

NOCTURNE IN THE CITY OF LIGHTS



SPACE

1889

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An Adventure by Andrew Peregrine

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SKU: CWP18900P



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Nocturne in the City of Lights

An adventure for Space: 1889 by Andrew Peregrine

Nations: All, Martians and Venusians are also possible.

Archetypes: Especially Academics, Celebrities, Moneymen, Reporters; less suitable for Criminals.

Introduction

This adventure is designed to suit almost any group of characters, but assumes the player characters will have a decent selection of skills and abilities between them. As it is set in Paris, all that is really required of them is the ability to get to Paris! They might be there on holiday (e.g. visiting the World Fair currently held here) or as natives of the 'city of lights'.

As this adventure takes place on Earth, the player characters will not need to have access to an ether flyer or take a journey across space. However, they need not all be human and actually having a Martian in the group might be very helpful.

Martians on Earth

As humanity colonized the Solar System, so too did many extra-terrestrials choose to make a life on Earth. Like those who come to Europe from the Dark Continent or India, Martians have joined other immigrants hoping to find wealth and work in the rich city centers. Unfortunately they often end up like any other immigrant, poor and ignored, eking out a day to day existence in the darker parts of a city a million miles from their home.

This is not the case for all Martians though, and a lucky few manage to make a name for themselves with specialist skills and abilities that make them exotic and exciting to the wealthier patrons of humanity. One such person is Alia, a Martian singer whose beauty and talent have made her a celebrated opera singer. Her voice is both captivating and haunting and has brought a new style to some of the most renowned operas. She has become the toast of Paris, and anyone who wishes to take part in fashionable dinner conversation has to have experienced her perform at least once.

Currently, Alia is performing *Lakmé* (by Léo Delibes) at the world famous Paris Opera House. Unfortunately, she has become a target for several groups that are looking to kidnap her. For the player characters, a night at the opera is going to get very complicated indeed.



The Language of Love

If your characters all come from Britain or America you may have an additional problem with an adventure set in Paris: that of no one speaking French. It is quite possible some of your player characters will be linguistically adept. But given the choice between more gun skills or a foreign language, plenty of players choose the former. While an understanding of French was considered a mark of civility among the gentry, plenty of bigoted Englishmen thought that if you shouted loud enough everyone understood English (and that those who didn't were just being difficult!). So what can the Gamemaster do about this?

Play Hardball: You can insist that if they don't speak French they can't understand it, period. It is only fair to warn them so they have the option of buying language skills, but if they choose not to then that is their problem. The difficulty isn't insurmountable though. Given Europeans are far better at learning languages than the British, most NPCs will have a smattering of English that will allow the player characters to communicate with them. However, if they overhear two NPCs speaking clandestinely the chances are they won't be able to understand them.

Go Soft: The easiest option is to just ignore the language problem completely. Just assume that somehow everyone understands each other. NPCs are using English most of the time or the player characters somehow get the gist. In this game, language is simply English with a different accent. If you do choose this option, you should also make it clear from the start, otherwise players who did spend their skill points on languages will be justifiably upset.

The Middle Ground: You can assume all the player characters (especially ladies and upper class characters) have a smattering of French, just enough to get by (those who have spent points on the skill might be considered fluent). This is not too unusual as speaking French was a mark of good breeding for the wealthy and privileged. In this case they can understand all the day to day conversations. However, the Gamemaster has the option of simply telling them sometimes that they can't understand certain things they hear. The characters might be talking too fast, using an odd accent, or just speaking outside the vocabulary of the listener. This essentially means the Gamemaster is going soft but can ensure the players only understand what he wants them to understand.

Background for the Gamemaster

The Martian opera singer Alia has caught the attention of two groups, both of which are looking to abduct her for their own nefarious schemes. The first group call themselves '**Les Patriotes de la Terre**' (or 'The Terran Patriots'; for more information see p. 10) and believe non-humans should stay away from Earth, although they have no issue with humans taking control of other planets! They want to use Alia to publicize their cause by abducting her, gaining media attention, and executing her as a warning to other Martians. Les Patriotes de la Terre are on the whole intellectually challenged, racist thugs, but they are dangerous nevertheless. Luckily their plans are never especially complicated.

The other group interested in Alia has a more complicated and intelligent plan. They are called **L'Agence** ('The Agency'; for more information see p. 27), and specialize in acquiring black market property for the wealthy. They are often contacted through 'someone who knows someone', being recommended across high society by word of mouth. Their work is simple: you ask them to get you something, and they will acquire it for you. The more difficult, the higher the price, but nothing is impossible. The only reason the Mona Lisa remains in the Louvre is because no one has yet decided they can afford L'Agence's fee for 'acquiring' it.

L'Agence is a very secretive and shadowy organization, and they will steal anything and anybody for their clients. In this case they have been retained by the renowned Martian antiquities collector Seigneur *Antoine DuFort*. This is not the first time DuFort has used their services, but this time he requested not some precious artifact, but Alia herself! DuFort wants her as his personal songbird and has built a well-appointed prison for her on his estate.

Both organizations make kidnapping attempts on the same day, but L'Agence is successful. They take Alia to the catacombs under Paris, using its tunnels to ferry their 'acquisitions' across the city. Here they intend to keep Alia until the search for her calms down, at which point she can be 'delivered'. Unfortunately, while Les Patriotes de la Terre fail to kidnap Alia, they decide to announce that they have her anyway. It garners them the attention they desire, but also makes DuFort become concerned L'Agence has failed him. He demands they deliver Alia right away, throwing a spanner into their carefully constructed plans.

The player characters get involved in the hunt for Alia at the behest of her manager, and possibly her parents. After following the trail of Les Patriotes de la Terre, they realize they do not have her after all. With the help of a mysterious denizen of the Opera House, they track her to the catacombs where they face the sinister Agency. However, Alia has already been taken to DuFort's estate, granting an opportunity to not only rescue Alia but expose DuFort for the cur he is.

Act I - Divas and Dramatics



The adventure begins with the player characters enjoying Paris in the summer. It is quite possible they have come over to see the 'Exposition Universelle' a great exhibition which is being put on in Paris from May to October this year. For this grand celebration and exhibition, a new tower by the renowned engineer Gustave Eiffel has been constructed, to much controversy. The artistic community considers this new 'Eiffel Tower' a monstrous metal horror that now blights a beautiful elegant city with its ugly steel and iron shadow.

Even without visiting the exhibition (which features all manner of attractions and displays) there is the glory of Paris itself. The player characters might visit the Louvre museum and art gallery to see the Mona Lisa, drink tea in the shadow of Notre Dame Cathedral or socialize in the cafés and parks. Paris is full of theatres, museums and restaurants, and has several parks where the wealthy go for a walk or carriage ride. Cafés can be found everywhere, serving the same purpose as pubs and bars but with a little more refinement. Many offer outside tables which are very crowded in the summer. In the evening, many Parisians partake of more exotic delights such as absinthe and risqué dance shows. For more ideas on what to do while in Paris see *Appendix 3*, p. 26.

The Eiffel tower is also open to the public, but the queues are quite long so many go simply to marvel at the structure. The only place the Gamemaster should discourage them from visiting quite yet is the Grand Opera House as they will soon get a chance to visit this historical theatre.

Scene 1 - Runaway Carriage

While out and about enjoying Paris, the player characters hear a crash and a scream from further down the street. If they look to the disturbance they see a well-appointed, driver-less carriage powering down the road towards them. The two horses pulling the vehicle have a wild look of terror in their eyes and are obviously panicked. If the coach were of less sturdy construction it would have shattered. As it is, the carriage is in danger of overturning and possibly crushing or killing those inside. From within, the screams of a woman should underline the need for the player characters to do something!

Stopping the carriage should prove difficult but not impossible. A dramatic leap onto the horses or into the driving seat might allow someone to bring the horses under control. This requires an Acrobatics or Athletics test (Difficulty 2). Should no character succeed in stopping the carriage (or if none of them even tries) a policeman will intervene courageously. (In this case, however, the Gamemaster might have to adjust the following first encounter with Alia and her agent accordingly.) If they stop the carriage, they find the occupant is an attractive Martian woman who is extremely grateful for their help. She introduces herself as the opera singer known as *Alia*. Even the least artistic player character will recognize the name.

If the player characters ask what happened, she will tell them it all occurred very quickly. She was on her way to a rehearsal at the Opera House when a ruffian attempted to hold up the coach and demanded she and her driver disembark. As she was about to comply and rejoin her driver at the foot of the coach, the ruffian fired his gun to underline his impatience. At which point her horses were spooked and set off at a panic. In the confusion the ruffian made a hasty retreat and is long gone by now. Alia caught little of his intensions, and he wore a scarf across his face to hide his identity. However, he was dressed in working class clothing and muttered some rather derogatory terms about Martians that Alia does not care to repeat.

