* (causes those who are affected to believe they're being turned inside out); **warp mind**; **6th** *flicker*

Treasure: Two *major healing potions* sit on a shelf above the tables.

C12. SPINNING ROOM

Low 17

Broken spinning wheels made out of strange clockwork mechanisms sit along this room's eastern wall, while three nests made of what appear to be spiderwebs lie near the western wall. A door to the east is labeled "Processing Room," while one to the south is labeled "Engine Room."

Creatures: Fenton repurposed the factory's spinning room as quarters for three otherworldly assistants—a trio of spider-like monsters known as karumzek. Vast swarms of these creatures serve Norgorber in the sewers below Axis, but the three found here are high-level clerics of the god who serve as advisors to Fenton—and (only suspected by him) as observers to ensure his pursuits don't jeopardize the greater plans Norgorber has for the region.

The three karumzek priests see the PCs as precisely that form of jeopardy, and upon noticing the PCs one of them addresses the party, warning them that they're brushing up against something greater than themselves and that they should turn away at once. The unsettling arachnids take anything other than immediate compliance as an excuse to attack. Once a battle begins, they fight to the death, but if two of the three are slain, the surviving karumzek retreats through the door to the south in an attempt to warn Fenton in area C14 of the PCs, adding that if Fenton doesn't handle them, Father Skinsaw will be tremendously disappointed.

KARUMZEK PRIESTS (3)

CREATURE 15

RARE MEDIUM ABERRATION UNHOLY

Variant karumzeks (*Pathfinder #171: Hurricane's Howl* 81)

Perception +29; greater darkvision, poison sense (precise) 30 feet

ENTERING THE BASEMENT

A PC who Searches the rubble in the northeast corner of area C6 for 10 minutes realizes that the rubble blocks a flight of stairs that once led downward. Likewise, a PC who cases the building's exterior for 10 minutes and succeeds at a DC 26 Engineering Lore or DC 31 Perception check can tell the building has a basement; on a critical success, the PC also notes small lead pipes that act as vents in the foundation near the ground on the building's northern side.

The distortion circle in area C10 provides one built-in way to access area C11 of the basement. The vents can also be used to enter the basement if a character can navigate the one-inch-wide lead pipe; the pipes all lead down to area C12. Teleportation effects can access the basement as well, but note that Fenton uses his *wand of planar seal* daily to protect areas C12-C14 from teleportation. *Magic passage* can provide access through the ground floor into any area below, providing it's cast in the right location. The ability to move through stone (such as via the *earthglide cloak* the PCs may have discovered in Chapter 2) can provide access with relative ease.

It's possible, but time-consuming, to dig out the rubble blocking the stairwell or to physically tunnel down into the basement. Unless the PCs use potent magic to do so quickly (such as via *disintegrate*), such an undertaking should take days to perform, during which Fenton will surely notice and retaliate in some way at your discretion.

Reward: However they manage it, the first time the PCs enter the basement of Graymire Textiles, grant them 60 XP.

Languages Chthonian, Common, Diabolic, Sakvroth

Skills Acrobatics +27, Crafting +23, Intimidation +27, Religion +31, Stealth +29

Str +6, **Dex** +6, **Con** +5, **Int** +2, **Wis** +8, **Cha** +6

Items *magic wand* (one has a 7th-rank *wand of divine immolation*, one a 7th-rank *wand of dispel magic*, and one has a *wand of eclipse burst*), planar keys for casting *interplanar teleport* (one for Axis, one for the Universe)

Poison Sense A karumzek senses any poisoned creature. It can spend an action with the concentrate trait to determine the poison's type and current stage.

AC 37; **Fort** +24, **Ref** +27, **Will** +31

HP 275; **Immunities** poison; **Weaknesses** holy 15

Speed 40 feet, climb 30 feet

Melee ✦ bite +29, **Damage** 3d12+14 piercing plus karumzek venom

Divine Prepared Spells DC 36, attack +28; **8th** *heal*,

spiritual armament; **7th** divine decree, execute, interplanar teleport; **6th** heal, spirit blast, vampiric exsanguination; **5th** breath of life, command, shadow blast; **4th** cleanse affliction, fly, heal; **3rd** blindness (×2), fear; **2nd** resist energy, see the unseen, translate; **1st** command, enfeeble, sanctuary; **Cantrips (8th)** daze, detect magic, divine lance, message, void warp

Occult Innate Spells DC 36; **8th** vision of death, vomit swarm (Player Core 2 254); **2nd** invisibility (at will; self only)

Change Shape (arcane, concentrate, polymorph) A karumzek can take the shape of a Tiny spider. This doesn't change its Speed or Strikes.

Karumzek Venom (poison, virulent) **Saving Throw** DC 36 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 1d6 poison (1 round); **Stage 2** 1d6 poison, 1d6 spirit, and enfeebled 1 (1 round); **Stage 3** 2d6 poison, 2d6 spirit, clumsy 1, and enfeebled 1 (1 round)

C13. ENGINE ROOM

Low 17

Banks of clockwork machinery cover the east and west walls of this room, while in the middle sits an immense boiler that leaves very little room to move around the sides. A sign above the door to the north reads "Spinning Room," and one to the east reads "Yarn Warehouse."



Fenton's Faithful

Creature: This room originally featured a large boiler attached to a clockwork contraption that would keep the looms above in area **C6** constantly wound and running, but the machinery here now serves a much more deadly purpose, for Fenton has transformed the huge boiler into a lumbering guardian. The fact that it can hardly move in this room is irrelevant as Fenton just wants it to block easy access to area **C14**. Moving along either wall to the east or west forces a PC to navigate the grinding clockworks, which acts as both greater difficult terrain and hazardous terrain that inflicts 4d6 bludgeoning damage. The animated boiler attacks any intruders unless it sees a prominently displayed symbol of Norgorber, in which case it only attacks in self-defense. The construct can't pursue foes out of this room.

Note that if combat takes place here, the din created by the battle alerts Fenton in area **C14**, and he casts *foresight* on himself and activates Ride the Wind from his *cloak of swiftness* to prepare for what he suspects will be an imminent fight.

ANIMATED BOILER

CREATURE 18

HUGE CLOCKWORK CONSTRUCT MINDLESS

Variant animated furnace (Pathfinder Bestiary 3 18)

Perception +26; darkvision

Skills Athletics +35

Str +9, **Dex** +0, **Con** +9, **Int** -5, **Wis** +0, **Cha** -5

AC 44 (40 when broken); construct armor; **Fort** +35, **Ref** +24, **Will** +26

HP 400; **Hardness** 15; **Immunities** death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, mental, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, unconscious

Construct Armor As animated furnace but reduced to AC 40 when broken.

Speed 10 feet

Melee ♦ door +35 (magical), **Damage** 3d12+17 bludgeoning plus 3d8 fire and Improved Grab

Fan the Flames ♦♦ The animated furnace opens its door and fans its flames in a 30-foot cone that deals 9d6 fire damage (DC 40 basic Reflex save).

Hungry Gears ♦♦♦ The animated boiler attempts to Grab all adjacent creatures.

Swallow Whole ♦ (attack) Large, 3d8+17 fire, Rupture 25

C14. SKINSAW SHRINE

SEVERE 17

Mannequins line the walls of this room, their expressionless masked heads turned toward the door. At the far end of the room is a wooden table heaped with books, scrolls, and ritual supplies, while under the table sits a large wood chest. A birdcage

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sized for a human-sized prisoner swings suspended from the ceiling just north of the table. A sleeping pallet sits on the floor on the other side of the table, and every inch of wall space is painted with outlines of hands, masks, and inscriptions in a strange script.

This was once the factory's yarn warehouse, but Fenton's made it into a shrine to Norgorber. A PC who reads Daemonic identifies the inscriptions on the walls as prayers to Father Skinsaw, as well as a list of names and descriptions of deaths; they spot Niallana's name and her fate described here. The last name on the list is Oriole's, but the space after their name is still blank.

Creatures: In their interactions with Fenton before, the PCs likely had little reason to suspect much of the man, and when they first reach this room and confront him, they may not immediately recognize him. He's used his raiment armor to adopt the garish, almost jester-like outfit of a Skinsaw cultist, carries much more gear, and wears a truly horrific mask that appears to have been stitched together with red twine from several different humanoid faces. Standing at his side is a more recognizable "Fenton," but this one appears to be made of half-melted wax and seems to have difficulty in making facial expressions due to this. This is Fenton's eidolon, as evidenced by the glowing sigil shining from both figures' chests—a rune that looks like a distorted version of Norgorber's symbol, but that can also automatically be recognized for what it is: a summoner's sigil.

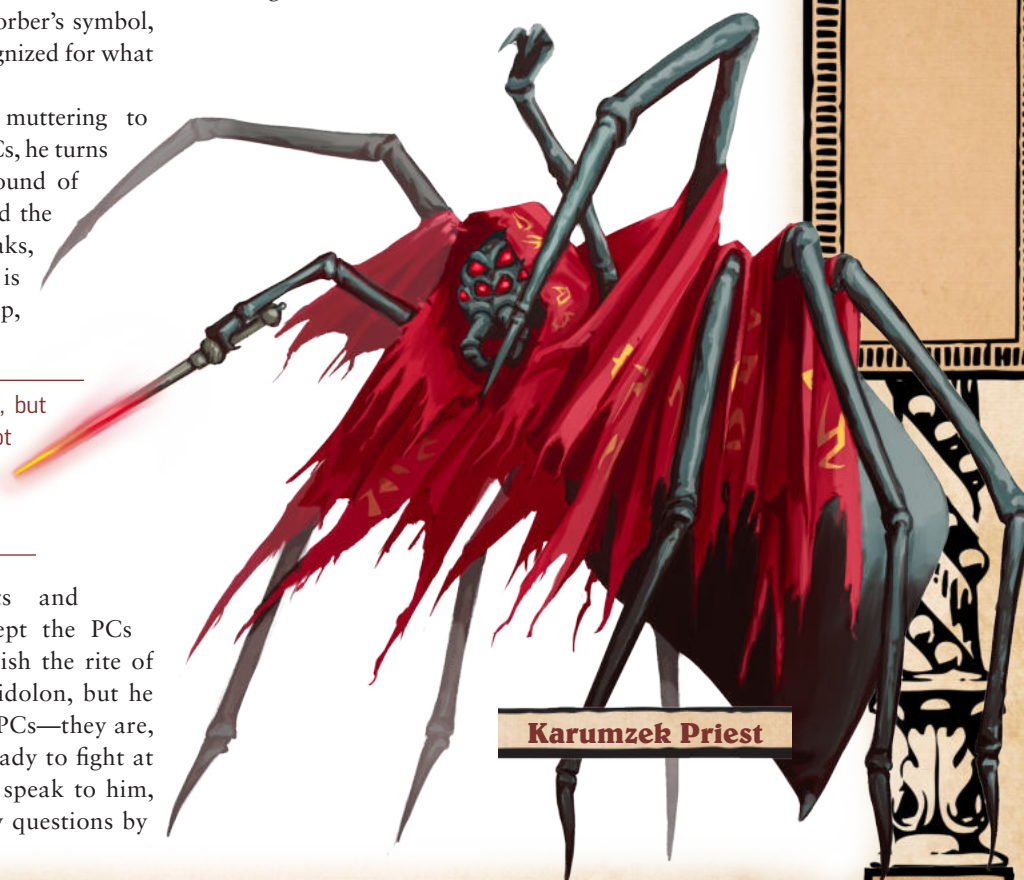
Fenton stands before the table, muttering to himself, but as soon as he notices the PCs, he turns to face them. When he speaks, the sound of his voice confirms that the man behind the mask is Fenton himself, and as he speaks, he gestures to his prisoner, Oriole, who is curled into a fetal position, sound asleep, inside the suspended birdcage.

