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Scurlock

is dead. His estranged children have returned home to Ilysium for the funeral and disbursement of the estate.

HOWEVER—There is little left; the manor servant, Jedmund, has collected the last 82 crowns in a small coffer, and with it only a shabby coach and two withered horses, the family crest and swords, a portrait of a strange woman, and Lord Scurlock's prized hunting rifle (hidden away from prying eyes).

The other attendees at the funeral are Lord Scurlock's creditors. They hover about the manor like vultures, eager to recoup some measure of their losses.

- VICEROY SKEIN has come to collect his bribe for withholding certain unpleasant facts from public knowledge. He expects the children to continue the payments. He is owed 14 crowns and 5 crowns per month ongoing.
- NARCUS KERP is owed for delivery of "medicines" that helped ease the tortured mind of Lord Scurlock in his final years. He is owed 6 crowns.
- CONSTABLE TUME is soliciting the tax payment on the manor. 67 crowns.
- MISTER BAILEY of the Fox & Anchor kindly asks for the stable fees for the coach and horses: 11 crowns for the past six months.
- MISTER PLOM demands the regular "protection" payment to the local goblin crime boss, Kudger. 1 crown per week (you owe 16 already).
- MAGISTRATE HOLPINE, a city judge, discreetly informs you that Lord Scurlock owes him certain trivial deeds and paperwork as a result of a gentleman's wager on a game of cards. It will take but a moment to retrieve them from the study.
- ✤ MILVOY OLLUM, the priest who is about to perform the rites, is due 1 gold crown for his service.
- PETRICE SEVOY, the esteemed artist, is completing a portrait of Lord Scurlock and lacks only the final payment of 2 crowns to deliver it.

IN ADDITION — Lord Scurlock's half-brother, Alward, is snooping about the house, looking to claim anything that looks valuable. "My brother would have wanted me to have this," he mumbles.

WHO WILL THEY PAY? WHO DECIDES?

WHAT ENTANGLEMENTS REMAIN FROM LORD SCURLOCK'S NEFARIOUS LIFE, AND WHO WILL TURN THEM TO THEIR ADVANTAGE?









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Helping: If your character is in a position to help another character, you can give them a die from your pool. Say what your character does to help. The outcome of the roll affects both of you.

Refreshment scenes can be flashbacks, too.

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SCURLOCK MANOR

WITH SUBTERRANEAN CANAL DOCK AND BARRED CANAL DOORWAY WITH CURIOUS MARKINGS

Curiosities Abound

Lord Scurlock collected a vast array of trinkets, oddities, books, maps, and artwork, hidden away in various secret places. When the players ransack the manor, roll on the following lists to determine what they find and what it may be worth to an interested party, if one exists.

Worth

You Find

1.A collection of	1 occult	1 writing(s).	1.Half a crown.
2.A pristine	2. ancient	2. maps(s).	2. 1 gold crown.
3.A faded and worn	3. criminal	3. artwork.	3. 2 gold crowns.
4.An inscrutable	4. arcane	4. device(s).	4. 3 gold crowns.
5.A ruined	5 mechanist	5. weapon(s).	5. 4 gold crowns.
6.A strangely modified	6. sentimental	6. trinket(s).	6. 18 gold crowns.

The dusty, painstaking search leaves you: [Mark a condition].

PERHAPS [NPC on relationship map] WOULD BE INTERESTED IN THE ITEM.

A Note to the $\ensuremath{\mathsf{GM}}$

Each of these items was personally meaningful to Lord Scurlock. When an item is found, describe a distinctive feature and, if you feel the mood hit you, was briefly about a moment from the PC's childhood when they observed him acquiring, using, or cherishing it.



Getting Started

STARTING QUESTIONS

This Chapter is designed as a multi-session campaign. The PCs have a lot of tangled backstory to unravel regarding their strange father and the fallout from his nefarious entanglements. Below, there's a questionnaire for the players to help them establish their relationship to their father, using the secrets he confided to them and why they all now want to stay in the city and deal with the fallout.

When the players answer the questions, they may choose similar options. They might want to introduce conflicting confessions from their father or supply different details regarding the same issue.

GM, put the relationship map out on the table for everyone to see during the Q&A. Players are free to modify, detail, or revise the map in any way to suit their answers, but there's no guarantee that the secrets are always fully accurate or even true at all. You'll discover that in play.

Which secret did Lord Scurlock confide in you (possibly while drunk or drugged)? choose one.

Arras

- A detail regarding the conspiracy with Holpine and the city treasury.
- A detail regarding Baston's strange heritage.
- A confession regarding Jedmund's complicity in his various conspiracies and crimes.

Baston

- A detail regarding the conspiracy with Holpine and the city treasury.
- A detail regarding his association with the demon Setarra.
- A confession of love for the painter Anika Wyeth, Arras's secret mother.

Tertius

- A detail regarding Baston's strange heritage.
- A detail regarding his association with the demon Setarra.
- A confession of love for Anika Wyeth, Arras's unknown mother.

Jedmund

- □ A detail regarding Baston's strange heritage.
- □ The secret access method to his occult lair in the canals.
- A confession of love for the street thief, Quess, Tertius's unknown mother.

Which desire drives you to take up residence at the manor now? Choose one or two.

Arras

- A desire for magical secrets and the power of the "family demon," Setarra.
- A desire for status and recognition as the rightful heir of the Scurlock name.
- A desire for wealth, extracted from the spiderweb of Lord Scurlock's conspiracies.