After a few moments Alia's patron, *Marcel Shiveryn*, catches up with the group. He got out of the coach first and is very glad Alia is safe. As thanks for her rescue Alia offers the player characters the use of a box at the theatre this evening to see her perform. Shiveryn suggests they check with the management first but Alia dismisses his reservations. She tells them she will see to it personally and adds that the player characters should come and meet her after the show when she might take them out to dinner afterwards.

It is possible the player characters won't be interested, but at this point the Gamemaster should underline how famous Alia is. The Opera House is booked solid months in advance and the opportunity to attend the performance as her guests will be a great honor.

Scene 2 - A Night at the Opera

Allow the player characters to do as they like for the rest of the day, until the performance at 7:30pm that evening. If they attend the Opera House and mention their names at the box office, they will be escorted personally to a private box in the grand circle. This box is reserved for guests of the cast and theatre management, so it offers a very good view of the stage. Unlike many of the other boxes, it is for seeing the performance rather than for others to see you are attending the theatre! An usher will also be assigned to see to the player characters' needs and will provide

them with whatever refreshments they require, beginning with champagne, courtesy of Alia.

The performance that evening is 'Lakmé' a reasonably new three act opera by the composer Léo Delibes (written in 1882). While the Opera is usually set in India, the current production is set instead on Mars. Alia plays the title role of the daughter of a High Priest of the Canal Folk. In this tragic tale, Lakmé falls in love with a British soldier, a love which both their cultures refuse to allow. The soldier is forced to remember his duty and return to his regiment and Lakmé commits suicide, poisoning herself rather than living without him. The opera has two especially well know arias, the Flower Duet in Act 1 (now renowned as a British Airways advert!) and the Bell Song in Act 2. As you might imagine, Alia is an incredible performer, and the haunting beauty of her voice reduces most of the house to tears.

During the two intervals, the player characters will be brought more champagne and be allowed into the more exclusive bar where several wealthy patrons of the arts are in attendance. Conversation is full of enthusiasm for Alia's performance. Several notable celebrities, the theatre manager and Alia's manager and entourage are also in attendance. Marcel Shiveryn will be there and will happily introduce the player characters to anyone. The following are a few NPCs the player characters might meet. Should they get too involved in conversation, a bell will be rung to call the audience back for the next part of the performance.

- **M. Alphonse Delière and his wife Claudette:** Very wealthy opera lovers who donate substantial amounts to the theatre. This is the fourth time they have seen Alia perform and they are her biggest fans. M. Delière made his money running a shipping business.

- **M. Patrice Nouriant and his sister Louise:** This is the couple the player characters want to avoid. They are wealthy, but rising middle class and only go to the opera because being seen to do so is fashionable. Patrice is a businessman who sells clothing, and might be a useful contact for any ladies. However, he is over opinionated about almost everything. Keen to be seen as a man of wisdom, he offers his thoughts on any conversation he overhears. His sister Louise is actually quite knowledgeable about theatre, but as she is getting older she is more interested in finding a husband. She might get very close to any dashing or highly placed player character.

- **M. Thierry Guillory and his wife Danielle:** M. Guillory is a lovable fellow who has little idea what is going on in the opera but enjoys the spectacle. He is actually accompanying his wife, who is a celebrated opera critic. She will rightly get rather annoyed at characters who don't know who she is and assume her husband is more important than she is. What has also put Danielle in a bad mood is that she really likes the opera and Alia's performance in particular. She has made a name as a harsh critic and savaged a recent production of the same opera (without Alia in it). To praise this one will be to potentially backtrack on what she said of the other production. So she is looking for other people's opinions to try and make a decision about what to write tomorrow.

- **Edgar Degas (Painter - 1834-1917):** The celebrated Impressionist Degas is in attendance. Having made a career of painting ballerinas as well as Parisian scenes, he is looking to secure a commission to paint Alia. Unfortunately, he has something of an 'artistic temperament' and can be very argumentative. He is especially annoyed at the recent breakup (in 1886) of the 'brotherhood of impressionists' that he put together. He is not shy about expressing his loathing for the word 'impressionist'.

- **Marcel Shiveryny (Alia's manager):**

Marcel discovered Alia when she was singing after dinner at a gala on Mars. He recognized her talent and risked everything he had to give her the proper training and secure performances for her. It is only now that he is reaping the rewards of that investment, but it should be clear to the player characters that should anything happen to Alia (who he treats like a daughter) he would quickly be reduced to penury.

- **Eugène Ritt (1817-1898) and Pedro Gailhard (1848-1918) – Theatre Managers:**

The opera house is run by two managers who took over in 1884. Pedro Gailhard is a retired opera singer himself and will effusively praise Alia's performance to anyone who listens. He may also 'treat' the gathering to a rendition of some of his favorite works.

- **Éloïse Chagal (Theatre Secretary):**

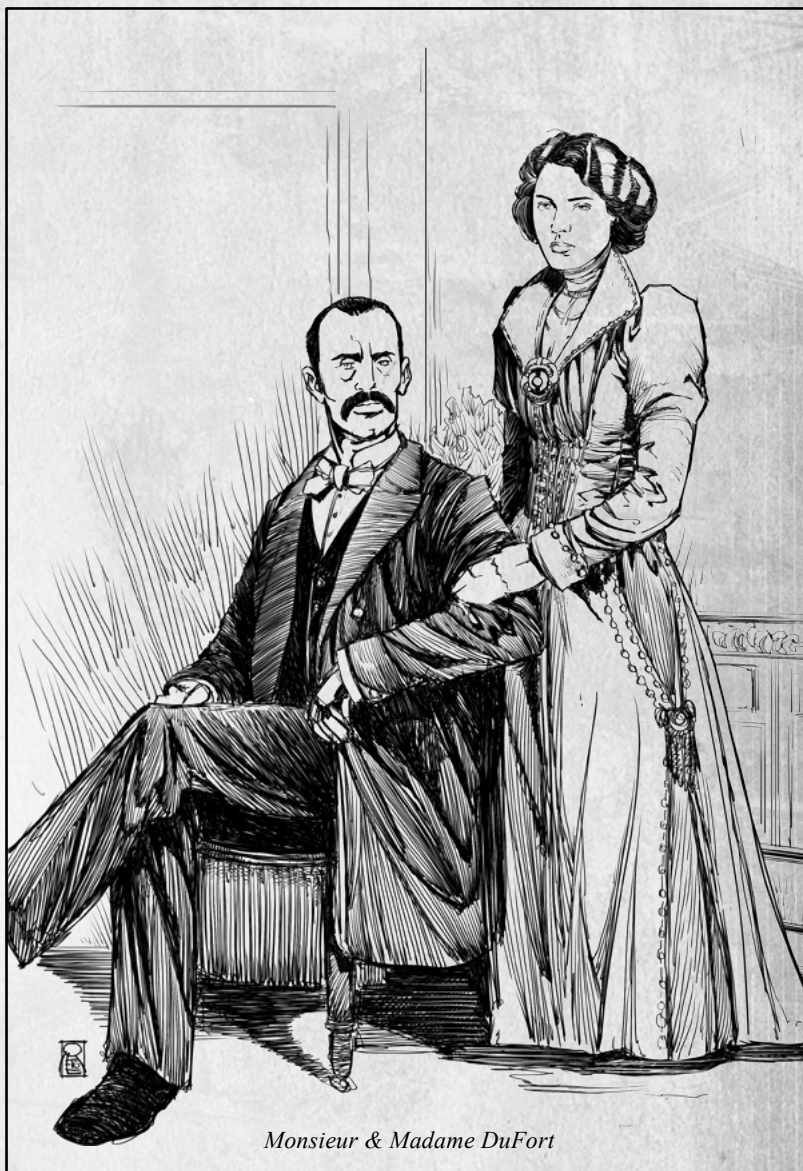
While Ritt and Gailhard manage the theatre; its day to day operations are taken care of by Mlle Chagal. In her younger days she worked as a high class courtesan, and counts several powerful men as contacts. As her beauty declined, she retired and took up the position she now has in the theatre. Éloïse is around 40 years old and while a little past her prime, is an elegant and intelligent woman. She is also a member of L' Agence and has facilitated most of the plan to kidnap Alia. She is interested in talking to the player characters to discover if they are going to make things difficult. But she will avoid showing her hand and excuse herself (declaring she must return to work) if they ask too many questions.