"You! I knew you would come for Oriole, but you won't interrupt my work. Not now, not when I'm so close! Mortals wither and die, but art—ah, art is eternal. And now this one's voice will be eternal, too!"

Fenton hoped that his agents and Graymire's defenses would have kept the PCs occupied long enough for him to finish the rite of transferring Oriole's voice into his eidolon, but he isn't particularly surprised to see the PCs—they are, after all, famous adventurers. He's ready to fight at any moment, but if the PCs wish to speak to him, the killer can't resist answering a few questions by

bragging about his plans, waxing poetic about his goal to "preserve" Oriole's voice, or idly threatening the PCs with "immortality as his waxen puppets" if they dare to meddle further. Use this opportunity as you wish to answer any lingering questions the PCs might have about Fenton's motivations or to foreshadow that, as dangerous as he is, there are even greater dangers associated with Norgorber in Vyre. He might even boast about his favored status in the church and that if he's attacked, killed, or even inconvenienced by the PCs, his god will surely retaliate against them. While this might ring as a hollow or empty threat, as the PCs are destined to learn in the next adventure, there's more bite to these words than they might expect.

If given the chance, Fenton Lies to the PCs, telling them that his procedure to take Oriole's voice won't kill the diva—all so that he can soon thereafter roll Deception for initiative. Once combat inevitably begins, Fenton relies upon his eidolon to remain at his side to protect him and to make it more difficult to flank him, while at the same time, three of the mannequins standing against the walls (one from the north, one from the west, and one from the south) step forward to join the fight on Fenton's side. These masque mannequins move forward to engage spellcasters or PCs who rely on ranged Strikes in melee.



Karumzek Priest

NIALLANA'S REVENGE

If the PCs saved Niallana, her spirit manifests in this room as combat begins, shrieking as she flows into Fenton's body then explodes in a wave of spiritual energy. Her soul then moves on to the Boneyard, but has the following effects.

- Fenton becomes outlined in glowing ectoplasm that prevents him from becoming fully invisible, instead rendering him merely concealed. He also becomes frightened 3.
- Facade's wax body melts and distorts; the eidolon becomes slowed 1 for the duration of this battle.
- Two of the masque mannequins are destroyed outright. The PCs still earn XP for these two destroyed masque mannequins as if they'd defeated them in battle, though.

Fenton's first action in combat is to activate *greater invisibility* from his armor. If he hasn't done so already, he tries to cast *foresight* and activate his *cloak of swiftness* to gain a fly Speed so he can move about the room more easily and avoid being caught in melee. His first offensive act in the fight is to use his *soulfeeding mask* on a PC to Devour Soul, then on the next round Disgorges Soul to create a duplicate of that PC to add to the fight. After this, he switches over to using spells but keeps his *war razor* handy as needed to slash back.

Facade and the mannequins fight to the death, but if Fenton is reduced to less than 50 Hit Points, he attempts to escape. This doesn't sit well with Norgorber. If he attempts to do so, or if the PCs kill or otherwise defeat Fenton before he can try to flee, proceed with "Norgorber Takes His Due" below.

Oriole is unconscious during this entire combat.

FENTON

CREATURE 17

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Initiative Perception +28

FACADE

CREATURE 15

Page 91

Initiative Perception +23

MASQUE MANNEQUINS (3)

CREATURE 15

Page 87

Initiative Stealth +29

NORGORBER TAKES HIS DUE

Fenton is one of Norgorber's favorite minions, and he watches from afar in his incarnation as Father

Skinsaw as this battle unfolds. He doesn't intervene until it becomes obvious that Fenton has failed; once he is slain, captured, or tries to escape, an unsettling chill spreads through the room and the lights grow dim. Time seems to stop for both the PCs and their foes—with the exception of an eerie creaking sound, as one of the non-creature mannequins steps down from its stand. As it does so, it becomes swathed in striped garments, garish robes, and an unsettling mask: any PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Norgorber Lore or DC 20 Religion check to Recall Knowledge (or any PC who is at least master in either of these skills) automatically recognizes and understands that this is Norgorber himself, manifesting as Father Skinsaw, in their presence.

Father Skinsaw surveys the room, giving the PCs a cursory glance before he focuses on Fenton. Shadows wreath him like a cloak, and the empty mouth of his mask curves up into a smile as he takes a bow before he addresses Fenton in a deep, mellifluous voice.

"Well, this is a disappointment. You were so delightfully inventive, Fenton. A visionary, gone before his time—but no sense crying over spilled entrails, as they say. I'll just be taking my due..."

He steps over to Fenton, reaches through his mask, and pulls out Fenton's soul—a screaming, frightened, ghostly spirit. Fenton's soul writhes for a few seconds, then is sucked into the soulfeeding mask his body wears. As Fenton's body crumples to the floor, Father Skinsaw's fingers close around the mask, which now glows softly and issues faint cries of torment in Fenton's voice. Mask in hand, Father Skinsaw turns to regard the PCs at last and speaks to them.

"I'll be taking this. I trust you won't object; it was dedicated to me, after all. I'd stay and chat, but I have much to attend to. What's that phrase you theater types are fond of? Oh yes—the show must go on."

Father Skinsaw bows once more, and just before one might expect him to straighten back up, the mannequin simply collapses, lifeless and inert. Norgorber and the soulfeeding mask are gone, and the PCs can once again move. If any masque mannequins or Facade are still active, they crumple to the ground, inert and defeated as well.

AFTERMATH

It should be apparent to the PCs that they've just had a close encounter with Norgorber himself! Before they get the chance to puzzle over his meaning, however, Oriole stirs within the birdcage, drowsily

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demanding to be released. Fenton kept them drugged and unconscious so as to not risk them escaping, but the most recent dose has worn off. Though groggy, Oriole is physically unhurt and relays to the PCs how they were captured. They're horrified if the PCs tell them what Fenton had planned and express thanks for the timely rescue, wryly commenting that they "prefer being a damsel onstage to being one in real life."

Treasure: Oriole's gear lies in a neat bundle, wrapped and tied in a cloth sheet stashed behind the chest under the desk. Atop the desk lie dozens of books, scrolls, and parchments that the PCs can use as you see fit to answer any lingering questions they may have had about Fenton's sinister plans, but also among these books they can find a formula book for the *teleportation circle* ritual (which is worth 3,000 gp), as well as 4 Bulk in supplies for ritual casting and magical research worth a total of 4,500 gp.

The chest below the table is locked; it can be opened with one of the keys on Fenton's key ring or with four DC 35 Thievery checks to Pick the Lock. Within are a dozen silk bags containing a total of 280 sp, 1,600 gp, and 1,300 pp, a *greater maestro's flute*, a true elixir of life, and a *mask of allure* (*Secrets of Magic* 186) that Fenton set aside after he was rewarded the *soulfeeding mask* as a gift in a dream from Norgorber.

Reward: For encountering Norgorber and saving Oriole from Fenton's ritual, grant the PCs 120 XP.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

With Oriole secured, the PCs can return to Kintargo. If they wish, they can check in with Mera Bantikere before leaving Vyre and relay their sighting of Norgorber; if so, Mera is concerned about the god manifesting personally and vows to keep an even closer eye on the Norgorberites. She promises to alert the PCs to anything she finds, but has little else to offer currently.

Fallenta and the rest of the cast and crew are relieved to see Oriole safe and sound. With only a few weeks to go until the show's premiere, the Kintargo Opera House increasingly becomes a bustling hub of activity. The buzz about the show has been building in the PCs' absence, and posters advertising their opera are all over town. The PCs are often recognized and stopped for autographs as they go about their

daily business. During this time, the PCs' sponsors check in to see how things are going, expressing delight or concern based on their Production Point total, regardless of how many points the PCs have gathered to date.

Though the PCs are likely concerned about Norgorber's appearance and ultimate plans, as is Fallenta if they alert her, they have no active leads on what he or his cult are up to. For now, Fallenta urges them to focus on making their opera a smashing success. The true extent of Norgorber's schemes won't become clear until the next adventure, for the opera's premiere is fated to coincide with an event that shakes the entire multiverse—Godsrain!



Father Skinsaw



Arshea

The muse of countless mortals and immortals alike, Arshea is the patron of all who feel imprisoned by their bodies or their circumstances, an empyreal personification of physical beauty and sensual allure.

Arshea's origin is oft debated, but the Spirit of Abandon appears to have existed since the earliest mortal record. Tales from Old Thassilon name Arshea the "Heart of Sorshen," whose physical allure was so potent that when she fell into corruption, Sorshen's abandoned morals took on a life of their own; and thus, the sobriquet Spirit of Abandon holds a dual meaning. Abadaran teachings imply that Arshea was once of the First Vault, where they represented the foundational ideal of gender and beauty. When Abadar saw how unhappy the Spirit was to be locked away, he bid them go free and share their beauty with all, and never again has Arshea let herself be bound to one place. For their part, Arshea answers questions on this topic with a wink and coy smile.

PERSONIFICATION AND REALM

In their primary form, Arshea appears as a humanoid of surpassing, ecstatic beauty. Their form blends the features of all genders in the most pleasing way, their shape at once slender and curvaceous. They go forth clad only in the lightest gossamer, which swirls around shapely flesh, obscuring and revealing with artful enticement. Arshea's every movement is a blissful dance, sultry and joyous, from their bare feet to their perfect face to their plumed wings.

