

On the Trail of the Artifact - Part 2

First Astrenor campaign

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Duration: 4-5h
For 2 to 4 players of at least level 2

Action	Infiltration	Dialogue	Reflection
★☆☆	★★☆	★★★	★★☆

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Synopsis

In this scenario, the players will need to embark on a quest to find King Toric in order to warn him about the events in Klodenn and obtain information regarding the artifact sought by Galarond. Upon arriving in Carleon, the PCs have just over 24 hours to complete this mission before meeting Oriel in front of the king of Irdian's castle.

<!> Caution: This scenario is not intended for a minor audience. Some scenes address adult themes that may be disturbing to some individuals. <!>
This scenario is entirely optional and can be skipped by only playing the final part, «The King's Revelations,» at Carleon Castle. However, if your players crave adventure, you can play the part «A False Lead» while awaiting Oriel's arrival.

This is the second part of the campaign «On the Trail of the Artifact.» Therefore, it is essential to have played Part 1 before starting this scenario.

Context

48 hours have passed since President Panorius declared war. The Asgure troops stationed in Klodenn have been nearly entirely defeated. However, the conflicts at Kingshill Landing port continue to escalate. The inhabitants of Rautha, reassured by the latest news from the front, continue their usual routines and seem to have full confidence in the Alliance's armies.

Since the war announcement, the kingdom of Irdian has ceased most of its maritime activities in favor of border surveillance, greatly reducing the number of guards in its major cities. Long feared by other nations, the kingdom of Irdian has recently seen a decline in its influence due to the emergence of the Alliance and, according to some, the rise to power of the young King Toric. With the Republic of Rautha gaining increasing importance on the international stage, the kingdom of Irdian, formerly known for its military feats against Asgure's troops, has now taken a back seat. Most of its brave warriors have joined the Alliance in the Republic's lands or in the Duchy of Velugian bases, causing the kingdom of Irdian to lose its military power and become a nation focused on agriculture and fishing.

Its capital, Carleon, boasts one of Rautha's largest ports, which is the nation's pride. The inhabitants of this fortified city, mainly living off fishing and maritime transport, find it hard to accept the king's decisions, even though a majority remain loyal to the royal family. But if the situation persists, the kingdom's economy could be drastically impacted, further accelerating its already fragile decline.

As the war rages on, you are sent to Carleon by Oriel, a high-ranking officer of the Alliance, for a secret mission: to warn the king of Irdian that your enemies are seeking to seize the artifact located in Klodenn and to learn more about it. It took you about twenty hours to reach the capital of the kingdom of Irdian. The journey has been exhausting, but you have an important mission to accomplish before Oriel's return.

In Search of the King

It's approximately 3:00 PM when the PCs arrive at the gates of Carleon, a grand fortified city centuries old. Situated at the center of the kingdom of Irdian, it stands at the mouth of the Serpent River, which divides the city in two. To the east of the river lie the castle, the shopping streets, and the beautiful affluent residences, while to the west are the lower quarters inhabited by the less affluent citizens of the capital.

The map of Carleon is available in the Appendix.

The PCs arrive through the West gate, located next to the stables where they can leave their mounts. To reach the king's castle, the PCs must traverse the lower quarters and observe the poor condition of some streets and buildings. If they inquire about the king from the lower quarter residents, they will not speak kindly of King Toric and will declare their disinterest in the crown's affairs.

After crossing to the other side of the Serpent River, the PCs will notice the inequalities present in the capital. If they question residents in this part of the city, they may hear a rumor: the king has supposedly gone on a quest to restore the crown's image and replenish the kingdom's coffers. If they press on about the dungeon, the residents will likely mention the Dungeon of the Damned located to the north, about a hundred kilometers from here, roughly a 2-hour journey on horseback.

This is actually a false lead. If your PCs decide to go there, proceed directly to the section «A False Lead.»

If the PCs choose to go to Carleon Castle, the gates will be blocked by two guards who will inform them that the king is absent and, therefore, the castle is closed to visitors. They don't know the king's whereabouts, but if the PCs insist, the guards will give different responses. The first may suggest seeing Edgar, the castle stablemaster, while the second will mention a rumor about the king's heroic expedition to the Dungeon of the Damned.

In the castle courtyard is a small stable used only for the royal family's horses. Edgar, the old stablemaster, is there. He whistles while cleaning the horse stalls. If the PCs ask him about the king, he will say that the king left a few hours ago without saying a word. The king apparently has a habit of leaving for private matters, and he doesn't know when he'll be back. Interestingly, the stablemaster will point out to the PCs that the king did not take Belfegore, his personal white stallion. If the conversation continues, Edgar will reveal that he knows someone in Carleon who always has good information. He goes by the name «Roberto the Informant» and is the owner of the tavern «The Hearty Slice.» His tavern is located on Thirst Street in the lower quarters (POI* 12).

If the PCs decide to go to Roberto's tavern, they will have to go back to the lower quarters. Upon arriving on Thirst Street, the PCs may feel

Carleon

Capital of the kingdom of Irdian, Carleon is a magnificent fortified city overlooking the sea. It boasts one of the largest ports in Rautha, and its inhabitants primarily rely on maritime activities.

*POI = Point of Interest. They are indicated on city maps

watched by succeeding in a Perception check of standard difficulty (10). However, it will be impossible to pinpoint the exact source of the threat.

It won't take long for the PCs to find Roberto's tavern, which happens to be the largest in the neighborhood. This large wooden building could accommodate a hundred people, but only two customers are present. They are drinking around a table and gossiping about the king's politics. If a PC wishes to listen to their conversation, they will hear:

Customer 1: «Have you heard the latest? Apparently, the king has gone on a quest to fill the state coffers. They say he went in search of the treasure in the Dungeon of the Damned!»
Customer 2: «The Dungeon of the Damned? Ha ha, don't make me laugh! That incompetent couldn't do anything good for the kingdom.»
Customer 1: «Stop it, we don't know. We might have misjudged him; after all, he's young. He's only been in power for 4 years.»
Customer 2: «In the days of his father, the late King Torkell, Irdian was respected! Look, today our kingdom is nothing but Rautha's pantry. A few pieces of gold won't change anything!»

At the back of the bar, behind the counter, is an imposing man with red hair and beard. This is Roberto, the owner.

If questioned by the PCs, Roberto will reveal that he knows someone very close to the king, someone who should definitely know where he is. However, he will only give the name of this person if the PCs place an order with him. Times are tough for business, so Roberto will offer them the house specialty: a good plate of charcuterie with a beer each, for a total of 7 sp each in exchange for his valuable information.

If the PCs agree, he will serve them a good meal and give them the name of Perséphone. This young woman works as a dancer and waitress in one of the taverns in the affluent quarters, called «The Dancing Thigh» (POI 11). Perséphone and King Toric have reportedly been seen together frequently lately. She is rumored to be his favorite mistress.

Once fully satiated with all these delicacies, the PCs can continue on to «The Dancing Thigh» tavern. But as soon as they leave «The Hearty Slice,» they are warmly welcomed by a gang from the lower quarters who have been watching them since their arrival on Thirst Street.