- **Seigneur Antoine DuFort and his wife Amélie:**

While the players won't know it yet, Antoine is the villain of the piece. He has basically come to inspect the merchandise he has ordered. Perceptive PCs may notice he is acting like a host this evening, even though he is a guest. Antoine and Amélie are a charming noble couple, who don't need to make much effort in society as they are remarkably wealthy with an old family name. They will talk to the PCs about Martian artifacts, of which they are very knowledgeable, and proudly mention some of their collection is on display at the Exposition.

Scene 3 - The Lady Vanishes

At the end of the performance, the player characters are invited to remain in the VIP room so they might meet Alia again. If they decline, Marcel Shiveryny will insist, saying she very much wants to thank them again and hear what they thought of the production. Then she intends to take them to a late supper. Usually, Alia greets her guests in costume, but does take a while to remove her stage make up and freshen up before seeing guests. However, nearly half an hour passes and there is no sign of her. As the guests begin to speculate as to her whereabouts, an usher approaches the



Monsieur & Madame DuFort

player characters and asks them to follow him. The usher takes them backstage to Alia's dressing room where they find Marcel and the theatre managers. The room is in considerable disarray and Alia is nowhere to be found!

The managers have called the police, but Shiveryny is very worried the potential scandal might affect Alia's career (and his percentage). He refuses to believe she might have been abducted and suggests she is prone to occasional 'artistic fugues' and may have caused the breakages before running off. The managers are not convinced and, being concerned for their own theatre's reputation, have called the police and insisted the staff remain to be interviewed. However, the audience is long gone and the waiting VIPs are all too important to be detained without more scandal.

The player characters have been summoned in the hope they might help, as they proved so useful earlier in the day. Before the police arrive, they have a few moments to investigate the crime scene. The Gamemaster should allow them to interview Shiveryny and the managers and make a few *Perception* or *Investigation* rolls to notice the following clues:

- The lock on the dressing room door has been forced, as if someone shouldered the door open. (*Difficulty 1*)

• The dressing room window has been smashed, but since no pieces are inside the room, it must have been broken from the inside. (*Difficulty 2*)

• A difficult *Perception* or *Investigation* roll will allow a player character to notice two wheel tracks leading out of the room. It may have been made by a two-wheeled trolley, which unless it was rolled back exactly on its previous tracks was heavier either on the way in or the way out as there is only one set of tracks. As the corridor floor is wooden rather than carpeted, the tracks vanish once they reach the corridor. (*Difficulty 4*)

• Several vases of flowers and ornaments have been broken, which initially suggests a struggle. However, a further perception roll might reveal the damage seems more consistent with a violent search. (*Difficulty 3*)

• On one of the bookshelves, several books have been thrown off, but one shelf remains untouched. This shelf is filled with a row of false books designed to disguise a mechanism. It is actually a secret door (see 'The Phantom' in **Act II**, p. 12). (*Difficulty 5*)

• Observant characters might detect a few flakes of dried mud on the carpet. The mud is an odd slightly burgundy color but otherwise normal. It has actually flaked off Paul and Gérard's boots from the catacombs. (*Difficulty 3*)

Traces in the mud

The reddish mud in Alia's dressing room, which might seem inconspicuous at first glance, will cross the player characters' path again in the course of this adventure. Like a scavenger hunt, these mud flakes can eventually lead them to the crucial hints. Should your players ignore the mud during their first investigation, we advise you to call their attention to it in this scene (e.g. through the remarks of an observant policeman), so they can recognize the peculiar mud crumbs in later scenes of the adventure.

What really happened

There have actually been two abduction attempts tonight. One was carried out flawlessly; the other was a complete botch from start to finish. L'Agence has been planning Alia's abduction for quite some time. They intended to carry it out later on but the attack on Alia this morning convinced them to move their plans forward.

Éloïse Chagal has seen to it that two new stage crew and a dresser joined the company over the last few months to reinforce the busy evening shift. As Alia returned to her dressing room, she was given a drink of water by her dresser Marie who is one of the abductors. The drink contained a powerful sedative and Alia was unconscious in moments. The two stage crew (*Phillipe* and *Gérard*) arrived with a large trunk just afterwards into which they placed Alia. They then brought the trunk down to the stage door where it was collected by more of L'Agence disguised as laundry deliverymen. As far as the stage door keeper knows, the trunk

was full of costumes that required specialist overnight cleaning for the next show—although he did find it odd that there were two such trunk collections that night. After the abduction was carried out, the dresser and stage crew joined the rest of the staff cleaning up after the show.

So far so good. Unfortunately, two more crew (*Paul* and *Michelle*) had joined the theatre recently, both members of Les Patriotes de la Terre. With one of their number having failed to kill Alia this morning by shooting her, plan B went into action: to capture her and cause a media sensation another way (they considered shooting her on stage but can't afford a ticket close enough to guarantee a hit). As L'Agence operatives were taking the trunk downstairs, Paul and Michelle were going up to Alia's dressing room with a more direct plan (in fact they passed each other on the stairs).

They lost no time breaking into the dressing room, which Marie the dresser had locked when she left it. Finding Alia gone, they decided she might be hiding and searched the room for her, breaking several items in their haste. With time not on their side and no sign of Alia, they decided to break the window to make it look as if intruders had broken in, forgetting the glass fragments would prove otherwise. Then they made a run for it. The stage door keeper remembers seeing them leave after the show rather hurriedly.

Scene 4 - Interviewing the Staff

The police will conduct interviews with the remaining theatre staff. The player characters might insist on sitting in if they get the managers on their side. But they will have more luck conducting their own interviews with the staff as they all wait to be seen. Many of the staff are muttering that it was 'the Phantom' that must have taken her. Anyone they ask will be able to tell the PCs the general rumors about the mysterious Phantom (see later). The staff come from every area of the theatre. Actors, front of house staff (ushers), backstage staff (crew, props masters, wardrobe assistants, stage management) and even a few cleaning and housekeeping staff.

Marie's Testimony

They will quickly be led to Marie, Alia's dresser. Marie will insist she was waiting as usual in Alia's dressing room to help remove her wig and help her get changed. However she will say that strangely Alia dismissed her upon entering the room, insisting she would be fine on her own. She returned only a few minutes later to put her costume into a trunk for washing but Alia wasn't there. She thought Alia had gone early to meet the guests in the VIP room so thought nothing of it. Phillipe and Gérard arrived moments later to take the trunk downstairs. Having completed her duties for Alia she returned to the wardrobe department to help with the washing of the other costumes. While the costumes are not always washed, all the undergarments have to be washed overnight so they are dry for the next show.

Phillipe's and Gerard's Testimony

If the player characters follow up on the 'costume trunk' they will be led to Phillipe and Gérard. Their tale is simple. The costumes are often sent for cleaning so they went up to collect the trunk. It was a heavy box to bring down several flights of stairs, but there are heavier jobs needing doing after the show so they volunteered.

They saw Marie and will back up her story but don't recall seeing anything unusual. Although they may say they saw two other crew members (Paul and Michelle) pass them on the stairs looking 'a bit shifty'. Marie, Phillipe and Gérard will all maintain their role for the next week in case their cover identities in the theatre are useful. As there is no evidence against them, making a run for it might create more suspicion.

Where to next?

It is at this point that the player characters should decide what path they are going to investigate. Some trails will go cold if they don't follow them but they should generally be able to follow several lines of inquiry. However, the player characters should be reminded that the performance ends at 11:00pm, leaving little of the day left. Luckily, this is Paris, and there are plenty of late night cafés open where they can discuss the next course of action.

If they decide not to do anything, M. Shiveryn may engage their services. He is now very concerned about Alia's safety. He is also worried about what he will say to her parents who are arriving to see her tomorrow.

- The PCs may be suspicious of Marie, Phillipe and Gérard and either follow them or try and interrogate them further.
- They might talk to the stage door keeper about the laundry collection.
- A more obvious lead is to try and find the missing crew members, Paul and Michelle.
- Investigating the strange bookshelf, the PCs may discover a secret door, and learn more about the mysterious 'Phantom'.
- The mud on the carpet is distinct enough to be worth investigating. There are many experts to be found at the Exposition, one of whom might be able to help.
- Alia's parents arrive tomorrow, maybe it is worth meeting them in case someone targets them as well.
- After meeting at the opera, the PCs may choose to ask Seigneur DuFort's opinion on the abduction as he and his wife are expert collectors of Martian artifacts.