When Arshea appears before mortals, the Spirit of Abandon prefers to take on that being's own form, that they might reveal the beauty and grace that their viewer might have struggled to find. Where the subject's form doesn't fit their truth, Arshea instead chooses the form they desire most—not in cruel mockery, but as tender encouragement to pursue their soul's desire.

Even immortals are at times visited in this fashion. The succubus Arueshalae of the Fifth Crusade is fond of recounting a tale in which, as she struggled with fears of sliding back into cruelty, Arshea came to her at Desna's behest. Arueshalae notes how Arshea appeared to her in her own form and how she wept

"Mine hands I clasp to bosom flat
Such to proclaim this wish impassioned
I am thy clay, my body shape, that
By thy hand I may be fashioned.
Soft-curved Arshea, strong of arm
Whose shapely form doth lust evoke
A portion grant me of thy charm
That truest self discard this cloak."

—"Hymn Unspoken" by the Jistkan poetess Aenere,
-3960 AR



to see her demonic shape made so heavenly, and they gently guided her to accept her desire without fear or shame and to learn to safely pursue it.

In artistry, the Spirit of Abandon is typically depicted according to the highest principles of beauty in the artist's culture. Even then, depictions are inconsistent; artists, even among her faithful, are encouraged to add their own touches to each individual depiction of Arshea, adding elements of beauty that they find most pleasing or infusing their desperately desired ideal form into the work. In the end, all are Arshea.

Unlike other empyreal powers, the Spirit of Abandon claims no realm of their own among all the planes. Arshea is content to wander, to make themselves at home wheresoever they rest. Should another's domain be convenient and their hospitality sincere, Arshea happily stays as a guest, offering their blessing in repayment of their host's welcome; if such reception is lacking, they depart without judgment.

DOGMA AND WORSHIPPERS

Arshea's faith holds few dogmatic commandments. The faithful are exhorted to seek their truest selves, to comfort the repressed and help them find themselves, and to inspire passion. This last doctrine can be controversial in cultures that encourage or enforce modesty and chastity, whether legally or socially. Many among Arshea's faithful dress or act provocatively, to say the least, scandalizing both repressed and repressive folk who behold them.



As their title suggests, the Spirit of Abandon exists to inspire ecstatic passion in others, to help set free one's desires without shame or judgment; thus Arshea lays few restrictions upon their followers. Of these anathematic acts, breaching consent in pursuit of passion is the very worst. Desire and willfulness must be enthusiastic and heartfelt from all parties, else they leave dire and lasting wounds. A common refrain of Arsheans is "May I?" which their partners can expect to hear repeatedly during even a single encounter. Some followers—and no few of their partners—even come to see this refrain as a prayer.

Judgment of others for their sexual desires or for the role of their desired gender, is likewise anathema; Arsheans encourage others to be their truest selves without shame, save where those desires violate others. No Arshean will ever defend acts upon those unable to consent or upon those who haven't granted it fully willing. Likewise, Arsheans live by these principles. Judgment for their desires and genders means nothing to them, and those who weaponize the sacred concept of consent to control others' expression are rightly mocked.

Much is made of Arshea's focus on complex gender and sexuality. However, even those who have never questioned their desires nor longed for a shape denied find much to admire in the Spirit of Abandon. Arshea is the soul of liberation, for they seek the breaking of all chains. They're also a source of redemption, for they offer all a chance to rediscover themselves in joy and wonder. Finally, they epitomize justice, for they stand against any who would crush the freedom and wonder of others. Thus do many good-hearted folk, and indeed many adventurers, find kinship with the empyreal lord.

Similarly, while physical beauty is of great importance to the faith, it isn't a place for the "beautiful" alone. Arshea teaches that physical beauty takes many forms, not limited to any given flesh, shape, or expression. Anyone can be beautiful, for joy in oneself brings out the most wondrous beauty. Comely flesh won't salvage an ugly spirit and often struggles with an unhappy one. Even those who struggle to find themselves beautiful can still do the Spirit's work. The shyest maiden or most curmudgeonly elder might work to acquire a reputation as an especially dedicated and skillful lover or learn the cosmetician's or clothier's art to foster beauty in others.

TEMPLES AND SHRINES

Arshean temples are built as openly as climate permits, typically with numerous pillars supporting a high

roof, symbolizing the freedom and openness they espouse. Arsheans are often found reclining among the pillars or upon the steps. The enclosed portions include living quarters, workshops for clothing and cosmetics, mysterious ritual shrines (for the Spirit of Abandon knows that mystery is one of the most alluring enticements of all), and a so-called Chamber of the Other. Here, the curious are invited to don blindfolds and enter; therein, Arsheans use all their insight and artfulness to clothe and paint the seeker in the aspect of another sex or role. At the end, the seeker is revealed to themselves in the chamber's many mirrors, showing them a potential future. Not all find the experience transcendent, but some do, and those who do are aided by the faith to realize their revelation.

While the faith of Arshea is everywhere, its traditional center today is the city of Magnimar in Varisia. Here, locals have long worshipped the empyreal lords, and the Spirit of Abandon is no exception. For centuries, Arsheans held a festival there in the fullest bloom of springtime. Galt was once a great center of the faith as well before it fell into chaos, but now, Kintargo has risen to fulfill that role. Arsheans flocked there in the wake of Ravounel's emancipation, eager to help the people throw off the repression of Imperial Cheliah through advice or performances. Today, the faithful can be seen daily on Kintargo's streets or performing on its many stages.

A PRIEST'S ROLE

Worshippers of Arshea place minimal emphasis on hierarchy, with younger followers generally bowing to elders' wisdom. Among Arsheans, however, "age" is often measured from the day one discovers and accepts one's true self. Thus, a particularly late-blooming worshipper might look to one who discovered themselves in adolescence for guidance.

Titles are loose and often self-assigned. Arshea's worshippers don't shame one another for their place nor pressure others to exceed their readiness; instead, those further along the path offer encouragement while living as examples of the loveliness of self-realization. The uncertain are those who haven't yet fully claimed their true selves, though it's no mark of shame. Other Arsheans gently guide and encourage the uncertain, helping them to make their journeys. The known have discovered their true selves but don't yet have the confidence to reveal it beyond their closest confidants. Tentatives, meanwhile, have begun to express themselves publicly, although they often rely on other worshippers or companions for confidence as they take their first steps out as themselves.

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The majority of Arshea's worshippers are the proud—willing to show the world their true selves without fear or doubt. The proud truly embody the Spirit of Abandon: eager, passionate sensualists, utterly without shame or shyness in their joy and revealed truth. While other Arsheans admire the proud for their utter abandon, not everyone can embody such heedless and beauteous glory, and admiration isn't always mixed with aspiration.

Arsheans are encouraged to develop well-rounded skill sets, the better to help others on their journeys. Demonstration is the most important role, and one all worshippers attempt to learn, for an Arshean should live their truth joyously, the better to show others its beauty. Likewise, the faithful should be knowledgeable in the many methods of attaining one's desired form or gender expression, from the cosmetic to the confident to the transmutative.

Beyond the pursuit of personal truth, Arshea's worshippers liberate and protect as need arises, which can mean guardianship over marginalized groups and professions or open battle with tyrants and oppressors. However, it can also involve rhetoric to sway communities or counsel for those whose personal circumstances are intolerable in ways violence can't solve. In keeping with the latter, the Spirit of Abandon's servants act as healers of family as well as body, helping to reunite broken families and aid sincere reconciliation with distanced kin.

HOLIDAYS

While Arsheans love any holiday, festival, or celebration, they have relatively few of their own. Arsheans often think of any given day as an opportunity to celebrate the exultation of living free and true. Two occasions each year, however, are celebrated widely enough.

Representine is commonly celebrated in communities with a strong artistic presence, and local temples of art-appreciating deities like Shelyn or Nocticula are invited to share in the celebration. In addition to gathering local artists, Arshean organizers seek out the most beautiful and striking individuals of the community, inviting them to model for the assembly and be immortalized in artwork. Artists are free to do with their works as they will, although the temples (or wealthy patrons in attendance) often sponsor the best pieces for display. Representine is generally celebrated in late Gozran or early Desnus, or in Lamashan and Neth in southern lands.

For the **Masquerade of Abandon**, celebrated from the first Starday of Sarenith to the following Moonday, the Arshean faith works special rituals to alter the

form of all celebrants for the duration. So changed, celebrants can try out new bodies, appearances, gender expressions, and other experiences, all without worries of recognition or social judgment. Worshippers fill the intervening time with festive gatherings, romantic dances, and other social events, encouraging celebrants to mix and mingle freely. In the following weeks, Arsheans surreptitiously contact those most joyful in their transfiguration, offering them counsel and support should they desire more permanent changes.

APHORISMS

As with holidays, Arsheans have relatively few aphorisms shared across the faith. Worshippers are encouraged to pen their own, putting their unique truth into words. Over time, the following three



Arshean Priest

sayings have become popular enough to be widely recognized by the faith.

Beauty sleeps beneath the veil of tears: No matter how shapely one might be considered by others, the heart's unhappiness steals the shine from even the most beauteous features. This aphorism isn't a command to suppress one's sorrows or project false happiness, but an exhortation to confront one's unhappiness at its source. You should seek and claim the joy that will make you shine brightest. The phrase is used especially often on behalf of those who desperately seek change, only to be told that they already possess enough attractiveness.

You are yours alone: Society places great pressure on individuals to conform to social or familial expectations. Arshea encourages individuals to escape those expectations when they prove intolerable and claim their true self. No social obligation can outweigh living one's truth. This phrase is also used as a cry of emancipation for Arshea's champions.

This day, and all that follow, are yours: Each life is finite, and few receive more than one. Don't wait to find your joy; seize it here and now! Find your true self, set it free, and live every day to the fullest, because no day is worth wasting. Arsheans often offer this phrase to those who've given up and decided it's too late to experience joy.

SACRED TEXT

Ecstasy and Euphoria is at once a touchstone for the meek, a blueprint of physical perfection, a thorough guide to the body's pleasures, and a catalog of methods for affirming transfiguration. Most copies are scribed and illustrated by hand, and thus few such texts are identical. Copies of *Ecstasy and Euphoria* generally include wide borders for notes, doodles, and other marginalia as well as numerous blank pages for the user's personal revelations—most copies of this text are intensely personalized as a result. Each tome is traditionally bequeathed to another worshipper when an Arshean passes away or retires, and some have passed through hundreds of hands in this manner.

Most copies of *Ecstasy and Euphoria* include the tale of Seledine, a sculptor who didn't know her true self. Consumed by confusion and despair, she poured all her obsession into a maiden form of surpassing beauty, even forsaking food and slumber. Collapsing from neglect as she made the final cut, Seledine awoke upon her pedestal—she'd taken the form in her heart, while the boyish body that had been her cage was now only cold stone. Today, the temple of Arshea in Absalom holds a suspiciously artless statue, knelt in despair with chisel in hand, that most believe to be this very work.

RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIONS

The Spirit of Abandon's worshippers approach like-minded faiths with their customary nonjudgmental joyfulness. Worshippers of the empyreal lord Lymnieris often ally with Arshea's faithful, the two groups complementing each other excellently. Likewise, churches of Shelyn and Desna openly support the faith, with Arsheans often modeling for one and exploring with the other. The recent ascension of Nocticula has drawn the faith's attention, and Arsheans protect the outcast faithful as they seek their newborn truth while eagerly trading artistic techniques and methods.

Even among those with whom they struggle to agree, Arsheans still seek to foster harmony. Milani's church is rather militant for most Arsheans, but their passion for liberation makes them worthy allies. Cayden's emphasis on alcohol all too easily blurs the sanctity of consent for the faith's liking, and more than one Caydenite has found an Arshean standing between them and a drunken dalliance if the circumstances are unclear. The church of Abadar is an odd bedfellow, but they know the tale of Arshea and the Vault. Followers of these faiths often develop playful rivalries—the Abadaran good-naturedly wagging their finger at the Arshean's provocative ways.

Unsurprisingly, Arshea's foes include all divine tyrants, not least Asmodeus. Fiendish demigods who encourage destructive relationships or nonconsensual encounters are the Spirit of Abandon's most hated foes, and the Arshean faithful will stop at nothing to stamp out these blasphemies upon such an encounter. Likewise, any faith or creature that uses sexuality to corrupt and shame mortals must be stopped. With those that preach chastity and modesty, Arsheans take a more nuanced view, for those things aren't inherently wrong. It's only when they're used to control or repress others or when enforced upon non-adherents that Arsheans push back, and only in careful proportion to the offense.

ARSHEA

Arshea is the empyreal lord of liberation, beauty, and sexuality; they encourage others to live as their truest self through both guidance and example. They inspire mortals to embrace passion without shame, to reveal their beauty, and to cast off their shackles.

Worshippers of Arshea gain access to the alchemical food, potions, and spells presented below.

**ARSHEA, THE SPIRIT OF ABANDON****Areas of Concern** freedom, physical beauty, sexuality**Edicts** comfort and free the repressed, inspire passion, seek your true self and desires**Anathema** act without consent in pursuit of passion, judge another based on sexual desires or gender roles**Divine Attribute** Constitution or Charisma**DEVOTEE BENEFITS****Cleric Spells** 1st: *mystic armor*; 2nd: *humanoid form*; 6th: *dreaming potential***Divine Font** heal**Divine Sanctification** can choose holy**Divine Skill** Diplomacy**Domains** confidence, freedom, passion, perfection**Alternate Domains** change, repose**Favored Weapon** flail**AVATAR**When casting the *avatar* spell, a worshipper of Arshea gains the following additional abilities.**Arshea Speed** 50 feet, fly 70 feet; **Melee** ♦ flail (disarm, sweep, trip), **Damage** 6d6+6 bludgeoning; **Ranged** ♦ gaze of abandon (nonlethal, range 120 feet, visual), **Damage** 6d6+3 mental**ARSHEAN CONSUMABLES**See page 46 of *Pathfinder Treasure Vault* for additional rules about alchemical food.**EUPHORIUM****ITEM 7**

UNCOMMON ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE PROCESSED

Price 60 gp**Usage** held in 2 hands; **Bulk** L**Activate** 10 minutes (manipulate)An alternative to the magical *serum of sex shift*, euphorium offers similar benefits with a gustatory twist. Euphorium generally takes the form of a light, fluffy cake decorated with overpoweringly sweet frosting and served with alchemically chilled ice cream.

Euphorium's effects begin to manifest as you consume it. With every bite of euphorium, you become a little more yourself. You can pause at any time, halting the transformation midway at a point you choose. In this case, the results persist for 24 hours before reverting slowly over the course of an additional hour, allowing you to approach the experience at your own pace.

The remaining dose of euphorium doesn't spoil (unless it's temporary due to another effect, such as the limitation of *Quick Alchemy*) but has no effect on anyone other than the person who initially began eating it. This allows you to restart your transformation when you feel comfortable in doing so. Restarting this way quickly restores reverted changes, letting you "pick up where you left off." Once you consume the final bite, the effect functions as if you'd activated a *serum of sex shift* (GM Core 260).**POTION OF PASSING FANCY****ITEM 4**

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE MAGICAL POTION

Price 20 gp**Usage** held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L**Activate** ♦ (manipulate)A lesser variant of the *serum of sex shift* with some interesting quirks, a *potion of passing fancy* is a staple of Arshean artisans, and most temples keep at least a few doses at hand. Upon drinking the potion, your appearance changes, taking on different sex characteristics in line with another gender expression. You have little control over the details of the change, but it lines up with your deepest heartfelt ideal. More importantly, unlike the *serum of sex shift*, a *potion of passing fancy* doesn't impart the "family resemblance" effect; thus, a drinker too shy or afraid of being recognized to publicly express another gender as themselves can experience the change more anonymously.A *potion of passing fancy*'s effects last for 1 hour before slowly fading over 10 minutes; drinking another before the effect fully ends resets its duration and undoes any fading. If you extend the effect this way a fourth consecutive time, your actual form stabilizes with your current characteristics while retaining a "family resemblance" to your original form, as per the effects of a single *serum of sex shift*.**ARSHEAN SPELL****REFLECTED BEAUTY** ♦♦**SPELL 4**

UNCOMMON CONCENTRATE ILLUSION MANIPULATE VISUAL

Traditions divine, occult**Duration** 1 hourWhen you cast *reflected beauty*, choose a willing creature that's the same size as you and that you can see within 30 feet. The spell then disguises you with a realistic illusion, as if via *illusory disguise* heightened to 3rd rank, but includes tactile and olfactory sensation in addition to visual and voice. The appearance of the illusion that disguises you includes any changes to sex characteristics or other aspects needed to match the target creature's heart's desire, allowing you to interact with them as the person they could be. If you're ever more than 30 feet from the subject you're reflecting, *reflected beauty* immediately ends. You can Dismiss this spell.



Adventure Toolbox

SPELLS

MISSSED CUE ◆◆

SPELL 6

RARE CONCENTRATE EMOTION FEAR MANIPULATE MENTAL

Traditions arcane, occult

Range 30 feet; **Target** 1 creature

Defense Will

You make the spell's target believe they had something incredibly important to say but forgot to say it, and now they've missed their opportunity. Sensations of overwhelming panic akin to stage fright flood the target's mind, causing them to suffer excruciating mental anguish and take 12d6 mental damage. The target might even become filled with the conviction that they've doomed themselves by missing their cue. The target must attempt a Will save.

Critical Success The conviction of a missed cue is only a fleeting notion that passes quickly without any effect on the target.

Success The target takes half damage and is frightened 1.

Failure The target takes full damage and becomes frightened 2. In addition, the target is slowed 1 for as long as they remain frightened.

Critical Failure The target takes double damage and becomes frightened 3. In addition, the target is slowed 1 for as long as they remain frightened.

Heightened (+1) The damage increases by 2d6.

MUSICAL SHIFT ◆◆

SPELL 8

RARE AUDITORY CONCENTRATE MANIPULATE

Traditions divine, occult

Area 20-foot emanation

Duration sustained (up to 1 minute)

With a quick series of wrist flicks, music fills the air. While the music can be heard as if it were performed normally at a distance, creatures in the spell's area become affected in more significant ways. When you cast *musical shift*, select a key signature (to affect enemies) and a time signature (to affect allies) from the options below; all creatures within the area are affected as indicated. You can change the key signature or time signature as part of the action you take when you Sustain the spell.

Flat (key signature) Whenever an enemy critically fails at a Strike, saving throw, or skill check, they fall prone in addition to other effects from the critical failure.

Natural (key signature) Enemies take a -2 status penalty to attack rolls.

Sharp (key signature) Whenever an enemy takes piercing or slashing damage, they also take 2d6 persistent bleed damage.

Double (time signature) You and your allies become quickened and can use the extra action each round only for Leap, Stand, Step, or Stride actions.

Quadruple (time signature) You and your allies gain a +2 status bonus to attack rolls.

Triple (time signature) You and your allies gain a +2 status bonus to Armor Class and Reflex saving throws.

TAKE YOUR PLACES ◆◆

SPELL 8

RARE AUDITORY CONCENTRATE LINGUISTIC MANIPULATE TELEPORTATION

Traditions arcane, occult

Range 60 feet; **Targets** up to 4 willing creatures

The scene would play out exactly as you envisioned it, if only the actors would respect their blocking. You instantly transport the targeted creatures and any items they're wearing and holding from their current space to an unoccupied space within range. You don't need to be able to see the destinations as long as you've been there in the past and know its relative location and distance from each target. Creatures affected by *take your places* are then temporarily immune to this spell for 1 minute.

VIBRANT VIBRATO ◆◆

SPELL 7

RARE AUDITORY AURA CONCENTRATE MANIPULATE SONIC

Traditions divine, occult

Area emanation up to 40 feet

Defense Will; **Duration** sustained (up to 1 minute)

Your voice trills in perfect vibrato. When casting the spell, you can make the area any radius you choose, up to 40 feet. The reverberations of your voice continue to shimmer and hang in the air as long as you Sustain the spell but can't be heard at all outside of the area. A creature must attempt a Will save if it's within the area when you Cast the Spell or as soon as it enters the area while the spell is in effect. Once a creature has attempted the save, it uses the same result for that casting of *vibrant vibrato*.

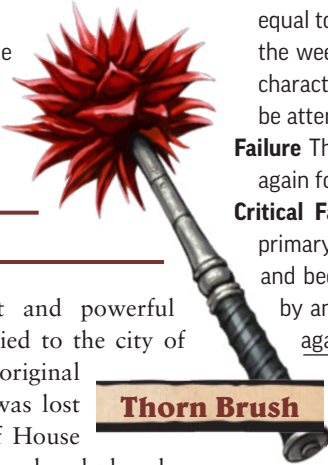
Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature takes 5d10 persistent sonic damage at the end of their turn as long as they remain within the aura's area of effect.

Failure As success, but if the creature leaves the area, or if you move far enough from the creature that they're no longer in the area, the creature hears a shattering sound and takes 5d10 sonic damage and is stunned 1. The creature is then deafened for the rest of the spell's duration.

Critical Failure As failure, but the creature takes double the sonic damage and is stunned 3.