These thugs attack by surprise unless one of the adventurers indicates that they are leaving the tavern on guard. In this case, they must succeed in an easy Perception check (5) to spot the ambush and not be attacked by surprise. If the player rolls more than 15 on their Perception check, the PCs will automatically be in a defensive position during the first attack by the thugs. The thugs outnumber the PCs by one and take advantage of the situation to attack first.

The lower quarter thugs of Carleon take advantage of the absence of



Roberto

A tall, imposing fellow with red hair and a beard, Roberto is the proprietor of one of the oldest taverns in Carleon. Thanks to his profession, Roberto knows many people and is aware of most rumors circulating in the kingdom.

some of the guards, sent to monitor the borders, to pick the pockets of foreigners. They are well organized and know the capital's streets perfectly. If the fight turns against them and they find themselves outnumbered, they will easily flee.

The map of Thirst Street as well as the Bandits' profile sheet are available in the appendix.

If the PCs are defeated by the lower quarter gang, they will wake up in Carleon Hospital (POI 5), stripped of all their savings. However, the PCs retain their weapons, armor, and other equipment.

After this confrontation, the PCs can head to the affluent quarters in search of Perséphone.

The Undercity Gang

A group of bandits that operates in the poor neighborhoods of Carleon, primarily targeting travelers and/or foreigners. Most of them are young people who grew up in these disadvantaged areas and make a living from their misdeeds, despite the harm they inflict. Merchants in the lower districts view them unfavorably because, even if they are not directly targeted, these bandits drive away their clientele.

A False Lead

This optional act is played only if the PCs choose to go to the Dungeon of the Damned.

Traveling from Carleon to the Dungeon of the Damned takes 4 hours round trip on horseback or 20 hours on foot, which would automatically fail the mission. The dungeon is lost deep in the forest, and the atmosphere there is very oppressive, especially at night.

The PCs will need to quickly finish the dungeon or abandon it early if they want a chance to complete their mission on time.

The Dungeon of the Damned is normally uninhabited, but it is said that during the night, strange noises from this place echo in the forest.

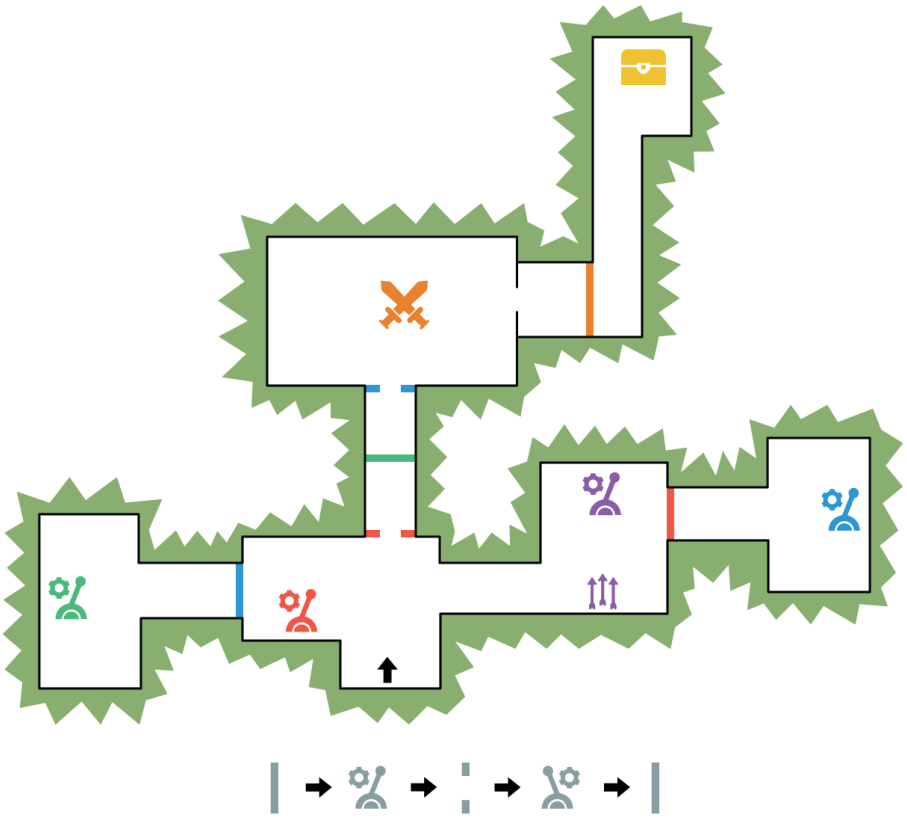
Upon arrival, the PCs will need to light a torch if they wish to navigate these ruins. The place is covered in cobwebs, and a great deal of debris litters the floor. To find the treasure of the Dungeon of the Damned, the PCs must solve the lever puzzle and defeat its inhabitants from beyond.

Refer to the map of the Dungeon of the Damned - Mechanisms available below to describe the location and events to your players. This map should not be disclosed to your players.

The Dungeon of the Damned

It is said that the Dungeon of the Damned was the former laboratory of a powerful mage who conducted numerous morbid experiments on decomposing bodies. According to legend, he attempted to resurrect his wife and children, all of whom perished in a fire. Unfortunately, necromantic magic drove him mad, and he committed suicide by casting a final resurrection spell. Since then, his spirit and those of all his subjects have haunted the place.

Plan of the Dungeon of the Damned



To better understand the map: The colored levers are actually large wooden planks protruding from the ground that open and close thick stone doors that cannot be forced. The levers and doors are similar and have no distinguishing features. The colors are only there to help the GM navigate. The green, red, and blue levers open and close doors of corresponding colors, while the purple is a trap that triggers a volley of arrows on whoever activates it (1d10 damage). The trap can be avoided if the PCs inspect the room. A Perception check of standard difficulty (10) will allow them to spot some arrows with rusty tips on the ground. If the roll is particularly successful (15 or more), the PC may notice strange gaps in the wall facing the lever.

To reach the large hall behind the three doors, the PCs must activate the levers in this order: Red, Blue, Green, Blue, and Red.
The PCs hear when a door opens or closes, but they do not see it if it is behind a closed door.

Once in the large hall, the PCs will face a horrifying sight: piles of bones and decomposing flesh scattered on the floor. In front of them, a huge circular slab covers the center of the large hall. If a PC steps on it, the doors behind them will close, and the piles of bones and flesh will start to animate to form an army of skeletons and zombies. These creatures have been brought back to life by the necromancer statue in the room on the right.

If there are 2 PCs, they must face 1 zombie, 1 skeleton, and 1 immobile necromancer.
If there are 3 PCs, they must face 2 zombies, 2 skeletons, and 1 immobile necromancer.
If there are 4 PCs, they must face 3 zombies, 3 skeletons, and 1 immobile necromancer.

Note: Zombies and skeletons are undead creatures. They can continue to attack even if their HP is below 0. The soul of the necromancer is trapped in the statue and cannot move. He will use his Necromantic Summoning spell as soon as one of his creatures is defeated.