NOTES

Baston

- A desire for occult secrets, clues to ancient treasures scattered across the wild blue.
- A desire for status and recognition as the rightful heir of the Scurlock name.
- A desire for wealth, extracted from the spiderweb of Lord Scurlock's conspiracies.

Tertius

- A desire to exploit Lord Scurlock's underworld connections, leveraged to outfit a criminal enterprise.
- A desire for status and recognition as the rightful heir of the Scurlock name
- A desire for wealth, extracted from the spiderweb of Lord Scurlock's conspiracies.

Jedmund

- A desire to find the best heir for the Scurlock name and ensure it sheds its tainted image.
- A desire for Scurlock's children to achieve their dreams and be happy.
- A desire to for wealth, extracted from the spiderweb of Lord Scurlock's conspiracies, enough to finally retire from the servant's life.

RUNNING THE GAME

Tips, tricks, and advice for the GM

LISTEN & ASK QUESTIONS, DON'T PLAN

When you're the GM, don't try to "direct" the action or plan out what will happen. Instead, ask questions—lots and lots and make them pointed toward the things you're interested in. Like, say Tertius threatens Arras, So I ask Jedmund's player, "How do you react to that? Is that okay with you?" And then, when it's totally not okay, "What do you say? What do you do?" and then "Baston, what are you doing? Everyone is distracted, do you want to seize the opportunity to do something?" A few more leading questions like that and everyone is yelling at each other and rolling dice to impose their will.

Also ask questions like:

"You can probably just pull the door off its hinges with your automaton strength, huh?"

"That sounds like a bold plan. What's the first step?"

"The two of you have a quiet moment here in the library. What do you say to each other?"

"Do you know anything about Demons? What are they like? Have any of you ever seen a real one before this?"

Keep that going at a steady pace and the game flies along pretty well.

Part of the job of the GM is *listening* to what the players say, catching it, turning it around, and seeing if there's anything else to be done with it.

The GM's jobs: listen and reincorporate, play NPCs with gusto, look for interesting obstacles, impose conditions as events warrant (especially when a roll goes badly), call for refreshment scenes (especially flashbacks).

Long-Term Play

Add these options for advancement as you play the long-term series:

- Add a new **Trait** (if you have a teacher or have learned by doing).
- Add a new [locked] Tag that you're in the process of learning.
- Create your Character anew if you've taken on a new identity or role. Keep the same number of identities, traits, and tags, retaining any that you carry forward into your new life and changing the rest.

In addition, the players will likely be interested in this special ability:

[LORD OR LADY]: You are the head of a noble house, with all the rights and privileges owed to you. You have a seat on the Governor's council. You may make arrests and prosecute law. You get +1d when your status helps you.

Only one member of House Scurlock may hold that ability at a time.

For a very long-term game, with much slower character advancement, assess XP from Keys at the end of each session, instead of each scene (each Key may be counted once per session). This is will limit XP to a max of 6 per session, and advancement will be much more gradual.

Setarra as a PC

Events may conspire to make Setarra a viable PC (via possession or other means). You'll find her character sheet in Chapter II of the Tales from the Wild Blue Yonder, *Magister Lor*. The PDF is here:

http://onesevendesign.com/ladyblackbird/magister_lor.pdf

Say Yes, Look For the Obstacles

By default, characters can accomplish anything covered by their traits. They're competent and effective people, in other words. It's no fun to call for a roll when there's no interesting obstacle or danger in the way. Just say yes to the action, listen, and ask questions as usual. But also, be on the look out for the opportunity to create obstacles as the action develops. Because you're asking leading questions and listening closely, they'll be all over the place, so it won't be too hard to spot them.

Obstacles can be other characters, situations (explosions, falling, chases, escapes) or anything else you can imagine.

If a character tries something not covered by their traits, that's an obstacle right there: lack of experience and training. Lots of fun things can go wrong when you don't know what you're doing! Also, players will sometimes try things they're bad at so they can fail and add dice to their pool. It's a fine move for them and it gives you the chance to create more trouble, so everyone wins.

Conditions

A condition constrains what the player should say about their character. It's a cue to tell the GM and players to pay attention to that thing and use it as material for the developing fiction. Gaming is just us saying stuff to each other, right? So you're like, "What do I say now?" and you look down and go, "Oh, I'm angry. Right. No, in fact I won't listen to reason!"

For the GM, the conditions can create opportunities or give permissions. "You're Shaken, right? While you're trying to recover your wits, Tertius, Arras has time to act. What do you do, Arras?" Sometimes a condition will become an Obstacle in its own right, calling for a roll to deal with it.

03

AN EXAMPLE OF GATHERING & ROLLING DICE

Arras decides to cast a spell of radiant flame to burn Kudger's black lotus supply right in from of his stupid face. This sounds like an obstacle, namely, can Arras draw that much power and do it before Kudger's goons can interfere?

Shannon, Arras's player, gathers up some dice. First, one die for an **identity**: Sorcerer. Then, she can add a die for **each trait** that applies. Both Arcane and Adept apply here, so that's two more dice. Finally, she can add a die for **each tag** that applies under **one** of the traits. She adds Attack and Radiant Flame (under Adept) for two more dice.

She has 5 dice. She decides to add three dice from her **pool**, for 8 dice total. She rolls all the dice and counts the even results. She has 3 even numbers showing, which is a **great** result! The GM says that Arras ignites the paper-wrapped bricks of black lotus resin before anyone can blink an eye.

Dedicated to Cameo Wood and Paul Tevis

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