Heightened (+1) The damage on a failed save increases by 1d10.



RITUAL

The *Song of Silver* is a potent and powerful ritual whose magic is inexorably tied to the city of Kintargo. Created long ago by the original Silver Ravens, the *Song of Silver* was lost for many decades after the rise of House Thrune in Cheliah. It was rediscovered and played a key role in Ravounel's secession from Cheliah's rule and the defeat of Barzillai Thrune several years ago. Since then, the song has remained a closely guarded secret known to a few Firebrands and other defenders of the Silver City.

SONG OF SILVER

RITUAL 6

RARE

Cast 8 hours; **Secondary Casters** up to 6 (see text)

Primary Check Performance; **Secondary Checks** Crafting, Society

Area Kintargo

Duration 1 week

The majority of the *Song of Silver*'s time needed to Cast it consists of preparations for the performance, which must take place on a stage in Kintargo. While the *Song of Silver* can be cast by a single primary caster, up to six secondary casters can assist by helping to decorate the stage with Crafting or by spreading word and gathering an audience with Society. At the end of this 8-hour period, the primary caster performs the song, which takes up the final minute of the casting time.

Critical Success The stage and rooftop above any stage where the song was performed glows softly with silver radiance for 1 week. During this time, the ritual tries to counteract teleportation effects and planar travel into or out of Kintargo attempted by unholy creatures, and all weapons wielded within Kintargo are treated as if they were made of silver for the purposes of calculating damage against creatures who possess weakness to silver. The ritual also generates the Success effects below. The *Song of Silver* can't be attempted again for 1 month.

Success For 1 week, the primary and secondary casters gain a +2 status bonus to all saving throws against mental effects; this bonus doubles to a +4 status bonus against all fear effects. Each caster gains the ability to cast *breath of life* as an innate occult spell at a rank equal to what the *Song of Silver* was cast at, once during the week. These benefits are suppressed as long as the character is outside of Kintargo. The *Song of Silver* can't be attempted again for 1 month.

Failure The *Song of Silver* fails, and it can't be attempted again for 1 month.

Critical Failure Not only does the ritual fail, but the primary caster is overwhelmed with shame at the failure and becomes stupefied 2 for 1 week (can't be removed by any means). The *Song of Silver* can't be attempted again for 6 months.

Heightened (10th) The effects of the *Song of Silver* expand to cover all of Ravounel.

MAGICAL TREASURE

WEAPONS

SINEW-SONG

ITEM 17

RARE **MAGICAL**

Price 15,000 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

A *sinew-song* is an ivory violin bow that bears an odd string, one that vibrates on its own, creating the soft sound of violin music whenever it's swung through the air. When used to play a violin, this ivory bow functions normally but grants a +3 item bonus to any Performance check attempted as a result. It can also be used to mime playing a violin when no instrument is at hand, but in this case, it grants no item bonus to resulting Performance checks.

A *sinew-song*'s primary use is as a weapon—it can be wielded as if it were a +3 *keen greater thundering greater striking sickle*.

Activate—Cutting Cadenza ♦♦ (manipulate, sonic)

Frequency once per day; **Effect** You Stride once and then swipe the weapon through the air three times. Shimmering waves of sound slice out in a 30-foot cone. All creatures in the area must attempt a DC 37 Reflex save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature takes damage as if you successfully hit it with a Strike using a *sinew-song*, but all of the damage is sonic damage.

Failure As success, but the creature also takes 2d6 persistent bleed damage.

Critical Failure As success, but double the damage and the creature takes 4d6 persistent bleed damage.

THORN BRUSH

ITEM 15

RARE HOLY MAGICAL

Price 6,500 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk 1

This +2 greater striking holy shifting morningstar has a head that appears to be a deep crimson metal rose with thorny petals. When you activate a *thorn brush* to Shift Weapon, you can cause it to take the shape of a painter's brush.

While in this shape, it can't be used as a weapon (it can still be activated to Shift Weapon back into a morningstar), but it does grant a +2 item bonus to Crafting checks to paint or otherwise use the tool while creating artwork.

Activate—Splatter Paint ♦♦ (manipulate)

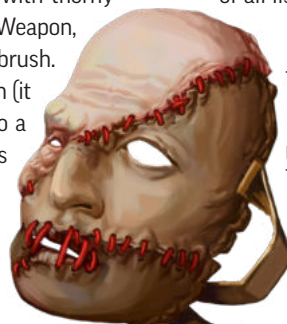
Frequency once per day; **Effect** You swing the weapon in an arc, causing a spray of paint of a color of your choice (chosen from black, blue, green, orange, white, or yellow) to splatter all creatures in a 30-foot cone. Each creature takes 14d6 energy damage based on the color of the paint (void for black, cold for blue, acid for green, fire for orange, vitality for white, or electricity for yellow) and must attempt a DC 34 Reflex save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature takes half damage.

Failure The creature takes full damage and is dazzled by paint in its eyes for 1 minute.

Critical Failure The creature takes double damage and is blinded by paint in its eyes for 1 round and then dazzled for 1 minute.



Soulfeeding Mask

SOULFEEDING MASK

ITEM 17

RARE INVESTED MAGICAL UNHOLY

Price 15,000 gp

Usage worn mask; Bulk –

This unsettling mask is made from different flensed faces that have been stitched together with bright red thread. Wearing a *soulfeeding mask* allows you to see others' souls within their bodies as long as they're within 60 feet, as if under the effects of see the unseen and truesight (but only against

living or undead creatures). Your Perception DC increases by 10 against living creatures who Impersonate undead creatures or against undead creatures who Impersonate living creatures, as you can tell if the creature's soul has been affected by undeath. The *soulfeeding mask's* counteract rank is 9, with a counteract modifier of +31.

While wearing a *soulfeeding mask*, you gain darkvision.

If you're holy, you're enfeebled 2 while you have a *soulfeeding mask* invested.

Activate—Devour Soul ♦♦♦ (concentrate, death, void)

Frequency once per day; **Effect** The *soulfeeding mask's* eyes and jaw open wide, and clouds of darkness and shadow spill out and attempt to engulf a single creature you can see that's within 30 feet. That creature takes 50 void damage with a DC 36 basic Fortitude save. If the target is undead or otherwise has void healing, this activation loses the death and void traits and gains the vitality trait, and the target takes 50 vitality damage with a DC 36 basic Fortitude save. If the target takes any damage, you become quickened 1 for 1 minute and can use the extra action each round for only Stride actions, unless the damage killed the creature, in which case you can also use the extra action each round for Strike actions as well.

Activate—Disgorge Soul ♦♦♦ (concentrate) **Requirements**

You're quickened as a result of Devour Soul; **Effect** The *soulfeeding mask* disgorges the devoured soul. You're no longer quickened from Devour Soul, and the *soulfeeding mask* casts *duplicate foe* (DC 36 Fortitude save) to your specifications, targeting the creature whose soul had been devoured. You must Sustain this effect, unless the target creature was slain by Devour Soul, in which case *duplicate foe* functions as if the creature had failed its save, and the *soulfeeding mask* Sustains this spell automatically.

WORN ITEMS

GASPING LAMENT

ITEM 12+

RARE CODA INVESTED MAGICAL STAFF

Usage worn collar; Bulk –

This collar is a silken cord from which hangs a small silver amulet that bears the likeness of a woman with her hand at her throat. A *gasping lament* is a powerful coda instrument that's worn rather than held. While you sing, you gain a +2 item bonus to Intimidation checks to Demoralize and to Performance checks. Full rules for coda instruments appear on page 136 of *Pathfinder Treasure Vault*.

Activate Cast a Spell; **Effect** You expend a number of charges from the collar to cast a spell from its list.

Type *gasping lament*; **Level** 12; **Price** 2,000 gp

- **Cantrip** message
- **1st** charm, command
- **2nd** sonata span (*Secrets of Magic* 129), ventriloquism
- **3rd** enthrall, shatter
- **4th** honeyed words, infectious melody (*Secrets of Magic* 112)
- **5th** command, concordant choir (*Secrets of Magic* 96)



HEAVY FOOTSTEPS

Even when appearing in a humanoid guise, a gambling devil's body remains extremely dense and heavy, often weighing more than 500 pounds. Old gamblers' yarns warn to watch the footsteps of fellow gamblers and be wary of those whose tread seems disproportionate to their size, though in truth, all but the most careless gambling devils know how to step lightly in their humanoid forms.



DEVIL, GAMBLING (AGADAZ)

Gambling devils, known also as agadazes, resemble horned humans crafted out of living gold in their natural forms, though their shapeshifting abilities let them move among mortals undetected. They're most commonly encountered in Erebus, the third layer of Hell, where many serve Mammon as accountants. They're unusually impulsive and distractible for their kind. Other devils often view their Risk Aura as a hindrance, so they usually receive less important missions. They don't mind, for it gives them more time to meddle with mortals.

AGADAZ

CREATURE 4

UNCOMMON MEDIUM DEVIL FIEND UNHOLY

Perception +10; greater darkvision

Languages Common, Diabolic, Emyrean; telepathy 100 feet

Skills Accounting Lore +11, Deception +12, Diplomacy +11, Games Lore +13, Intimidation +10, Thievery +11

Str +3, **Dex** +4, **Con** +4, **Int** +3, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +4

Items 20 gp

AC 20; **Fort** +12, **Ref** +14, **Will** +10

HP 50; **Immunities** fire; **Weaknesses** holy 5; **Resistances** physical 5 (except silver), poison 5

Risk Aura (aura, divine, mental, misfortune) 30 feet. A feeling of recklessness surrounds a gambling devil. When a non-fiend creature enters the aura or begins its turn in the aura, it must attempt a DC 21 Will save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected and is temporarily immune to Risk Aura for 24 hours.

Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The next time the creature rolls a d20, it must roll twice. If either roll is a natural 20, the creature uses that result; otherwise, it must take the lower of the two results.

Critical Failure As failure, but applies to all of the creature's d20 rolls as long as it remains in the aura.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ✦ fist +12 (agile, finesse, magical, unholy), **Damage** 2d4+7 bludgeoning

Ranged ✦ thrown coin +12 (magical, unholy), **Damage** 2d4+5 bludgeoning plus 1d6 precision

Divine Innate Spells DC 18; **2nd** *illusory creature*, *illusory object*; **1st** *ill omen* (at will); **Cantrips** (2nd) *figment*

Rituals *diabolic pact* (Monster Core 364)

Change Shape ✦ (concentrate, divine, polymorph) The agadaz adopts the appearance of any Small or Medium humanoid. This doesn't change their Speed or their attack and damage bonuses with their Strikes, but it might change the type of damage their Strikes deal.