The map of the main hall of the Dungeon of the Damned as well as the profiles of the zombies, skeletons, and the necromancer are available in the appendix.

Once the creatures from beyond are defeated, all the doors of the dungeon open, thus releasing the passage to the treasure room. This room contains a chest filled with gemstones and valuable items, but no trace of the king. The PCs must leave as quickly as possible if they want to complete their mission.

A STRANGE INVESTIGATION



Perséphone

A seductive young woman with flowing red hair and an enchanting gaze. Her pretty face and dancing steps turn the heads of many men in the capital. Rumors suggest that she is the new mistress of King Toric.



Luigi

The cook at The Dancing Thigh, Luigi is an extravagant, jovial character with a passion for his job. He doesn't mince his words and loves to gossip.

Once arrived on the street of bars and restaurants (11), the PCs quickly spot a lively tavern where music and joyful cries can be heard. It's called The Dancing Thigh.

On the spot, about a hundred customers - mostly male - crowd around, drinks in hand, around a splendid young woman with long red hair, twirling and swirling to the music. They form an almost impermeable circle around the dancer: the PCs will have to elbow their way through if they want to approach the young woman before the end of her performance. However, her performance should soon come to a close.

The tavern is slightly more spacious than The Hearty Slice's, but what sets them apart is, of course, the atmosphere.

If the PCs ask one of the tavern's customers for the dancer's name, they will quickly confirm that it is Perséphone.

Once the young woman's number is over, she will be much more inclined to answer the adventurers' questions. She will lead them away from the crowd towards the kitchens for a more audible conversation. In the kitchens, Chef Luigi is busy with his tasks: he is very busy and does not pay attention to them.

If the PCs question her about her relationship with King Toric, Perséphone will respond that it's none of their business. She won't appreciate this insinuation, especially in the presence of Luigi, who has a reputation for being a real gossip.

If the PCs mention the rumor about the king's presence in the Dungeon of the Damned, Perséphone will chuckle and claim that she doubts it.

The young woman knows where the king is, but she will only reveal this information under one condition: that the adventurers complete a mission for her. If they present themselves as adventurers or members of a guild from Castle City, the young woman will say the following words:

«I might indeed know where Riri, um... I mean, our king, is.
I agree to tell you if, in exchange, you complete a mission for me. You are adventurers after all. By the way, how come you're here right now? Shouldn't you be fighting Asgure's troops? Are you deserters? I should probably go and report you to the guards myself... Ha ha, I'm joking! Complete my mission and I'll tell you how to find him.»

Perséphone is much more concerned with her personal affairs than with the geopolitical situation. She won't be impressed by the PCs' warnings, especially since she knows she can rely on the king's protection no matter what happens. If they accept the mission or ask for more information, the young woman will lead the PCs to the

tavern's staff break room. This room can only be accessed through the kitchens and is off-limits to customers. It is used by the tavern's employees for breaks, meals, and to store their personal belongings.

Perséphone heads to her locker and explains straightforwardly what she expects from the adventurers. For the past few weeks, she has been missing her underwear from her locker. Her first suspicions fell on regulars of the tavern. Since the break room is only accessible from the kitchens and off-limits to customers, she accuses her colleagues of being negligent.

With this information in their possession, the PCs can start their investigation. Here is a list of actions likely to reveal clues to exonerate or incriminate a suspect.

Inspecting the break room lockers

If the PCs examine Perséphone's locker, they will find a strange letter at the bottom of the locker. The young woman hadn't noticed it, saying it doesn't belong to her.

See the appendix for the letter from the secret admirer.

She doesn't recognize the handwriting, but this only confirms her suspicions about the tavern's shady customers. If the PCs ask her to name the weirdest customer, she can give the name of Delmad: a man with an unattractive face and a disturbing gaze.

Adam the bartender's and Luigi the cook's lockers are accessible, but the PCs will need to be careful to check them discreetly: having strangers in the break room is unusual, so they are particularly vigilant and will come running at the slightest suspicious noise. They may not appreciate this surprise search.

Adam's locker is quite ordinary. The PCs may find a jacket, city shoes, and a cigar box. A few silver coins are at the bottom of his jacket pockets.

Luigi's locker is somewhat similar except for a locked briefcase, nestled at the back of his locker. The briefcase can be picked with the Lockpicker Edge and a lockpicking kit. The difficulty of the Dexterity check is standard (10). The briefcase can also be forced open, albeit damaging it, with a Strength check of hard difficulty (15).

In the briefcase is a nice collection of male pornographic magazines with representations of naked and muscular orcs in suggestive positions.

If a PC steals or damages anything in these lockers, they automatically lose one morale point.

Inspecting the kitchens

Letter from the secret admirer

Handwritten letter from a Perséphone admirer, left in her locker. The letter is well written, but covered with grease stains.

The kitchens have a central island with a few drawers for cutting meat and vegetables as well as storing kitchen utensils. A large fireplace is used for cooking dishes.

If the PCs search the kitchen drawers and cabinets while Luigi is still around, they will attract his wrath, as he will deem their behavior unacceptable. They will then have to succeed in Charisma checks to obtain information from him later.

However, the PCs may find the key to Luigi's briefcase in one of the drawers of the central island. They will need to be careful not to be spotted, as Luigi won't stand for it and might well send a hot frying pan over their heads (1d8 damage).

Inspecting the main hall

The main hall has about ten tables, a small stage for entertainment, and a counter for serving drinks behind which Adam, the bartender of the establishment, works. Next to the counter, just behind the stage, is a door leading to the boss's office: Riza.

If the PCs try to enter, Adam will warn them that the boss doesn't like to be disturbed for nothing.

This place is very lively: about thirty customers are still there to drink and eat, but most are just waiting for Perséphone's return. Among all these customers, one man catches the PCs' attention. He is the only customer sitting alone at his table, with a glass in front of him that he doesn't touch, and he doesn't eat anything. This is Delmad, the suspicious weird customer suspected by Perséphone.



Delmad

A shady customer at The Dancing Thigh, Delmad is a strange, uneducated man with a diction problem. He regularly hangs out alone in the tavern and seems to worship Perséphone.

Questioning Delmad, the weird customer

Delmad is a big fan of Perséphone; he comes to see her dance every day.

If the PCs want to question him, they will quickly understand that he cannot be the author of the letter found in Perséphone's locker.

Indeed, the poor man is not very educated; he cannot read or write and has a speech impediment.



Adam

Barman at The Dancing Thigh, Adam is a man who cares about a job well done. He is often called upon by the tavern's customers, but always remains very professional. His only moments of relaxation are his cigar-smoking breaks.

Questioning Adam, the Bartender

At the counter, a few customers are waiting to receive their drinks. Adam is very busy, so getting more information from him will be difficult, as his only interactions consist of:

«I don't have time for this nonsense. Do you really think I have nothing else to do?»

During his breaks, Adam usually goes out to smoke a cigar outside the establishment. It would be wiser to find him there to discuss. If

the PCs suggest that they suspect Luigi, Adam will laugh and say that Perséphone doesn't really match the cook's tastes.