Act II - Investigations

This Act might go in several different directions depending on what the player characters decide to investigate, in what order they do so, and where each clue leads. The Gamemaster should remind them that it is perfectly reasonable to follow whatever clues they have to hand, or to return to an older clue if they reach a dead end. They may be able to follow some of these clues that very night; others however will have to wait until the next day, since they require certain events to happen first (like for example the stealing of DuFort's statue or the arrival of Alia's parents—see the Main Event Outline on this page). But otherwise they may have to wait until the morning to begin their investigation. In which case they may be aware Les Patriotes de la Terre have claimed responsibility.

Main Event Outline

While this adventure allows the player characters to investigate in a very freeform way, some events are time sensitive. To help the Gamemaster keep track, here is a quick listing of when certain events happen and when the investigations described in *Act II - Investigations* can be undertaken.

Day 1

Morning

- The PCs stop Alia's runaway carriage and rescue her.

Evening

- Alia's performance of *Lakmé* and her abduction

Night

- Most characters return home and most businesses are closed apart from the laundry and some cafés.
- A Martian statue is stolen from the Exposition at gunpoint
- Paul and Michelle get drunk in a café

Possible investigations: Investigations 1 (p. 10), 2 (p. 10), 3 (p. 10), and 5 (p. 12)

Day 2

Morning

- Les Patriotes de la Terre claim they abducted Alia and the news appears in the papers.
- The police will find the abandoned stolen laundry horse-drawn cart.
- DuFort demands L'Agence delivers Alia to him, and is shown the catacombs to prove they have her.

Possible investigations: Investigations 1 (p. 10), 2 (p. 10), 3 (p. 10), 4 (p. 11), and 5 (p. 12)

Afternoon

- Paul and Michelle wake up in prison.
- DuFort visits the Exposition after hearing his statue is stolen.
- Alia's parents arrive at the Paris spaceport and are attacked.

Possible investigations: Investigations 1 (p. 10), 2 (p. 10), 3 (p. 10), 4 (p. 11), 5 (p. 12), 6 (p. 13), and 7 (p. 14)

Evening

- Alia is brought from the catacombs to the DuFort estate.

Possible investigations: Investigations 1 (p. 10), 2 (p. 10), 3 (p. 10), 4 (p. 11), 5 (p. 12), 6 (p. 13), and 7 (p. 14)

Day 3

Evening

- DuFort hosts a party and shows Alia to a selected few of his guests.

Investigation 1 - Marie, Phillipe and Gerard

Even if the PCs are suspicious of the three Agency operatives, they will be hard to unmask. Having done their part of the operation, their orders are to lie low for a week at least. They will go to work, visit the pub with friends and generally go about their normal business. They won't go near the catacombs or other Agency people.

If the player characters search their homes (each has a small apartment not far from the theatre in a boarding house) they won't find anything of importance. Clever PCs will notice that actually this itself is suspicious, as there are no family photographs or personal items from their childhood (an *Intelligence* x2 or *Investigation* roll with *Difficulty* 4). However, rather than attack the PCs, should the operatives find their places have been searched, they will call the police.

However, if the PCs prove persistent L'Agence might decide they need to be removed. The three agents will be ordered to kill them and make it look like an accident if possible. If such an encounter goes badly for the operatives, they might be interrogated. However, all they know is that the 'people they work for' are dangerous and have a hideout in the catacombs.

Investigation 2 - The Laundry

While the Stage Door keeper (an old and rather cantankerous man called Gaspard) thought it quite usual for a trunk of costumes to be washed overnight, it was unusual for two such trunks to be sent separately. Because the cotton underwear and shirts of the actors get very sweaty during the show, the wardrobe department washes those nightly. However, some of the coats, dresses and jackets need more specialized care and hard work so they are sent away to ease the burden on the wardrobe department. This is especially true of the costumes for the leads, as they need to look good for the next performance.

It takes quite a while for these costumes to be gathered for collection at the end of the show. So the stage door keeper was surprised when Phillipe and Gérard brought down a trunk earlier than usual. It was collected by horse-drawn cart from the usual firm of cleaners, but the stage door keeper didn't recognize any of them. He was doubly surprised when another trunk was brought down at the usual time and collected by the usual men. They knew nothing of the previous delivery.

The laundry is not far away and works overnight to get everything clean and dry for the afternoon. They work for several theatres as well as private citizens. The managers are not on the premises after dark, so only the most persistent, charming or skilled bribers will convince the night foreman to give them a tour. His name is Pierre, and he is effectively just a security guard. The person they really want to talk to is Nathalie, who is in charge of the small army of women doing the washing here. As far as she knows there is nothing especially strange happening. What they received from the theatre was as they expected, it was one trunk, not two.

However, either Pierre or Nathalie will be able to tell the PCs that a week ago there was a theft. A horse-drawn cart was stolen as well as some overalls. On the morning of day 2 the police will find this cart abandoned in the city and return it to the laundry. L'Agence stole the cart for this very plot, and simply dumped it when they no longer needed it. They had the sense not to leave it

near the entrance to the catacombs they were using. They burned the overalls elsewhere and carried the trunk to its destination. If the PCs get to investigate the cart, they will find a little of the strange mud where the driver's shoes would have been, although none on the wheels of the cart or on the horses' hooves.

Investigation 3 - Tracking Paul and Michelle

The most obvious lead to follow is tracking down Paul and Michelle. They have run home to pack their things. But, being idiots, they both decide they need a stiff drink at their local café. Even if the PCs try to hunt them down as quickly as they can, they will be a little behind them. Paul and Michelle left the theatre just before Alia was discovered missing. However, their addresses are on file and as it turns out they share the same boarding house.

So on the one hand they are quite easy to find, while on the other they unfortunately won't be in a state allowing them to answer many questions. Before the PCs can get to them, they drink far too much and get into a fight with some of the other locals. If the PCs are quick, they will come across them lying insensible in the road by a raucous café near their boarding house. If they are much later, they will find the police have arrested them and several others for drunk and disorderly behavior.

However, all is not lost, as they are known rather well in the local area. The staff in the café recognized them as trouble makers from past experience. They will happily tell the PCs Paul and Michelle are rather bigoted on the subject of Martians and indeed other immigrants. They happened to be blaming the troubles of the world on immigrants in general and a group of Irish workers drinking at the next table took issue with their attitude. The café staff were happy to let the Irish teach them a lesson. They will add that Paul and Michelle are not the only Parisians to think this way. Another café a few streets away, called *La Belle Française*, is actually their usual haunt as it has a reputation for playing host to some extremist groups.

La Belle Française

If the player characters decide to take a look for the other café it is easy to find. During the day it looks quite normal, serving a lot of lower class Parisians. As evening draws on the clientele are much the same but the discussions become louder. A lot of nationalistic talk can be heard and as evening draws on, the talk becomes more overt. Eventually it is as if the place has become a mini-rally. Strangers will be asked their views on the subject of immigration and 'France for the French' and if they don't share the bigoted views of the others, they will be asked firmly to leave.

If it is late at night, the café will be closed, although it appears something is going on inside. Behind closed doors Les Patriotes de la Terre meet here as a society. While most have been ranting and talking here during the day, it is in the late evening they actually make plans as a group. Thankfully, while there is no shortage of sympathizers here, only a few attempt acts of violence.

Les Patriotes de la Terre

The café is the main base for Les Patriotes de la Terre. What this group lacks in subtlety, it makes up for in enthusiasm. It is run by



Jean Pennais, who was a mill worker until the managers brought in cheap labor from the desperate immigrant population. He sadly blames the immigrants rather than the managers. Pennais holds court after hours at the café, where the owner is sympathetic and happy to 'help the cause'. Most of the audience brings a 'donation' which is split between the owner and Pennais. This has become his salary, and he realized that the more of a firebrand he is, the more people were willing to support him. Now, he doesn't believe a lot of what he says, and is beginning to worry at the growing violence of the crowd.

Fearing that his position might be in danger if he failed to prove himself a 'man of action', he hatched a plan to kidnap Alia. He didn't think it would work, and has been careful to stay out of getting his hands dirty. So while the player characters may have enough on Paul and Michelle, Pennais is a trickier foe.

The player characters may try and infiltrate the group, and this is not especially difficult. As long as they espouse the group's racist morality they will be welcomed as friends. In fact, they will be invited to hear Pennais speak in the evening. If they don't join the group, they will be able to hear most of Pennais's speeches if they lurk outside the café, as his voice does tend to carry. The ethos of the society is quite simple, Martians need to go home to

Mars and take all their weird items and artifacts with them. It should be clear as well that this group will not fail to stoop to violence to further its aims.

Investigation 4 - The Mysterious Mud

If the players decide to investigate the strange mud, they will be told that several experts can be found demonstrating all manner of scientific advances at the Exposition. While it will be very busy, it is the largest collection of experts in Paris at the moment and should provide the help they need.