Double Down ✨ (divine, fortune) **Trigger** The agadaz attempts a Strike, saving throw, or skill check; **Effect** The agadaz takes a -2 status penalty to the roll, then gains a +2 status bonus to the next Strike, saving throw, or skill check they attempt before the end of their turn, or before the end of their next turn if they used Double Down during another creature's turn.

Produce Gold Coins ✦ **Frequency** once per round; **Requirements** The agadaz has a free hand; **Effect** The agadaz creates up to 5 gp in their hand. At any one time, an agadaz can possess no more than 20 gp created in this way; coins created in excess of this value vanish. A coin created in this way vanishes automatically 1 hour after leaving the devil's possession.

MASQUE MANNEQUIN

Masque mannequins are a type of soulbound construct animated by a fragment of a once-living soul infused into an eerie, nearly featureless mask that's then affixed to a mannequin or dressmaker's dummy. Though similar in process to the creation of a soulbound doll or mannequin, creating a masque mannequin requires conducting ritualistic murder and extracting a soul shard during an unwilling victim's death, and only the vilest of crafters would consider attempting such a deed. Masque mannequins are popular among Norgorberites, especially devotees of Father Skinsaw, as well as Kuthites who take pride in drawing out the ritual to gain the largest possible fragment of the soul.

MASQUE MANNEQUIN

CREATURE 15

UNCOMMON MEDIUM CONSTRUCT SOULBOUND

Perception +26; darkvision

Languages one spoken in life (typically Common; can't speak any language)

Skills Acrobatics +29, Athletics +29, Stealth +29

Str +8, **Dex** +6, **Con** +5, **Int** -2, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +0

Soul Mask The spark of the soul used to create a masque mannequin is infused into its mask. A creature can break a masque mannequin's soul mask with a DC 40 Athletics check or steal it with a DC 40 Thievery check. If its mask is broken or removed, a masque mannequin must attempt a DC 40 Fortitude save.

Critical Success The masque mannequin's animating spark shifts to infuse its body; it is unaffected and no longer has a soul mask.

Success The masque mannequin takes 2d6 persistent mental damage. If it regains its mask, it can place it back on its face as an Interact action to automatically stop this persistent mental damage.

Failure As success, but 4d6 persistent mental damage and stunned 1.

Critical Failure As failure, but 8d6 persistent mental damage and stunned 3.

AC 38; **Fort** +26, **Ref** +29, **Will** +24

HP 210; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, unconscious, vitality, void; **Weaknesses** fire 15; **Resistances** bludgeoning 7, piercing 15, slashing 7

Awaken ➤ **Requirements** The masque mannequin is in Pose; **Trigger** A creature unaware of the mannequin's true nature approaches within reach; **Effect** The mannequin makes a Strike against the triggering creature.

Speed 30 feet, climb 30 feet

Melee ♦ fist +29 (agile), **Damage** 3d8+16 bludgeoning plus Improved Grab

Occult Innate Spells DC 33; **7th spirit blast** (×3); **Cantrip (7th)** daze

Pose ♦ (concentrate) Until the next time the masque mannequin acts, it appears to be an inanimate mannequin. It has an automatic result of 45 on Deception checks and DCs to appear as an ordinary mannequin.

Refashion ♦ (incapacitation, occult) **Requirements** The masque mannequin is grappling a living creature; **Effect** The grabbed creature must attempt a DC 36 Fortitude save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature is slowed 1 for 1 round as its body grows more wooden.

Failure The creature is petrified for the next 24 hours, but instead of turning to stone, it turns into a wooden mannequin. It can attempt a new save at the end of each of its turns.

Critical Failure The creature turns into a wooden mannequin permanently.



MALEVOLENT MINDSETS

Masque mannequins, even those crafted from virtuous individuals, tend to have a sadistic sense of malice. If left to their own devices, a masque mannequin enjoys playing cat and mouse games with their chosen victims by freezing and unfreezing in areas with mundane mannequins, slowly driving their unfortunate playthings to paranoia before going for the kill.





CHANTER VANITY

Shanty chanters are quite vain, adorning themselves in jewelry obtained in the raids of their allied ships or taken in raids of their own.

They appreciate flattery toward both their physical appearances and musical talents, and they view this type of bribe to be as valuable as material goods. Conversely, the surest way to gain a shanty chanter's enmity is to insult their singing, and only the deeply unwise would dare such a thing.

SHANTY CHANTER

Shanty chanters are known to dwell along the coasts of Garund or the eastern isles of the Shackles, living on small islands or cliffsides but rarely venturing too far inland. These capricious fey have humanoid torsos and seagull heads, wings, and feet, and they stand about 5 feet tall. Consummate performers, shanty chanters adore music, especially the sea shanties sung by ships' crews. The songs from these fey's aeries can be heard from miles away over the open sea. While some sailors claim these songs intentionally lure mortals to drown, most shanty chanters aren't outright malevolent and would be more inclined to investigate a foundering ship than to slaughter those aboard, even if they do relieve such a vessel of its valuables.

Shanty chanters have a particular affinity for pirate ships, and a captain who wins an alliance with an aerie of shanty chanters is considered blessed with good luck. Of course, this attention can be a double-edged sword. If a captain fails to appease the ship's allied shanty chanters (generally by giving them a fair share of the plunder gained while they're on board), the affronted fey afflicts the captain with a *mariner's curse* before departing for more prosperous shores.

SHANTY CHANTER

CREATURE 10

RARE MEDIUM FEY

Perception +20; low-light vision

Languages Common, Fey

Skills Acrobatics +20, Deception +22, Diplomacy +20, Nature +20, Performance +22, Sailing Lore +18

Str +5, **Dex** +6, **Con** +5, **Int** +4, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +6

AC 30; **Fort** +17, **Ref** +22, **Will** +20

HP 175; **Weaknesses** cold iron 10

Speed 25 feet; fly 60 feet

Melee ♦ beak +22 (finesse, magical), **Damage** 2d12+11 piercing

Melee ♦ talon +22 (agile, finesse, magical); **Damage** 2d8+11 slashing

Primal Innate Spells DC 29; **5th** *mariner's curse* (×2); **4th** *charm*, *lightning bolt*, *water breathing*; **3rd** *wall of wind*;

Cantrips (5th) *electric arc*

Seasong (air, concentrate, primal) A shanty chanter aboard a vessel that uses wind propulsion can use this exploration activity to call up lightly buffeting winds. The chanter can Sustain this effect for up to 8 hours, during which the vessel they're on benefits from the propulsion in the desired direction. Seasong is overwhelmed and negated by powerful storms.

Shanty Call ♦♦♦ (auditory, linguistic, primal) **Frequency** once per day;

Effect The shanty chanter begins to sing a catchy sea shanty and selects up to 10 allies within 60 feet who can hear the shanty chanter to potentially join in. Selected allies feel an urge to join but aren't required to—a targeted ally can join as a Reaction. A shanty chanter can Sustain Shanty Call as a Reaction at the start of their turn for up to 1 minute. While sustained, the shanty chanter and all allies who joined the shanty when they began to sing become quickened and can use the extra action to Climb, Force Open, Reposition, Shove, Strike, or Swim. When the shanty chanter ceases to Sustain Shanty Call, they and all allies who were affected become fatigued for 1 minute.



WAXEN EFFIGY

The undead ooze known as a waxen effigy forms under a specific set of circumstances, making such creatures quite rare. Most waxen effigies arise from botched rituals intended to migrate a powerful sapient creature's soul into a body made of wax, whether in a bid for immortality or a method of imprisonment or sacrifice. The death—especially a traumatic death—of a sapient creature in close proximity to a wax figure or while attempting to craft a construct out of wax might also result in a waxen effigy.

A waxen effigy looks like a partially melted wax version of who it appeared as in life. They retain little of their former personality but recall a jumble of memories from their mortal existence that serves only to anger them. They often cling to objects that were important to them in life, such as a spouse's wedding band or a tool from a favorite hobby. Displaying such an object to a waxen effigy transfixes their attention, though they often lash out if the object is taken away before they can be laid to rest.

WAXEN EFFIGY

CREATURE 18

RARE **MEDIUM** **OOZE** **UNDEAD**

Perception +29; **darkvision**

Languages Necril, one language known in life (can't speak any language)

Skills Athletics +35, Stealth +32 (+36 among other wax statues)

Str +9, **Dex** +4, **Con** +7, **Int** -1, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +0

AC 38; **Fort** +31, **Ref** +24, **Will** +27

HP 415, void healing; **Immunities** death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, precision, unconscious; **Weaknesses** cold 15

Memento Vulnerability Waxen effigies retain an attachment to objects they had a strong tie to in life. A character who holds such a memento in a hand can use it to alter the effects of Demoralize. Doing so adds the manipulate trait to Demoralize. If the attempt to Demoralize the waxen effigy is successful, it becomes slowed 1 (slowed 2 on a critical success) for 1 round rather than becoming frightened. On a critical failure, the waxen effigy loses Memento Vulnerability for 24 hours.

Wax Trail A waxen effigy leaves behind a trail of molten wax when it Strides, making any spaces it moves through difficult hazardous terrain until the beginning of its next turn, whereupon the molten wax trail vanishes. Creatures moving through the wax trail take 4d6 fire damage each time they do so (DC 40 basic Reflex save).

Speed 20 feet, climb 20 feet

Melee ♦ fist +35 (agile, fire, magical), **Damage** 3d10+17 bludgeoning plus 2d6 persistent fire

Ranged ♦ wax spray +30 (fire, magical), **Damage** 3d8+8 bludgeoning plus 2d6 persistent fire

Enervating Howl ♦♦ (auditory) The waxen effigy emits a gurgling howl, sapping the life energy from all living creatures within 30 feet. Affected creatures must attempt a DC 40 Fortitude save. The waxen effigy can't use Enervating Howl again for 1d4 rounds

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature takes 6d6 void damage and is drained 1.

Failure The creature takes 12d6 void damage and is drained 2.

Critical Failure The creature takes 24d6 void damage, is drained 2, and is doomed 1 for as long as they have the drained condition.



CRUEL CREATIONS

Few set out to create a waxen effigy on purpose, as their fragmented memories cause them to behave rather erratically, and as such, they make poor guardians or assassins. Any intentional creation of a waxen effigy is solely an act of spite since it condemns the soul to an undeath steeped in bewilderment and fear.



Fenton Vilorgo

Secret Cultist of Norgorber

It's hard to have a first impression of Fenton Vilorgo when he barely leaves any impression at all. Though well-known in the theater world as a skilled costumer, in person he's unassuming, plain, and a tad obsequious—but essentially harmless. This veneer is as much an artifice as the costumes he creates, and Fenton might well be a better performer than many of the divas onstage.