Adam seems honest; he seems too preoccupied with his work to engage in stealing underwear. A successful standard difficulty Perception check (10) reveals that he has a nervous twitch in his right eye, symptomatic of overwork.

Questioning Luigi, the Cook

Luigi is very talkative; he will not hesitate to answer the PCs' questions unless they have been disrespectful to him.

If he is in good spirits, he will answer the adventurers' questions with a smile while continuing to cook. Otherwise, they will have to charm him a bit to make him smile again, with a difficult Charisma check (15) or a 5 if you're a male orc.

If the PCs ask him about Adam, he will say he can't imagine him doing such things.

If the PCs ask him which people have recently accessed the kitchens, he will say that only tavern staff can enter his kitchen. After a moment of thought, he will add that some suppliers may also come to drop off their goods. Luigi recalls receiving a delivery of spirits, charcuterie, and vegetables this week. However, he doesn't remember the days or the name of the suppliers.

Questioning Riza, the Boss

Riza is a very busy businesswoman. She manages several establishments in the area. Unless the PCs have a specific question for her that only she can answer, she will ask them to see someone else, as she has an important task to finish before leaving.

If the PCs ask her for the list of suppliers and delivery dates, she will be somewhat reluctant to search for this document. Then she will eventually comply with the request, understanding that only she can provide this information.

The list of suppliers is available in the appendix.

Questioning Perséphone

Perséphone is a carefree young woman who enjoys life. She has many admirers and doesn't really know which one could have done this. She doesn't think it's one of her colleagues, but after all, she's only known them for a few weeks, and only they have access to the break room.

If the PCs ask her a question about the time of the incident, she will say it happened the day before yesterday (today is Friday), last Wednesday, and once again before that, but she doesn't remember the date.



Riza

Owner of The Dancing Thigh, Riza is a strong-willed woman in her forties. Her sharp business sense has enabled her to build up one of Carleon's most prolific businesses. She now runs several restaurants and inns.

Supplier List

A note listing all the tavern's suppliers and their delivery dates for the current month.
Among the list of suppliers is Roberto's tavern, The Hearty Slice.

Solution to the Investigation

Once all the pieces of the puzzle are assembled, the PCs will understand that it's dear Roberto. The grease stains on the letter and the delivery dates of the charcuterie coincide with the time of the incidents, and are clues leading to the owner of The Hearty Slice.

If the PCs return to The Hearty Slice, Roberto will still be there. If accused of stealing underwear, he will initially deny all accusations against him. A difficult Intelligence check (15) will reveal signs of nervousness from Roberto. A difficult Perception check (15) will draw a PC's attention to a piece of lace protruding from Roberto's pants. The old rascal is currently wearing a pair of Perséphone's panties. The young woman's other underwear is hidden in one of the drawers of his counter.

If the PCs put some pressure on him, a standard Charisma check (10), or if they find underwear on him or in his drawer, the poor man will crack and confess everything in a low voice.

«Okay, okay, I confess! But please, speak lower.
Yes, I'm the one who stole Perséphone's underwear. Are you happy?
At first, I just wanted to scare her. I wanted her to believe that a dangerous psychopath was lurking among the tavern's customers, so that she would leave The Dancing Thigh... Since her arrival there, I've been losing customers continuously, to the point that I'm now forced to deliver my charcuterie myself to my own competitors! What a shame. And then, as she didn't leave, I started again for the next two weeks. But by going there so often and seeing her flirtatious smile, I fell, like many others, under her spell... There, you know everything!»

Terribly embarrassed by the situation, Roberto will then fetch Perséphone's underwear and take a few extra minutes to remove the pair he is wearing. He will entrust them to the PCs, asking them not to disclose his name to Perséphone. He swears never to do it again and that this incident taught him a lesson.

With the mystery solved, the PCs can then return to The Dancing Thigh to return Perséphone's underwear.

If the investigation was quickly resolved and your players are thirsty for combat, you can integrate a new brawl scene on Thirst Street with the low quarters gang. They have recruited some extra muscle to take down the PCs, their last defeat having served them as a lesson (or not).

A DUNGEON LIKE NO OTHER

Upon returning to The Dancing Thigh tavern, the PCs will find Perséphone serving customers. They can return her personal belongings and claim their reward. Perséphone will want to know the name of the culprit: the PCs can choose to name Roberto or remain silent. Whether they decide to name the thief or not, if they assure her that it won't happen again, the young woman won't insist.

Perséphone will warmly thank the adventurers with these words:

«Thank you for your help. I see that the reputation of the [PCs guild] is well deserved. Well, promise made, promise kept. I will tell you where Riri is... I mean, the king!
It is said that he is in a dungeon... Actually, that's not entirely untrue. But I know exactly what kind of dungeon he likes. He has already tried to take me there, but it's not really my thing...
A few kilometers east of Carleon is a small hamlet known for its libertine club called the Lustful Dungeon. You can be sure to find him there. He usually goes there once a month and spends two or three nights there. It's a very select club, you won't be able to get in so easily, especially dressed like that. Don't take it the wrong way.»

The PCs must meet Oriel the next day at 7 p.m. at Carleon Castle. Unfortunately, it will be too late if they decide to wait for the king's return.

If the PCs ask Perséphone how to enter the establishment, she will suggest first dressing in chic (15 gold) or even luxury (30 gold) clothes. She also knows that a secret code is required at the entrance to the club. Unfortunately, it changes every week and she doesn't know it. She knows all this thanks to one of her friends, Rebecca, who works in this establishment. Perséphone will only mention her friend Rebecca's name if the PCs are convincing in expressing the urgency of the situation. It is also possible to try to seduce the young woman, with a difficult Charisma check (15). If the PCs present themselves as Perséphone's friends, Rebecca can help them enter and find the king once inside.

The Lustful Dungeon is about 30 minutes by horseback, or 2.5 hours on foot. The tower of the Lustful Dungeon overlooks the hamlet and can be seen from afar: it emits red lights and strange music. The few people present in this hamlet seem to be concentrated inside the establishment, as the streets are completely deserted.

As they approach the club, the PCs will see wealthy bourgeois. They wear black evening masks and enter one by one. From a distance, it is possible to see that the clients knock several times on the large wooden door of the dungeon, wait a few seconds for the peephole in the door to open, then approach the door (to give the password) and enter the club once the door is opened by what seems to be a bouncer.

The Lustful Dungeon

A very exclusive libertine club frequented only by nobles and wealthy bourgeois of the Kingdom, where discretion is paramount. The password changes every week to prevent unwanted intrusions and to admit only club members.

If the PCs walk around the establishment, they will find a small door hidden behind large waste containers: it provides access to the kitchens. If they wait a few minutes, they will see a first cook take out the garbage, and then a few minutes later, a second one will come out to smoke a cigar.

The PCs have several options for entering:

Through the main entrance

To do this, the PCs must find the password spoken by the club's clients. There are very few places to hide; approaching without being noticed is particularly difficult. A PC can attempt a standard Dexterity check (10) followed by a standard Perception check (10) in order to approach close enough to hear the password without being spotted. But if during this attempt the bouncer sees a PC's face spying, they won't be allowed in anymore.