Among the stands can be found a geologist called Gabriella Allard. She is quite free to assist the player characters as her stand is not especially interesting in comparison to the others. Another factor is that she is a woman and many people are passing her by, assuming the 'real scientist' is unavailable to explain the exhibit. If the player characters are polite and treat her with the respect she is due, she will be more than happy to help. She is one of the most experienced geologists to be found here, having had to work so much harder to prove herself. In fact, if the player characters prove to be decent folk, she will not only identify the mud but happily act as a guide to the rest of the Exposition and introduce them to anyone else they may wish to meet.

Gabriella will need only moments to identify the mud as it comes from Paris. It is a particular color of clay soil that might usually be found in the catacombs beneath the city. Gabriella will explain

how these catacombs are an extensive ossuary and how they have also become a major tourist attraction.

Break in

As the player characters pass the Exposition manager's office, Seigneur DuFort storms out, almost knocking into them. He demands of the manager who follows him out if 'these are the ones' to which the manager nods and looks pleadingly at the player characters. If they go along with this, or at least do not correct the mistake, DuFort will go on to inform them he will pay a fee of 5,000 francs (the equivalent of around £200) 'and not a centime more!' for the return of his artifact. He will leave without waiting for their answer and make for his carriage in a foul mood. He will dismiss any player character who follows him, telling him to talk to 'that idiot manager' instead.

The manager is Jean-Charles Alphand and he has a problem. He will explain (if the PCs haven't met him) that the nobleman is Seigneur Antoine DuFort, a renowned and wealthy patron of the Exposition and of several museums. He lent the Exposition a Martian statue, which has been on display for several months and

proved a great attraction. M. Alphand can show the player characters photographs of the statue which is around three feet high and features a Martian girl carrying a water pot. Its base and the pot are covered in ancient Martian writing, making it one of the best examples of ancient Martian languages.

The statue was stolen at gunpoint by a group of masked ruffians late last night. DuFort is enraged at the theft of his property, especially as it was on loan. He is threatening to cancel his patronage to several museums as well as the Exposition, which would be a major blow to all of them. M. Alphand will beg the player characters to try and find the statue, and reminds them that DuFort is offering a lot of money.

In fact the statue has been stolen by Les Patriotes de la Terre. They hated to see such an artifact celebrated as part of the Exposition. However, they haven't harmed it, intending to sell it to raise funds. There are few clues, as the gunmen wore scarves to hide their identity, although they were dressed in lower class clothing (like when they attacked Alia's carriage). However, one of them did shout "France for the French, Vive Humanity!" This is a common slogan for Les Patriotes de la Terre. If the PCs haven't already heard it, they will hear it any night they pass the café they gather at. The statue is now being kept at the café, but its size makes it difficult to hide (*Investigation* roll with *Difficulty* 3 or *Perception* roll with *Difficulty* 4—however, the characters will first have to acquire access to *La Belle Française* and secretly look around). Its discovery could lead to several arrests of Les Patriotes de la Terre.

What is also interesting is that when DuFort has gone, the PCs might notice some red mud has flaked off his shoes (*Perception* roll with *Difficulty* 3; for characters, who have already become aware of the mysterious red mud, the *Difficulty* is reduced to 2). He has been to the catacombs in a fury this morning to check L'Agence hasn't been party to the theft (and possibly to check they have Alia if he has read the papers). L'Agence doesn't usually allow this sort of visit, but DuFort is a valuable patron who threatened to spread a rumor across society that L'Agence couldn't be trusted to deliver.

Investigation 5 - The Phantom of the Opera

The Opera House is riddled with secret corridors, and only one man knows them all. There is a rumor among the staff that a ghost haunts the place, which is not unusual for a theatre. This 'Phantom' is a mysterious masked figure who wears evening dress to watch the productions. He is often seen at the side of the stage or among the ropes of the flies, always too far away to catch. He seems to vanish without trace at will as well. Rumors abound about this ghost's history, but popular opinion is that he was a musical genius who was burned to death in a tragic fire.

While the Phantom does exist, the truth is far more mundane. The Phantom is actually one of the theatre's cleaning staff called Henri. He is one of the first to arrive and the last to leave the theatre each day. He keeps to himself and rarely says a word



to anyone. When he joined the theatre, he had no home to go to, but discovered one of the secret doors and made a home for himself in the secret tunnels under the theatre. To make things more comfortable, he took some old costumes and supplies from the props and wardrobe stores. He's been living secretly in the theatre for about ten years now.

Henri created the persona of the Phantom for two reasons. The first is to keep people out of the secret passages. There are a few who know of them, and if they believe them haunted they won't look too far. The other reason is that the Phantom is allowed to watch the shows. Henri loves music and even composes some himself. His work is very good and the pages the Phantom leaves for the musical director have sometimes been used in productions. However, when he used to spend his breaks listening to rehearsals he was berated by the management for shirking his duties. No one has the temerity to tell the Phantom what to do! The secret passages allow him to move around the theatre as he pleases to find the best position, as well as vanish mysteriously.

Henri, as the Phantom, saw the abduction. He was about to speak to Alia in his Phantom guise to express his admiration for her performance. But he discovered her unconscious after the show. Before he could do anything, Phillipe and Gérard came in and took her away in the trunk. He wants to share what he knows, but cannot without revealing how he found out and exposing his identity.

The Passages

The PCs can find out about the mysterious Phantom initially in two ways. They may hear of him when interviewing the staff, or attempt to follow the secret passage from Alia's dressing room (see p. 8). If the PCs attempt to enter the secret passage they may get lost very quickly. The passages come in quite a variety and are extensive. Some are thin passages between walls, covered in grime and dust, others are lost areas of the theatre, spacious and oak paneled. Henri will try and scare the intruders, letting his voice echo down the passages, saying that they should leave or that they should beware the wrath of the Phantom. This is unlikely to dissuade player characters though. So the Gamemaster has two options. Either the player characters find their way to another part of the theatre, or they actually discover the Phantom and his lair (see Meeting the Phantom). If the Gamemaster doesn't want the PCs to meet the Phantom yet, they will follow several mysterious corridors, but whatever they do they find themselves exiting in some forgotten area of the theatre. Henri has locked and hidden the important corridors and unless they make exceptional *Perception* rolls (*Difficulty* 5), they will not find a way to leave the path he has set out for them.

It is possible the PCs will ignore the secret tunnels or get busy with other clues. If they do so, sooner or later Henri will realize he needs to tell them what he knows. They will find a letter inviting them to the Phantom's lair. It is written on headed notepaper (stolen from the manager's office) and tells the player characters to enter the passages alone, and follow the music. This time, the passages will be clearer and music will be heard, guiding them deeper into the labyrinth. Henri has opened and unlocked the right sections to lead them to his domain.

Meeting the Phantom

Eventually the passages give way to cave tunnels and lead to an underground cavern deep under the theatre. There is an underground river here, running through flooded ancient ruins, and a small boat can be seen tied to a jetty. The Phantom is waiting for them as expected, playing on the organ or violin that has led them here. He is dressed in evening wear and a red lined cloak. He wears a white mask that covers his whole face, making him hard to read. The Phantom will warn them to keep their distance and try and maintain his persona as long as possible. Henri wants to tell them what he knows and then make an exit by boat so they can't follow (or at least follow quickly). He will explain rather grandly what he saw in as much detail as he can. Then he will allow the PCs to ask questions before leaving.

It is possible, player characters being as they are, that they will attempt to subdue the Phantom the moment they see him. It will be quite easy to do as Henri is not a fighter. When unmasked he will tell them his story and beg they keep his secrets. He means no harm, he just wants somewhere to live and to be close to the music of the opera.

If the player characters ask about the red mud, Henri can tell them he has seen mud of that color deeper in the tunnels. While he doesn't know it, his tunnels connect to the catacombs and are actually a backdoor into L'Agence's lair. If the player characters tell him what they know of L'Agence, having been unable to pass the flooding in the catacombs (see Investigating the Catacombs, below), Henri will offer to take them down the river.

Investigation 6 - Alia's Parents

If M. Shiveryn doesn't let it slip, one of the Managers may mention that Alia's parents are on their way from Mars to see her perform. Shiveryn plans to meet them at the spaceport to tell them what has happened before they discover it in the papers. The Managers are worried about what to say to them, but clever player characters may realize Alia's parents may be in danger as well. If the PCs agree to meet the parents and explain the situation, M. Shiveryn will happily give the player characters the details of when they are due to arrive. They are coming to Paris by Ether flyer, landing at lunchtime in the spaceport just outside the city.