Fenton was born in Magnimar to a family of well-off cloth merchants. His life changed forever at age 18, when he stopped home for lunch from his apprenticeship to a local tailor. He found his parents stabbed to death on the parlor floor, victims of a botched burglary, with the thief who'd done it still standing over their bodies. Fenton drew his blade and ran the intruder through—not for vengeance or grief, but from a sudden euphoria at the sight of so much blood. When the slayings became public, he adeptly played the part of the distraught son.

With his inheritance, Fenton set up shop as a seamster. Fascinated by the theater, he focused on costuming and soon made a reputation for himself. During his travels, he first saw Oriole perform, and their voice became an obsession for Fenton. He hadn't forgotten the thrill of slaughter, however, and his itinerant lifestyle worked well to conceal the disappearances left in his wake. He eventually encountered Norgorber's teachings on his first trip to Vyre, from a sinister soprano who recognized his proclivities. His enchantment with Father Skinsaw was as swift and overwhelming as falling in love, and he made Vyre his new home. For the next several years, he delved into the summoning arts, using his eidolon, a construct he dubbed Facade and who appears as a melted wax facsimile of Fenton, to assist him in his murders. News of Oriole's retirement devastated him, and so Fenton began to work on a way to create the perfect voice that he could forever control for his private entertainment.

Just over a year ago, Fenton finally secured his own den in Vyre—a run-down and abandoned workhouse called Graymire Textiles. Soon after, he met Niallana Spirisio, a gifted alto. He'd costumed many talented performers, but Niallana was something special—while not as talented as Oriole, she came close. Fenton also became obsessed with her, and the thought that she might retire some day increasingly frustrated him. Then, as if by divine providence, a thought whispered to him, assuring him Niallana's talent didn't have to die with her.

Fenton seized upon the inspiration, crafting a magical process by which he hoped to capture Niallana's voice within an animated wax sculpture. He enlisted a sculptor, Therandis Monniva, to teach him the art of crafting waxwork statues, and through several productions, he ingratiated himself with Niallana. He won her trust and friendship, and when he'd completed his preparations, he lured her to his hideout.

The process failed, however, and Niallana's soul fractured into two separate undead entities that Fenton locked up in Graymire. Reeling and furious, Fenton resolved to try again, this time using his eidolon as a focus for his work. As fate would have it, just as he believed he hit upon a method that might work, rumors surfaced that Oriole was coming out of retirement in nearby Kintargo. It seemed to Fenton as if Father Skinsaw himself was serving up the perfect donor for his greatest endeavor.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

While this adventure assumes the PCs don't suspect Fenton of being anything more than a costume designer until after he abducts Oriole, there's a chance they'll catch on to him before that point. In this case, he should still abduct Oriole—even if that means he has to perform the act somewhere other than the Kintargo Opera House. If the PCs engage him in combat before Chapter 4 of the adventure, his primary goal should be escape.

FENTON VILORGO

CREATURE 17

UNIQUE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Male human summoner

Perception +28; darkvision

Languages Common, Daemonic, Diabolic, Varisian

Skills Acrobatics +33, Arcana +29, Crafting +29, Deception +33, Intimidation +31, Occultism +27, Religion +28, Stealth +30, Theater Lore +27, Thievery +30

Str +2, **Dex** +5, **Con** +1, **Int** +4, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +6

Items *cloak of swiftness*, +3 greater resilient raiment greater invisibility explorer's clothing, ring of keys for various locks found in Graymire Textiles, *soulfeeding mask*, major staff of phantasms, wand of planar seal, wand of translocate (5th rank), +3 greater striking greater astral keen wounding war razor (Treasure Vault 25)

AC 39; Fort +29, Ref +27, Will +31

HP 300

Living Secret Fenton is one of Norgorber's favored murderers, and as such, he's been granted a major boon. He's immune to divination effects and attempts to magically alter his memory, unless he chooses to be affected or those effects come from a deity or similarly powerful source. He can never be tricked or forced by mundane means into uttering a secret he wishes to keep.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ war razor +31 (agile, backstabber, deadly d8, finesse, magical), **Damage** 3d4+8 slashing plus 1d6 spirit and 1d6 persistent bleed

Arcane Spontaneous Spells DC 39, attack +31; **9th** (2 slots) *foresight*, *phantasmagoria*; **8th** (2 slots) *blood vendetta*, *hidden mind*; **Cantrips** (8th) *daze*, *detect magic*, *telekinetic hand*, *prestidigitation*, *telekinetic projectile*

Summoner Link Spells 2 Focus Points; **9th** *evolution surge* (*Secrets of Magic* 144), *lifelink surge* (*Secrets of Magic* 145);

Cantrips (9th) *boost eidolon* (*Secrets of Magic* 144)

Rituals *teleportation circle* (*Player Core* 2 270)

Manifest Facade ♦♦♦ (arcane, concentrate, manipulate, teleportation) Fenton causes Facade to appear in an open adjacent space. Facade can then take a single action. If Facade is already manifested, they're instead unmanifested. Facade must remain within 100 feet of Fenton at all times; if forced beyond this distance (or if Fenton is reduced to 0 Hit Points), Facade unmanifests.

Share Senses ♦ (arcane, concentrate, scrying) Fenton projects his senses into Facade, allowing him to perceive through his eidolon. When he does, he loses all sensory information from his own body but can sense through Facade's body for up to 1 minute. Fenton can Dismiss this effect.

Sneak Attack Fenton deals 3d6 extra precision damage to off-guard creatures.

FACADE

CREATURE 15

UNIQUE MEDIUM ASTRAL CONSTRUCT EIDOLON

Perception +23; darkvision

Languages Common

Skills Arcana +21, Crafting +21

Str +6, **Dex** +3, **Con** +5, **Int** +2, **Wis** +0, **Cha** -1

AC 37; **Fort** +28, **Ref** +26, **Will** +23; +2 vs. death effects, disease, poison, and effects causing the fatigued or sickened conditions

HP 300

Construct Heart Facade removes persistent bleed damage on a DC 10 flat check (DC 5 with aid).

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ fist +29 (agile, magical, shove), **Damage** 3d10+14 bludgeoning plus Grab

Constrict ♦ 2d10+14 bludgeoning, DC 38

Encase in Wax ♦ **Requirements** Facade's previous action was to Constrict a creature; **Effect** Facade encases the creature they just Constricted with wax. That creature becomes slowed 1 until it takes a 3-action activity to Interact with the wax and peel it off.

Remake Self ♦ (arcane, polymorph) Facade changes their appearance to be similar to any Medium humanoid creature they've seen, though they're still obviously a wax statue and can't use this ability to Impersonate that creature.

Unsettle ◀ (arcane, emotion, fear, mental) **Trigger** Facade Strikes a creature they've assumed the basic appearance of; **Effects** The damaged creature becomes frightened 1 (frightened 2 on a critical hit).



Oriole

Reclusive and Retired Opera Singer

Mercurial, eccentric, and irrepressible, Oriole made such a name for themselves in the Inner Sea opera scene that their reputation still captivates aspiring divas two years after their retirement. Though most opera stars specialize in a single voice part, Oriole is adept at performing all of them, from soprano to bass, with haunting beauty, and this incredible versatility made them highly sought-after as a performer. The aura of mystery surrounding their past only increased this appeal, and each rumor that circulated about their origins became wilder than the last.

No one has guessed the truth: that Oriole was born in rural Cheliah, in the western Fields of Chelam. Their parents, humble farming folk, had no knowledge of anything extraplanar in their bloodlines before Oriole's birth, so the baby's appearance (feathered hair and a serpentine tail) came as a shock. They loved their child dearly, however, and tried to instill in the flighty youngster the importance of a modest, hardworking living, avoiding trouble, and above all else, not standing out, for they feared that Oriole's unusual heritage might attract the attention of Thrune agents.

Oriole ignored all of it. From an early age, they loved to sing and dreamed of gracing the stages of major cities in the Inner Sea. As soon as they reached adulthood, they bid farewell to their bewildered parents and set off, determined to find fame and fortune. They considered heading to Egorian, home to Cheliah's most renowned opera academies, but realized the rigid atmosphere of the capital, under the eye of House Thrune, would make them miserable.

Instead, they chose Kintargo, which had a more freewheeling environment and a venerable—if less prestigious—opera scene. They left behind their gift-name from their parents, taking a new name as both stage and heart-name: Oriole, after their favorite songbird. They soon realized they had an innate vocal flexibility that, if honed, allowed them to perform multiple voice parts. Still, with no formal training, they struggled for a few years, taking every minor gig they could get while using their sorcerous talents to make ends meet. Finally, Oriole got their big break: the role of Devorine, the heroine's jealous rival in *Lament of the Sea*, at the Three-Legged Devil, Kintargo's oldest performance hall.

The role catapulted the young singer to stardom. Aristocratic opera fans rushed to offer them patronage, and they received audition offers for leading roles in increasingly prestigious venues all over the world. Oriole's name was on everyone's lips, just as they'd hoped, and they relished it. When their career reached its height, casting Oriole was the biggest coup a director could achieve, ensuring a packed house for a show's entire run.

But as the years passed, the luster started to fade. Oriole was as in demand as ever, but they began to view their roles with a degree of ennui. Dealing with hovering producers, stage politics, and patrons who viewed them solely as a status symbol (or worse, as an object of obsession) wore on them, and although their performances still received acclaim, they felt themselves stagnating. To the shock of the opera world, Oriole announced their retirement and disappeared, remaining in touch with only a few close friends.

Oriole considered returning home, but though they love their family, they never felt they belonged in their birthplace. Instead, they used their considerable savings to build a hideaway on a remote island in the Shackles. Now, they're essentially a recluse, and while they tell themselves that they prefer to sing alone these days, part of them still misses the floodlights and the standing ovations of the crowd.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Oriole is destined to be a key part of the PCs' opera, and despite their eccentricities, they take their performance very seriously. Once they commit to the role, they spend long hours rehearsing, determined to show the audience that they're still a star and understanding that a lot rides on the reception to their comeback. Their meeting with the PCs has reawakened their love of the stage, but the aftereffects of their burnout linger, and they're likely to bond with PCs who have experienced similar issues.

Oriole is a diva in all senses of the word, and they leave an impression on everyone they meet, for good or for ill. Still, they have few true friends and tend to hold others at an emotional distance while appearing loquacious and friendly. Those who win Oriole's genuine

Singer, Stalker, Skinsaw Man

Chapter 1:
Siege of Songs

Chapter 2:
Setting the Stage

Chapter 3:
All In!