The PCs can pull aside a couple of bourgeois who are approaching. These are hardly corruptible given their financial ease. They can reveal the password under threat, but it will cost one morale point for each PC. Otherwise, they can try to charm them with a difficult Charisma check (15).

The password is «The moon is full tonight.»

The bouncer will only open the door if he hears the password. There is no point in asking him to call Rebecca or trying to bribe him.

Once inside the establishment, the bouncer will ask the PCs to leave their belongings and pay their entry fee, 10 gold per person. In exchange for this sum, the person in charge of the cloakroom will give each of them a black mask. The PCs are required to leave their bag with their personal effects if they want to pass through the entrance gate.

Through the kitchen door

If the PCs choose to force or pick the lock, they will come face to face with the kitchen brigade of the establishment. They will be forcibly escorted outside by a dozen cooks ready to fight if they resist.

If the PCs wait long enough, they may come across Charles, a cook taking a break. They can ask him to fetch Rebecca for them for a small sum of money, at least 5 gold. After a few minutes, Charles will return with the young woman and then go back to work.

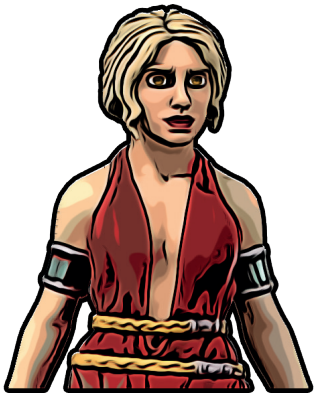
If the PCs present themselves as friends of Perséphone, Rebecca will be grateful to her friend. She can confirm that the king is indeed present tonight, and she will even agree to help the PCs enter. Unfortunately, the employees of the Lustful Dungeon do not know the password; only the club members and the security personnel do. Employees can enter and move around the Lustful Dungeon only thanks to the badge sewn onto their work clothes.

Rebecca works here as a courtesan. After a few minutes of thought, she will offer the PCs costumes from the establishment so they can enter.

The clients of the Lustful Dungeon have very diverse tastes, so the establishment has made a habit of hiring courtesans of all origins and sizes. Therefore, she will probably find outfits tailored to each of the PCs' morphologies. She will bring a small veil for each man so they can hide their faces.

If they accept, Rebecca will fetch them clothes that fit them. Courtesan outfits are very revealing, leaving little to the imagination. Before entering, the adventurers will need to hide their belongings, as they will not go unnoticed with their bag on their back.

Once dressed in their costumes, the PCs can enter through the kitchens without arousing suspicion, but not without a certain embarrassment.



Rebecca

A courtesan and waitress at the Lustful Dungeon, this ravishing blonde with full lips is a childhood friend of Perséphone. It is thanks to Perséphone's new contact that Rebecca was able to obtain this new job, for which she is very grateful.

The Ascent of the Dungeon

Inside the Lustful Dungeon, the atmosphere is lively. In the large ground floor hall, dozens of courtesans dance to sensual music to the delight of the masked and elegantly dressed clientele.

Most of the clients are seated at tables, enjoying the dishes and drinks offered by the establishment. At the back of the room is a large bar, from which waitresses retrieve various cocktails to serve the clients. To the right of the bar is the door leading to the kitchens, and to the left is a staircase leading to the upper floors.

On the first floor, there are several rooms dedicated to carnal pleasures that all clients can access freely. The second floor looks exactly like the first, except that only VIPs and staff members can access it. Finally, the third floor is accessible only to VIP members and a few carefully chosen courtesans. Most people there do not know what happens there and don't really seek to know.

If the PCs are wearing courtesan attire, they can continue their ascent to the second floor. However, they will be regularly approached by club clients for various requests...

If they try to access floors that are off-limits to them, they will be blocked by 2 imposing guards, responsible for checking access to VIP areas.

The Lustful Dungeon is a very exclusive club that has a rule never to disclose the identity of its members. If the PCs ask for information about King Toric, the employees as well as the club members will say nothing, and they won't appreciate anyone trying to break the club's rules.

If the PCs are observant, they may notice that some clients wear different masks: golden masks adorned with small precious stones.

These are the masks of VIP members, granting them access to the 2nd and 3rd floors.

Attempting to retrieve one of these masks won't be easy. The PCs will need to be ingenious to take them without resorting to force.

Here is a list of possible actions for each floor:

Ground Floor

If not already done, the PCs can try to contact Rebecca by asking one of the employees where she is. The young woman is currently in charge of serving cocktails and will be easily identifiable by the other employees. Once in contact with Rebecca, the PCs can only obtain her help if they present themselves as friends of Perséphone.

Access Rules for Floors

Authorized to circulate on:
Ground floor: Everyone
1st floor: Everyone
2nd floor: VIP members and staff of the establishment
3rd floor: VIP members and only the courtesans accompanying them.

The 2nd and 3rd floors are monitored by 2 guards each, responsible for enforcing these rules.

In case of confrontation, the guard's profile is available in the appendix.

Depending on the questions asked by the PCs, Rebecca can:

confirm that King Toric is indeed present tonight, and that he is on the top floor.
inform them that golden masks provide access to VIP floors.
provide them with courtesan attire.
The large ground floor hall is a conducive place for meetings. If disguised as courtesans, a PC can try to seduce a VIP client by succeeding on a standard (10) or difficult (15) Charisma check, depending on their approach. If successful, they can lead them to one of the rooms on the 1st or 2nd floors to steal their golden mask out of sight. Once in one of the rooms, they will need to distract or gag the client during the operation to prevent them from alerting the guards.

1st Floor

Out of the ten available rooms, only two are unoccupied. Most of the occupied rooms are locked, but some are left open, intentionally or not. The PCs can try to enter one of the rooms to steal a courtesan outfit. However, they won't find any golden masks in these rooms. A PC can attempt a standard Dexterity check (10) to steal the clothes of a courtesan in the room without attracting the attention of the busy occupants...

The doors of the closed rooms can be picked with the Lockpicker Edge or forced open with a difficult Strength check (15). However, by force, the PCs risk terrifying the occupants and alerting the guards. By succeeding on a difficult luck roll (15), the PCs may come across a VIP client wearing a golden mask. They'll need to use their imagination to steal it.

The staircase leading to the 2nd floor is blocked by 2 guards who only allow people wearing a golden mask or staff members to pass. Forcing their way through without weapons or equipment is purely impossible, if not suicidal.

2nd Floor

Among all the available rooms, only two are occupied: the first is locked, and the second is left open.

If a PC decides to listen behind the closed door, they may hear snoring by succeeding on an easy Perception check (5). If a PC has the Lockpicker Edge, they can try to open the door without waking up the occupant. Lockpicking requires a standard Dexterity check (10). Once inside, it will be very easy to retrieve the golden mask from the sleeping person, which is prominently placed on the bedside table next to the bed.