Unsurprisingly, Les Patriotes de la Terre do intend to make an attack on the spaceport. Their plan, as usual, is not a subtle one. They are sending a few armed men to just attack and make a run for it. They are not expecting much resistance.

The Paris spaceport is on the outskirts of the city. It is a wide open space for ether flyers to land. As only the more affluent classes can afford space travel, the area has been elegantly landscaped. It resembles a garden rather than a parking lot and also contains a terminal building for passengers to wait. The terminal has several seats and complimentary drinks for waiting passengers. There is also a restaurant for those requiring a meal before their flight. Transport links are excellent from here to the center of Paris, making it a simple trip.

The PCs can be furnished with the flight details for Alia's parents' ship. There are not that many flights each day, and the etherflyers land one at a time. Quite often the crew has ample time to disembark and perform several checks or have a meal before setting off again. The flyer company employs several stewards to bring passengers to and from the terminal building across the lawns to the ether flyers. It is during this time Les Patriotes de la Terre intend to strike. They have situated a few men in the bushes near the landing area, who will charge the group of passengers as soon as they see any well-to-do Martians.

Unfortunately for Les Patriotes de la Terre, Alia's parents are not the only Martians on the ship. In fact, a few Canal Martians can afford to take such flights, and many have come to visit the Exposition. This means Les Patriotes de la Terre will make their attack before Alia's parents disembark. They will open fire on any Martian, not being especially worried about shooting too many. Where the player characters are depends on them. They are welcome to wait in the terminal building. However, they can walk with the stewards to meet the ship if they are convincing or offer the right 'consideration' of a few francs. It is not inconceivable they might even pick the same hiding place as Les Patriotes de la Terre! Given that the flyers land in the main field, they will not be allowed to wait there as it is dangerous and makes it hard for the pilots to land. If the player characters have a good look around, they might discover the Patriotes in their hideout on a successful *Perception* roll against *Difficulty* 4.

Les Patriotes de la Terre will gun down two Martian passengers on their first assault, after which all passengers will break out in panic and try to take cover. The Patriotes will continue their assault and strike down an additional passenger per combat round until the PCs can draw their fire. While they are keen to kill all the Martians, they will recognize the sense in taking out the people shooting back at them first! Only a couple of the crew on the ship have guns and they will not be expecting to use them. They will only be able to return fire when the PCs arrive. It will take them at least two or three rounds to get to the ship from the terminal. The distance between the terminal and the assassins is 100 ft. or

30 m—every character with an average Move rating (4) can cover that distance within 5 combat rounds if running.

If the player characters are not there to meet Alia's parents, they will hear about their deaths very soon. Les Patriotes de la Terre will be able to kill all the Martians on the ship before making their escape. Several humans will be wounded as well, but they will not have been targets.

If the PCs are there, Alia's parents will be among the last the assassins manage to target. So if the PCs can drive them off, they may save them. Les Patriotes de la Terre will make a run for it once they lose half their men, leaving any of their wounded. These wounded might be interrogated, although the police will arrive soon to arrest them.

Patriotic Assassins

The assassins making an attempt on the lives of Alia's parents are barely worthy of the name, but still very dangerous. They are basically thugs with guns. All of them are uneducated, working class Parisians who have swallowed Pennais's rhetoric that Martians are to blame for all their ills. They no longer think of aliens as having any humanity and so have no moral qualms about killing them.

There are basically two assassins for each player character, more if the player characters are especially skilled at combat. This should be a tough fight, but one where the PCs should not escape unscathed rather than one they are at risk of losing. The tough part should be getting to and protecting Alia's parents. Luckily the assassins are bullies and they will make a run for it once half of them are killed or made insensible.

For stats see p. 23

Alia's Parents

Both Selene (Alia's mother) and Navath (Alia's father) are very average examples of Canal Martians. They run a store together in one of the larger Martian cities. They are both middle class Canal Martians who have never left Mars before. While they are not poor, they are also not rich, and are still a little bewildered that their 'little girl' has become such a success. They have always supported their only child in her endeavors, but never imagined she would sing on another planet. Despite being from a city, they are very like country cousins seeing Earth for the first time.

They will be wide-eyed at everything and full of gentle parental pride for their daughter. They are both pleased and grateful for the opportunities Alia's career grants them. The player characters should find them odd, a little naïve but also adorable. If they get on, they will behave like parents to the PCs, insisting on buying lunch, asking when they are getting married and if they are eating properly.

For their first visit to Earth, Alia has sent them new clothes so they will fit in. Given that many Martians wear their usual clothes on Earth, this will make them harder for the assassins to spot in the crowd.

Investigation 7 - Asking DuFort's Opinion

If the PCs do not meet DuFort at the Exposition, they might think to ask his advice on Martian artifacts. He and his wife have a huge estate outside Paris, centered around a large manor house dating from before the 15th century. From the moment the player characters approach, it should be clear DuFort is a man of wealth and influence.

If the PCs are rude or boorish, DuFort will not extend them an invitation to visit, and will have his servants turn them away if they arrive unannounced. However, despite their lower social status, he will welcome an opportunity to show off his collection to interested and knowledgeable parties (as long as they have already met in favorable circumstances or are now in his employ). The DuForts have an entire wing of their house dedicated to Martian items, and a few Venusian ones. There are statues, paintings and even Martian sand collected here. Not all the artifacts are actually from Mars. Many are commissioned works of art showing particular views, landscapes and Martians.

As they are shown the collection, while Antoine owns it, it is clear his wife Amélie curates it. She knows more about each artifact than he does, and often invites Martian guests to talk about the collection with her 'ladies circle'. Should the PCs try and wrangle an invitation to such a gathering, it will not be forthcoming to anyone but a very upper class woman or a woman with an influential patron.

It is quite possible the Martian connection will instantly make the PCs suspicious of DuFort the minute Alia goes missing. That's fine. They will have little or no evidence to conduct a search and any attempt to do so will get them removed from the property. DuFort is rich and well placed in society. Without hard evidence, any accusations the PCs make can get them arrested for slander. Any rudeness will ensure they are asked to leave, and if they do not the police will be called to arrest them. All the artifacts on display are legally acquired, while those that aren't are carefully hidden. If they are to make accusations or search the house, the PCs need to have good evidence and some idea of where to look.

Act III - Treasures among the Dead

The player characters will certainly be busy following the various lines of enquiry for most of day 2. How things play out will be very dependent on what they learn and when they learn it. They might follow the mud clues into the catacombs and not rest until they find L'Agence's stronghold. Alternatively they might spend all their energy trying to hunt down Les Patriotes de la Terre.

So in this section of the adventure we detail the various ways everything might play out and how the Gamemaster can lead it to an exciting conclusion.

In the course of day 2, the player characters should have discovered most of the following:

- The mud comes from the catacombs.
- Les Patriotes de la Terre are dangerous but do not have Alia (although they do have DuFort's statue).
- DuFort is somehow involved.
- Marie, Phillipe, and Gérard are working for another organization.
- They (possibly) have an ally in the Phantom, who knows the catacombs.

When the adventure should move on to the next act is really up to the Gamemaster. In fact, the player characters may follow an investigation into this act and then return to an earlier clue from Act II later on. In general the player characters should have a day to follow up on clues, but that could stretch to more if they are slow or get too involved in a single lead. The events will still happen as detailed in the sidebar from p. 9, but some NPC encounters might play out a little differently.

Morning Event - The Announcement

The day after the abduction brings a startling revelation: Les Patriotes de la Terre have Alia. The morning papers are full of the news that this anarchist group has claimed responsibility for her kidnapping. They sent a message to several newspapers, who were all printing the story before any of them decided to tell the police. They all received the same information in the form of an anonymous note. The interesting thing is that they demand no ransom. Instead they say that *"the Martian songbird will reap the consequences of coming to the sacred Earth, and serve as an example to the rest of her backward kind."*

While the player characters will not know it yet, this announcement really puts the cat among the pigeons. When DuFort sees it, he decides L'Agence has been playing him for a fool. He demands they deliver Alia to him to prove they still have her. He is already annoyed about the statue from the Exposition, even if it has been returned to him.

If the player characters have not visited the Exposition, the Gamemaster might make the announcement in the papers happen a little later depending on how he wants that scene to play out. If the player characters have already fought with or had all Les Patriotes de la Terre arrested, the announcement still happens. The Patriotes were so sure of themselves that they did not even wait to inform the press until they actually had the Martian singer in their grip. Since their only intention was to seek attention from the media, they achieved their goal anyway—with or without Alia (hence the lack of demands).