Chapter 4:
Stitcher's Redoubt

Arshea

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affection, however, gain their complete loyalty, and they're extremely protective of these rare individuals.

ORIOLE

CREATURE 14

UNIQUE MEDIUM GANZI HUMAN HUMANOID

Genderfluid ganzi sorcerer

Perception +21; low-light vision

Languages Common, Diabolic, Elven, Mwangi, Protean

Skills Acrobatics +22, Deception +27, Diplomacy +27, Intimidation +23, Nature +19, Performance +29 (+31 when acting, orating, performing comedy, or singing), Society +23, Survival +19, Theater Lore +25

Str +3, **Dex** +4, **Con** +2, **Int** +3, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +5

Items +2 greater striking thundering dagger, +1 resilient raiment explorer's clothing, greater persona mask, planar keys for interplanetary teleport (First World, Maelstrom, Universe)

AC 35; **Fort** +25, **Ref** +27, **Will** +22; +1 vs. effects granting the controlled condition

HP 255; **Resistances** acid, electricity, or sonic 15

Alter Resistance \rightarrow **Frequency** once per hour; **Trigger** Oriole takes acid, electricity, or sonic damage; **Effect** Oriole's energy resistance changes to match the triggering damage and immediately applies to the damage.

Ganzi Resistance At the beginning of each day, the element Oriole resists is randomly determined by rolling 1d6 (1-2 acid, 3-4 electricity, and 5-6 sonic), but this resistance can change during the day as they Alter Resistance.

Speed 25 feet

Melee \blacklozenge dagger +26 (agile, finesse, magical, thrown 10 ft., versatile S), **Damage** 3d4+5 piercing plus 1d6 sonic

Primal Spontaneous Spells DC 33, attack +25; **7th** (4 slots) *dispel magic*, *heal*, *interplanar teleport*, *sunburst*, *unfettered pack*; **6th** (4 slots) *chain lightning*, *cursed metamorphosis*, *dragon form*, *nature's pathway*, *repulsion*; **5th** (4 slots) *elemental form*, *lightning bolt*, *plant form*, *wall of thorns*, *wave of despair*; **4th** (4 slots) *aerial form*, *cleanse affliction*, *dinosaur form*, *vapor form*, *vital beacon*; **3rd** (4 slots) *animal vision*, *haste*, *insect form*, *slow*, *wall of wind*; **2nd** (4 slots) *animal form*, *calm*, *create food*, *humanoid form*, *speak with animals*; **1st** (4 slots) *charm*, *illusory disguise*, *mending*, *pest form*, *ventriloquism*; **Cantrips (7th)** *detect magic*, *electric arc*, *light*, *prestidigitation*, *sigil*, *tangle vine*

Bloodline Spells DC 33, 3 Focus Points; **7th** *blinding beauty* (Pathfinder Advanced Player's Guide 235), *establish ward* (Advanced Player's Guide 236), *nymph's token* (Advanced Player's Guide 236)

Blood Magic When Oriole casts *animal vision*, *calm*, *charm*, *repulsion*, *unfettered pack*, *vital beacon*, *wave of despair*, or any of their bloodline spells, their movements are so graceful that they distract foes. This either grants Oriole a +1 status

bonus to Diplomacy checks for 1 round or imposes a -1 status penalty on one target's Will saves for 1 round.

Crossblooded Evolution While Oriole's sorcerous bloodline comes from a mysterious connection to nymphs in their ancestry, their equally mysterious ancestral connection to proteans influences their spell repertoire such that they can cast *illusory disguise* as well. They can heighten *illusory disguise* freely.

Legendary Diva \blacklozenge **Frequency** once per day; **Trigger** Oriole succeeds at a Performance check to act, dance, or sing; **Effect** Oriole critically succeeds at the check instead.

Many Forms Oriole can freely heighten any spell with the polymorph trait.



NEXT MONTH

BRING THE HOUSE DOWN

by Sen H.H.S.

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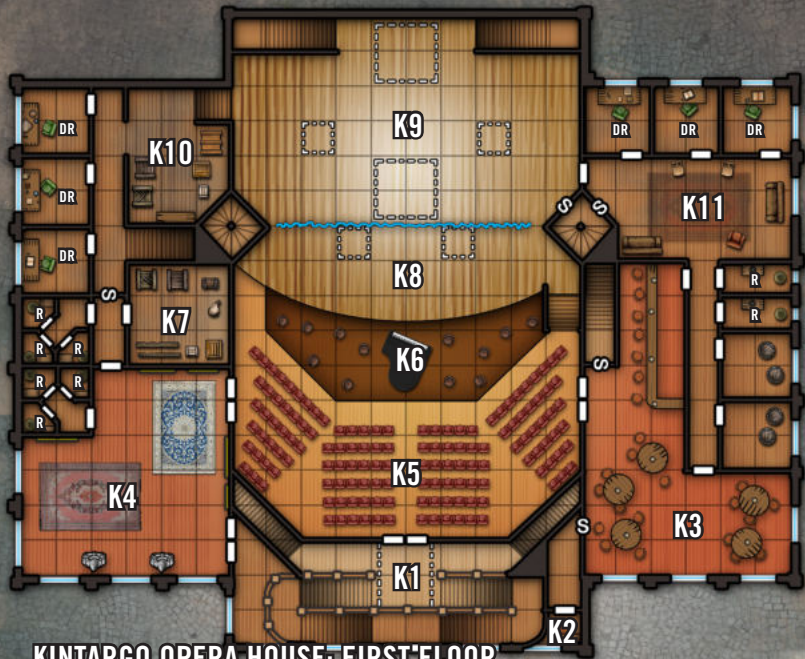
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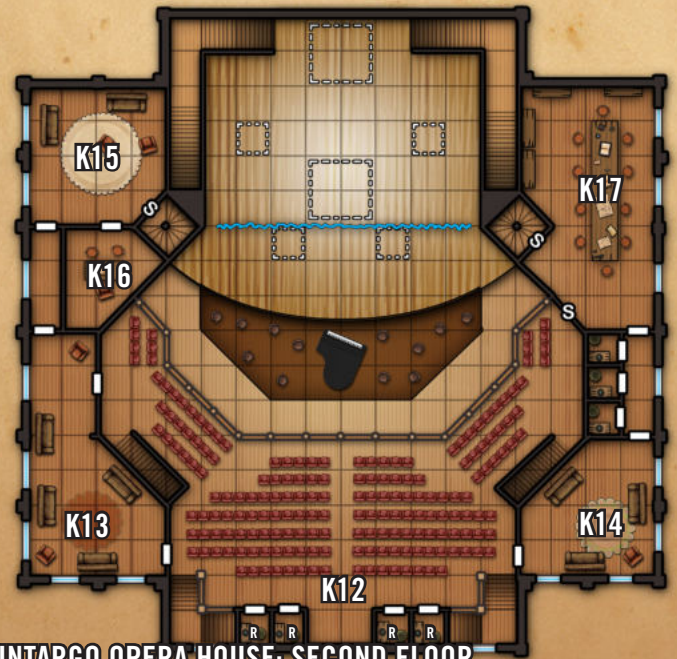
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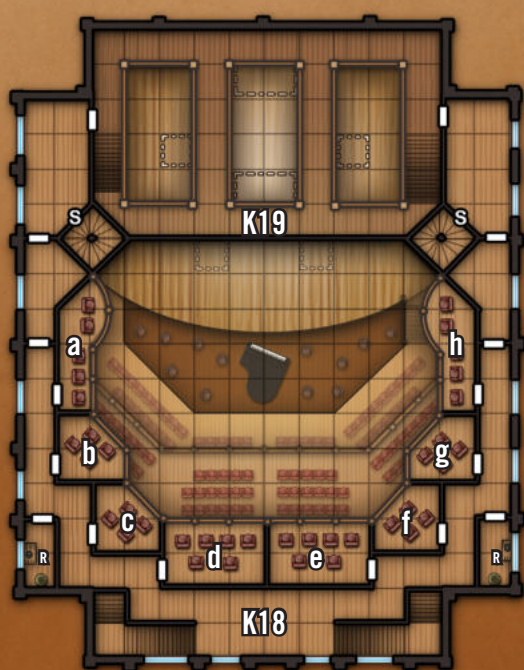


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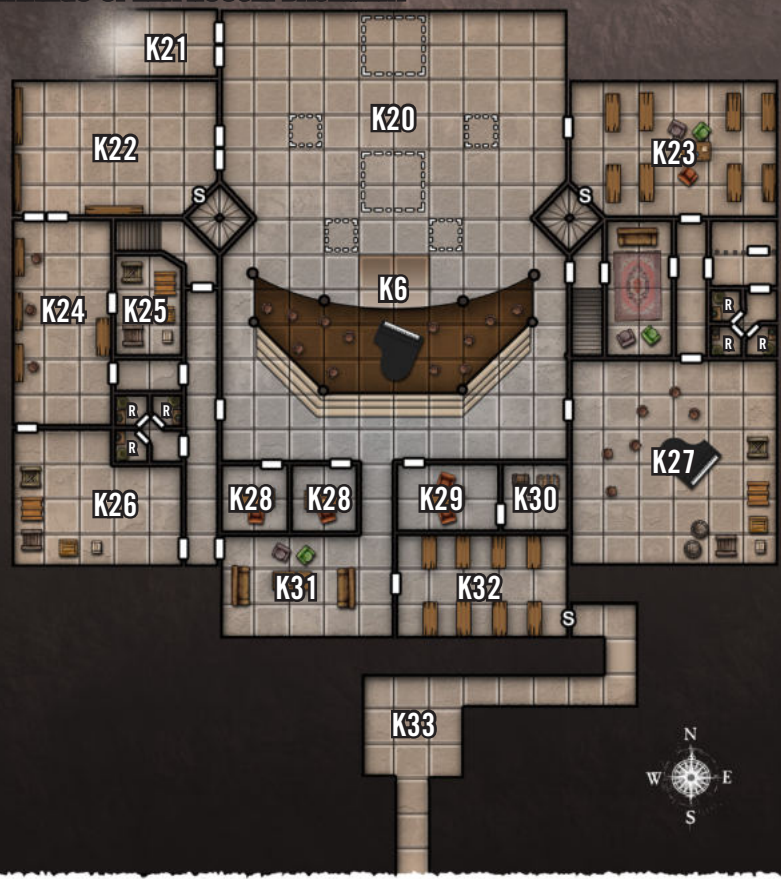


KINTARGO OPERA HOUSE: SECOND FLOOR

KINTARGO OPERA HOUSE: THIRD FLOOR
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



KINTARGO OPERA HOUSE: BASEMENT



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