If a PC decides to enter the open room, they will encounter a torrid scene between several individuals, including a VIP club member who is still wearing their golden mask. The man in question doesn't mind the arrival of additional courtesans or courtiers, which is why his

door remained open. To retrieve his mask, the PCs will either need to distract him or resort to force. However, they must be careful not to attract the guards, as the PCs are unarmed.

The staircase leading to the 3rd floor is blocked by 2 guards who only allow clients wearing a golden mask and accompanying courtesans to pass. Forcing their way through without weapons or equipment is purely impossible, if not suicidal.

3rd Floor

Upon reaching the top of the stairs, the PCs may hear cries of men and the sound of whip blows echoing in the corridor. Most of the rooms are empty, but 4 of them are occupied and locked.

If the PCs listen at the doors, they may hear moans and curious invectives such as «You miserable worm» or «Obey your mistress»... If they listen at the third door, they will hear «You've been a naughty boy... Riri deserves a big punishment.» King Toric is behind this door.

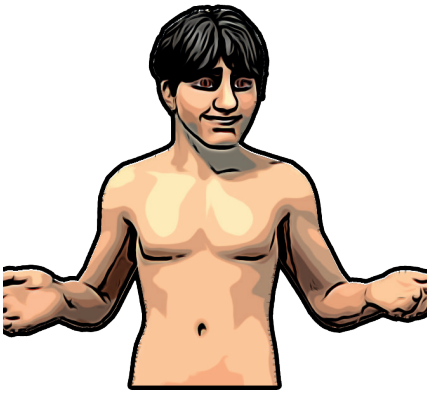
If the PCs knock on all the doors without reason, the disturbed clients may alert the guards. The guards are not in the habit of bothering VIP club members. Therefore, they will warn a PC wearing the golden mask the first time and tell them not to disturb the other clients anymore, otherwise they will be forced to intervene.

If the PCs knock on the door of the king's room (the third one), they must present themselves as members of the Alliance and say that Father Luther left him an important message or that the temple of Klodenn has been attacked. Otherwise, King Toric will not understand the urgency of the situation, and being very busy, he will ask the PCs to come back later, preferably in another place.

If the PCs fail to convince the king to open his door or if they are chased away by the guards, they will have to leave the Lustful Dungeon empty-handed and wait for the king's return to the castle. Fortunately for them, the king will not linger there and will return the next day, just a few minutes before the appointment with Oriel. The PCs will then be able to obtain their information in time.

In this situation, you must play the «Revelations of the King» part as if this scene took place at the castle, without the context of the club.

If the PCs manage to convince the king of the urgency of the situation, he will ask Stella, his mistress, to open the door. The PCs will witness a curious scene where the king will inquire about his friend Luther while being naked and tied by hands and feet to the bed frame. King Toric doesn't seem bothered by the situation and is more concerned about his old friend. As the conversation progresses, Stella will untie him, whip in hand, and give him back his clothes.



Riri's secret

Riri is the nickname of King Toric, given by his mistresses. He takes advantage of his secret visits to the Lustful Dungeon to engage in BDSM practices with his mistress Stella.

The King's revelations

After learning about the events in Klodenn, King Toric will be deeply affected by the revelations from the players, especially if he learns about Luther's death. Luther's family and the king's family have always been very close. Before Klodenn's independence, Luther worked as an advisor to Toric's father, the late King Torkell; he has known Toric since he was very young. However, the young king, carefree of danger, will not be overly concerned about Asgure's threat, especially since he no longer possesses the artifact that resided in Klodenn.

If the players ask him about the artifact, the king will respond:

«Why are you all interested in that cursed family trinket? It had been gathering dust in the castle's treasure room for years, to the point where I had completely forgotten it was stored in Klodenn before the republic was formed. Unfortunately, I no longer have it in my possession. I handed it over to King Guldrak during his last visit, and for a very good price! The castle's coffers were starting to run dry, someone had to replenish them. Luckily, your good king Toric is a skilled negotiator. I got 200 gold pieces for it as a souvenir... Why are you looking at me like that? Do you think it was worth more?»

The players will be somewhat stunned by the king's revelations, as he does not seem to understand the magnitude of his mistake and is unaware of the true nature of the artifact.

If the players ask him for information about the appearance of the artifact, Toric will say it resembles an egg, blue in color, about 20cm wide and 30cm tall.

Once they have given their warning and gathered the information, the players can meet Oriel outside Carleon Castle at the appointed time.



King Toric
The current king of the kingdom of Irdian, son of the former king Torkell. Toric is a carefree young man who has little regard for his role as king. He enjoys the company of pretty young women and is not interested in much else.

Conclusion

The players know that the artifact is in Guldrak's possession, the king of the kingdom of Drukh, and they have completed their mission by warning the king of Irdian of the danger.

They meet Oriel, who returns from the Alliance headquarters in Castle City. She is outside Carleon Castle at the appointed time. After the PCs report to Oriel, she will tell them that time is of the essence and they must quickly leave for Wolforge to meet King Guldrak. Oriel seems to have learned some information. However, she will be very evasive about the purpose of this mission. If the players ask her about what she learned in Castle City, Oriel will respond that it is confidential information and they will learn it in due time, if all goes well. In the meantime, the players have no choice but to trust her and continue to obey the Alliance.

The journey to Wolforge is likely to be long and perilous. Climbing Gigantic, the tallest mountain in Rautha, will not be easy. But there is no doubt that if the players seek answers, they will surely find them there.

Rewards

Here is the list of end-of-scenario rewards available, depending on the objectives reached:

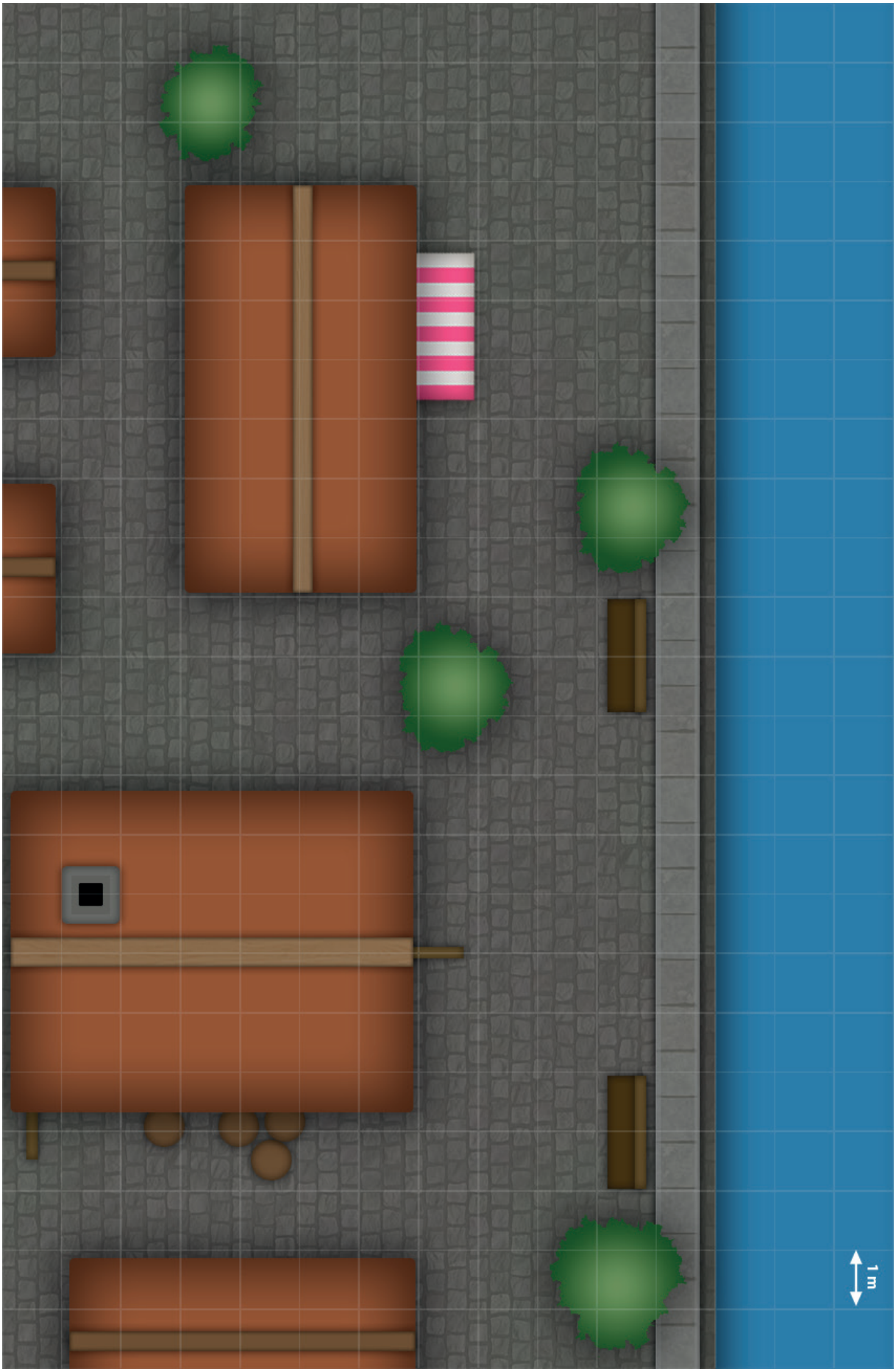
Goals	Rewards
Meet the King at the Lustful Dungeon	200 experience points and 100 gold coins per PC
Completing Perséphone's quest	1 morale point and 70 XP
Do not reveal the name of the culprit to Perséphone	1 morale point
Defeat the Downbelow Gang (once)	100 experience points and 25 gold coins per PC
Recover the treasure of the Dungeon of the Damned	150 experience points and 75 gold coins per PC
Complete the scenario	50 gold coins per PC