Possible Event - Mademoiselle Chanteuse

This event might take place any time after the player characters have interfered with L'Agence's plan. L'Agence is by now suffering from far more annoyances on this operation than they usually experience. As a civilized group, they prefer to catch their flies with honey and decide to reveal a little of themselves to the player characters. A very large gentleman will politely request they follow him to a nearby café to take tea with his employer.

His name is *Gustave* and he is very powerfully built, making his request sound very threatening. The player characters should at least be curious enough to follow. If they do not, he will leave them be and L'Agence will consider a few less polite methods to get their attention later.

Gustave will lead the player characters to the café where they will be invited to take tea with Mademoiselle *Cécile Chanteuse*. Cécile is a young woman of exceptional style, grace and manners, dressed in a simple but highly fashionable gown (for a detailed description and stats, see p. 23). She offers the player characters whatever food and drink they would like and tells them she would like to make a deal. If they desist from investigating Alia's disappearance, or better yet, leave town, Cécile will give them anything they want. She will emphasize 'anything' to underline that there are no lengths the people she works for will not go to. She will tell them she represents 'L'Agence' but more than that she will not say as 'its business is private'. She insists Alia will be safe, but they will never see her again. All the player characters have to do is just go away, and L'Agence will procure their heart's desire.

Whatever the player characters ask for, Cécile will simply note it down in neat handwriting in her journal and tell them it will be forthcoming very soon. If they ask for something ridiculous, they will actually end up with a forgery. The Agency is willing to compensate them very well, but not to waste its time on them! If they agree, they will be shown out of the café and will receive what they asked for the next day, as long as they stop investigating. This might seem very generous, but their gift will be rare and valuable enough to prove L'Agence is not to be trifled with. It may also prove useful evidence the PCs were the thieves too if need be! If they refuse, Cécile will say she is disappointed, and warns them the next request will not be so civil. If the PCs cannot all agree, this will count as a refusal; they either all stop the investigation or get nothing.

Once their business is concluded the PCs will be shown out. Cécile will leave by the back door and get into a carriage, making her almost impossible to trail (although she is returning home just in case). She is a high level operative, but more of an accountant and administrator than assassin or leader. If the PCs refuse to leave or if they threaten Cécile, they will discover that all the waiting staff and the few customers here are all working for L'Agence. They all take out guns and will happily shoot the player characters down if they continue to be obstreperous.

This encounter should serve to tell the player characters two things. First, that there is a powerful organization probably responsible for kidnapping Alia. Second, that this organization is scared they will mess up its plans.

Possible Event - Helpful Greed

If the player characters have been a bit slow on the uptake in finding Les Patriotes de la Terre, you might add this event. Two chancers called *Bernard* and *David* come to them to offer a deal. They can tell them where Alia is for a reward. Both the men are members of Les Patriotes de la Terre and know who runs the group, where they meet and what they do. They are also very greedy. They will tell the player characters all about Les Patriotes de la Terre and the café *La Belle Française* where they insist Alia is being held.

Neither of the men actually knows where Alia is, but they have a plan to make some money. Not only do they expect a reward for their information, but they do know DuFort's statue is hidden at the café. They hope to get their reward, and see the police raid the café and arrest most of the group. Once the dust settles they

then plan to sneak into the place and steal the statue to sell it later. If asked why Alia wasn't there, they plan to feign ignorance and suggest the police beat the information out of those they arrested. For an extra fee they can point the finger at someone too...

Ending Les Patriotes de la Terre

Once the player characters have discovered the existence of L'Agence, they may choose to ignore Les Patriotes de la Terre. However, they may decide to try and finish off this group of thugs and bigots. By this point they should find it a straightforward matter. They know where they meet and possibly who runs them. There should be enough evidence for the PCs to convince the police to raid the café and arrest them all (especially if David and Bernard have offered their 'information'). If the PCs are polite, the police will be glad to take them along. It is possible the PCs will decide to take them down on their own, but that will be a lot messier.

The café will usually contain at least 5 to 10 henchmen of the group (stats like *Paul and Michelle*, p. 22, or *Patriotic Assassins*, p. 23—at the GM's discretion depending on the fighting strength of the player group). They are not expecting an attack, but do have a store of weapons. At the first sign of trouble they will all arm themselves. They will all have knives or clubs, and at least half will have firearms. It will be a tough fight, but luckily Les Patriotes de la Terre are not especially skilled.

When it looks like the fight is going badly, the leader Pennais will make a run for it. It will be up to the player characters to stop him. He will run upstairs to the attic and use a trapdoor there to get onto the roof. From there he intends to run across the close rooftops until he is far away and can leave the city. It will be up to the player characters to give chase across the roofs of Paris, as Pennais (use *Patriotic Assassins* stats, p. 23) shoots at his pursuers. If the PCs have had an easy time of it up to now, Pennais will have a couple of lieutenants with him who will also do their best to see an end to the player characters.

The Gamemaster should be able to make this an epic encounter. Gunfire will be exchanged as everyone tries to keep their footing while running from roof to roof. Eventually, either Pennais will escape or be captured; both issues mean the end of Les Patriotes de la Terre. Without Pennais's leadership, they will fall apart, and if Pennais is arrested he will happily give the names of every member to reduce his sentence.

Investigating the Catacombs

At some point the player characters will want to investigate the Paris catacombs. These tunnels under the city are now an ossuary, containing the bones of hundreds of Parisian dead. The bones are stacked very artistically in ordered piles to create a corridor of grinning skulls. They are collected by cemetery, and the thick piles create a labyrinth visitors can walk around in. It is a dark and macabre place, and over the entrance are carved the words "*Arrête! C'est ici l'empire de la Mort*" ("Stop/Beware! This is the Empire of Death").

The player characters can enter the catacombs at any time. They are open to the public and charge only a moderate fee. In fact they are extremely popular this year with the extra tourists brought in by the Exposition. If the player characters decide to take a look they can walk the catacombs at their leisure. Only in a few areas will they see the earth they are walking on turn a distinctive red.

However, if they try to go deeper into those tunnels they will find them 'closed because of flooding'.

As you might imagine, L'Agence owns the catacombs, controlling them through a shell company. So the storehouses in the tunnels are not open to the public. If the player characters try to get close they will first see signs saying those tunnels are closed. They will see water running along the floor of these tunnels, which will lead to locked iron gates. If they break through those, they will run into Agence guards. The guards will initially tell them the area is closed, but if the player characters refuse to leave the guards will draw weapons and open fire. L'Agence does not want people to know they have armed men down here, so if they are forced to draw their weapons, the guards will be looking to kill the characters.

How deep the player characters try to go into the tunnels may depend on their information. While the red mud can be found down here, it can be found in several 'flooded' tunnels making it hard to know which one to take. Ideally the player characters should investigate the tunnels early in the adventure but not go too far without more information.

The Phantom is the one who can give them the best way to get into L'Agence's stronghold. His river is part of the small underground waterway system L'Agence uses to bring goods in from the Seine. So the Phantom effectively has a back door, one that is too thin for a cargo barge so L'Agence has never explored it. Taking a small boat along the waterway will lead the player characters into the heart of L'Agence's storage area.

The Storehouse

When the player characters arrive at the main storage area, it may be something of an anti-climax. It is not a well-appointed villain's lair but a large underground cave filled with boxes and a few guards. It is dry and well lit with gas lamps. Numerous tunnels lead into the catacombs from here and a reasonably wide underground river is met with a small docking area.

What the player characters will find down here will depend on when they arrive. If Alia has not been moved yet she will be found here locked in a cage. When she is due to be 'delivered' she will be drugged, tied up and put in a shipping crate to be taken to DuFort's estate. Otherwise, the area contains several expensive and unique items L'Agence has stolen. Some crates contain priceless works of art, others unique items that have been specially stolen. However, most crates contain expensive black market goods. L'Agence trades in numerous smuggled items to maintain its resources between the more bespoke thefts.

Storehouse Guards

There are several guards here, all of whom are armed (for stats, see p. 23). They wear ordinary street clothes for working class laborers but are actually well trained soldiers. They are not elite warriors but all have a solid military training and are experienced in combat. They will not be easily dispatched or deceived. There are around 3 to 6 guards here at any one time, enough to cover most of the area but not all of it.

The guards will be unable to cover the entire area all the time. So the player characters may be able to take a look inside a few crates if they are careful and sneaky. However, the guards will probably notice them sooner or later and will shoot first and ask questions later. Alia will be reasonably easy to spot if she is here,

but she is also well guarded, making it almost impossible to reach her without attracting the guard's attention.

It is possible the player characters will know something of L'Agence already and attempt to fool the guards into discussing their operations here. However, they will not allow anyone they do not know or who doesn't have the right paperwork (L'Agence are very well organized when it comes to paperwork) to take anything from the storehouse. This goes double for Alia if she is still there.