Appendix

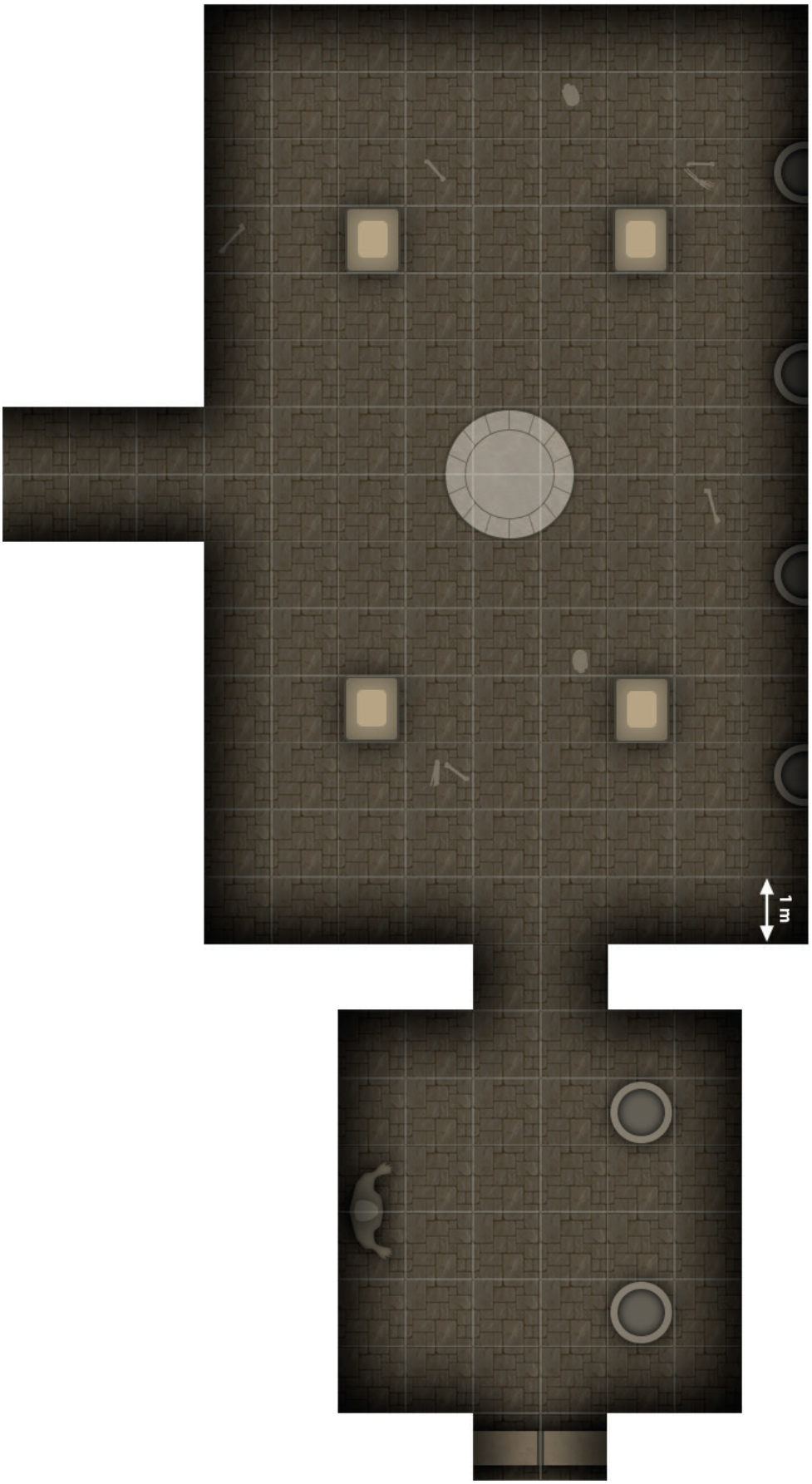
Map of Carleon



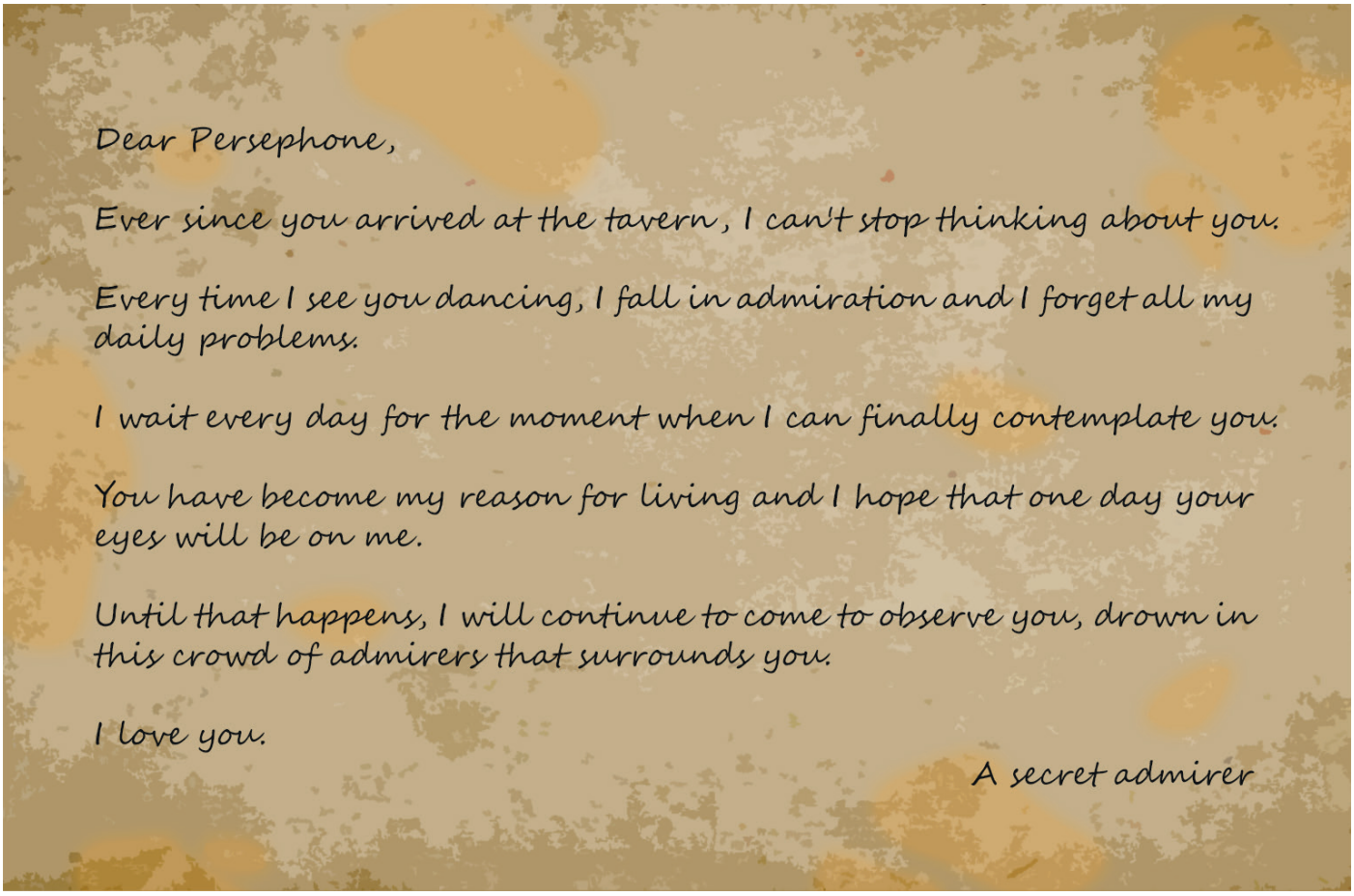
Thirst Street



Great Hall of the Dungeon of the Damned



Letter from the secret admirer



List of suppliers

June Delivery Schedule

Friday, 2nd June: Vales Butcher - Meats

Saturday, 3rd June: Clark - Spirits

Saturday, 3rd June: Duff Brewery - Mead & Beer

Monday, 5th June: Tony's Farm - Fruits and Vegetables

Tuesday, 6th June: The Cormorant - Fish and Seafood

Wednesday, 7th June: The Right Slice - Delicatessen

Friday, 9th June: Vales Butcher - Meats

Tuesday, 13th June: The Cormorant - Fish and Seafood

Wednesday, 14th June: The Right Slice - Delicatessen

Friday, 16th June: Vales Butcher - Meats

Monday, 19th June: Tony's Farm - Fruits and Vegetables

Tuesday, 20th June: The Cormorant - Fish and Seafood

Wednesday, 21st June: The Right Slice - Delicatessen

Friday, 23rd June: Vales Butcher - Meats

Tuesday, 27th June: The Cormorant - Fish and Seafood

Wednesday, 28th June: The Right Slice - Delicatessen

Friday, 30th June: Vales Butcher - Meats

Creatures and NPCs

BANDIT

Rogue & Warrior : 1

HP : 15 EP : 10

STR	DEX	INT	CON	PER	CHA
-3/3	-3/3	-3/3	-3/3	-3/3	-3/3

Weapon	Range	ATK	DMG
Common Weapon of choice			

Bandits roam in gangs and are sometimes led by thugs, veterans or mages. Not all bandits are bad. Oppression, drought, epidemics or famine can often lead honest people to a life of banditry.

Special move : Palm Strike

NECROMANCER

HP : 15 EP : 15

STR	DEX	INT	CON	PER	CHA
-3	0	3	0	0	2

Weapon	Range	ATK	DMG
Necrotic Scepter	-	1d20+2	1d8+INT

Necromancers are specialized magicians who study the interaction of life, death and the afterlife. They enjoy digging up corpses to create undead slaves.

Special moves : Spectral Orb, Necromantic Summoning

ZOMBIE

HP : 7 EP : 10

STR	DEX	INT	CON	PER	CHA
2	-2	-5	0	-2	-5

Weapon	Range	ATK	DMG
Jaw	Melee	1d20	1d4+STR Raw*

**The raw damage does not take armor into account*

A zombie is the result of necromantic magic cast in order to reanimate a corpse, usually humanoid. Sometimes a zombie will also rise on its own if it is in a place strongly imbued with an aura of death or necromantic energy.

Edges : Undead

Special move : Regenerating Bite

SKELETON

HP : 10 EP : 10

STR	DEX	INT	CON	PER	CHA
1	1	-5	-2	-2	-5

Weapon	Range	ATK	DMG
Common Weapon of choice			

A skeleton is the result of necromantic magic cast to reanimate bones, usually humanoid. Sometimes a skeleton will also rise on its own if it is in a place strongly imbued with an aura of death or necromantic energy.

Edges : Undead, Magical Creature

CITADEL GUARD

Warrior : 4

HP : 20 3-7 EP : 13

STR	DEX	INT	CON	PER	CHA
3	0(-1)	-2	2	-2	1

Weapon	Range	ATK	DMG
Sword	Melee	1d20+4	1d10+STR

Armor	Require	Penalty	AP
Scale Mail	Constitution > 1	-1 Dexterity	3
Shield	Strength > 2	~~Dodge~~	+4

Special move : Fury, Overturn