This doesn't mean that talking is a waste of time. If the player characters can convince the guards they are operatives of L'Agence or some similar lie, they will take them to the man in charge of the guards for this shift. His name is Jérôme Shalourd, and while he isn't party to the full operation he does know some useful information. The player characters might cleverly tease the information out of him with a cunning conversation, or kidnap him in a running gun battle and extract the information by more painful means.

Shalourd knows he is working for a group called 'L'Agence' and knows the operation involves stealing unique items for high ranking customers as well as a little smuggling and black marketeering. He doesn't know any other bases of operations, but does know that Mlle Chanteuse is one of several operatives who come to oversee the delivery of certain items. He knows nothing of where they go and never sees the customers. The individual guards only know they are paid well for guard duty and not to ask questions. They might recognize Mlle Chanteuse but do not know her name.

If the player characters arrive after Alia has been moved, the guards and Jérôme will all have heard the name 'DuFort' as he came to inspect 'his merchandise' before it was moved. They will not know where Alia was taken though, although the DuFort estate might be a reasonable guess on anyone's part.

If a gun battle begins in the storehouse (player characters being as they are) there are luckily several ways to escape. They might try to get out via the small canal, and if the Phantom's boat is not there they might find it later. In fact, if the Phantom is not their friend already he will be very surprised when they swim up

the river to his secret lair! They might also try the larger river, possibly stealing a barge moored here. It will eventually take them out onto the Seine on the outskirts of Paris. If they make a run for the tunnels there are numerous ways into the catacombs. After a locked gate or two and a few guards, they will come out into the public catacombs. If they are being followed by guards they might find cover here for a gothic battle among the bones amidst several frightened public. Such a battle is more public than L'Agence likes, but better than the PCs revealing the specific location of their lair.

Finding the caverns too early

It is possible the player characters might get to this part of the adventure too quickly. If they follow the red mud clues and push into the catacombs they might come across the storeroom and Alia very early, while she is still a prisoner of L'Agence. This is not a problem as they still have little idea about everything that is going on at this point. They will still have a long way to go to unravel the plot. L'Agence will also spend its considerable resources in trying to reacquire Alia. While they might make an attempt while she is with the player characters, the minute she leaves their protection they will have her again. In such a case DuFort will insist on early delivery, and if he doesn't show his hand, most Agency members (even the guards) will know his name as the patron after the fuss he has made.

Act IV - Saving the Songbird

After all this it should now be clear DuFort is the one responsible for Alia's abduction. The only way to save her will be to sneak into his estate and rescue her. The player characters will not be able to convince the police to help unless they have cast iron evidence of DuFort's involvement. He is far too well placed for them to have much chance of a conviction and such a raid will see them all fired.

So if Alia is to have any hope of rescue, it is going to be up to the player characters. They might pick a number of ways to save her; depending on how 'direct' they tend to be. However, the Gamemaster should remind them that even though DuFort should be their prime suspect by this point, they have no real idea where Alia is. The best option is to search his estate, and hope to find a clue if Alia is not there.

Luckily, Alia is being kept at the estate, in a secret vault with DuFort's other 'unique Martian items'. What is even more helpful is that DuFort cannot wait to show off his new captive 'songbird'. He has arranged a grand party for the evening, where those he trusts will be granted a special performance. This party is due to take place the evening after Alia is delivered to the DuFort estate. The party will be quite lavish and all day there will be caterers

and decorators busily working across the estate. Alia will be carefully hidden away, but it is possible word might reach the player characters. While no one will see Alia, DuFort has been bragging about a 'special surprise' and some of the servants might have overheard a clue.

If the player characters plan some form of frontal assault, the party will form a useful distraction. If they plan to join the party, they will need to be inventive to acquire access as staff or an invitation as a guest. Waylaying anyone with such credentials will not be especially difficult, but will involve potentially hurting innocent people. None of the guests or staff are part of L'Agence or necessarily one of its customers. While DuFort won't know all the new staff that evening, he and his wife will know almost all the guests. This is quite an exclusive event, even if there are around 150 guests. So if the player characters are to maintain a cover as guests, they had best avoid DuFort or his wife. Luckily, plenty of the other guests don't know each other and might be convinced with a clever story. It is possible the player characters might be placed high enough to get a real invitation, but unless they are part of European aristocracy it is very unlikely.

The Estate

The DuFort estate is a large expanse of countryside about an hour or two's carriage ride from Paris. It covers at least two square miles and in the center lies a large mansion. There are a few outbuildings for the gardeners and their tools, and a summerhouse about the size of a small cottage. A drive runs up to the house from the nearest road, and the area around the main house is landscaped as a garden with several trees and hedges. Most of the surrounding area is open lawns, but there are enough trees to provide some cover in the approach.

There is no fence around the area, and it is too wide to place guards everywhere, so approaching the main house is actually quite simple, especially at night. Any interlopers will have to make at least some effort though, as there are torches spread around the grounds to provide light and several guards walking the area. The outbuildings are not guarded, mainly as there is nothing of interest there. The summerhouse (a one story building with only a few open rooms) is a secure area, but only because it has been set aside for the guards as a common room. This might make it appear to be a heavily secured area, but actually it is just a rest zone for the lower orders away from the party. It will make a great red herring if the player characters assume Alia is there.

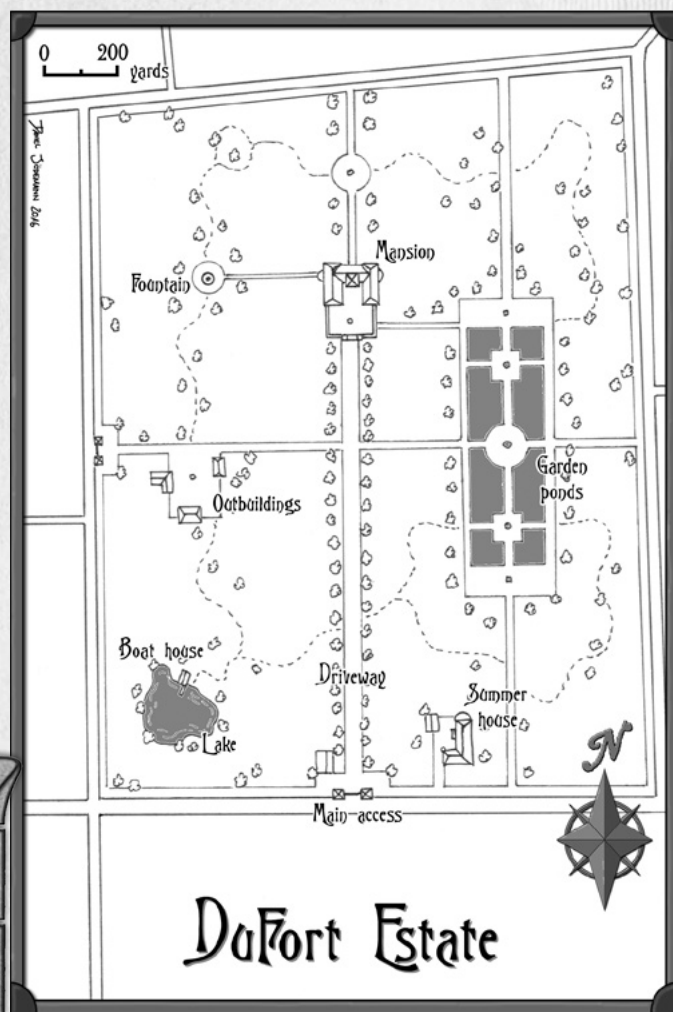
Undercover Infiltration

If the player characters infiltrate as servants they may still have to avoid DuFort and his wife who may recognize them from a previous encounter in the adventure. However, they pay little attention to their servants, which will make it difficult for them to notice the characters (*Perception* against *Difficulty 3*—or even higher, if the characters make successful *Stealth* rolls). The new servants will be doing most of the work at this gathering, the permanent staff taking the opportunity to gear down for a change. So it will be hard for the player characters disguised as servants to avoid getting assigned to some sort of duty.

These will usually include:

- Standing 'on duty' in a particular corridor in case a guest should require them
- Taking trays of drinks around the crowd
- Serving at dinner
- Serving at the buffet table in the ballroom
- Seeing over (drunk) guests to their carriages
- Standing outside waiting to call carriages for guests

Any of these jobs might be done by male or female servants, although generally women will be assigned to indoor tasks and men to outdoor ones. Those called upon to serve at dinner had better have some form of formal service training or they are very likely to blow their cover! The servants here are skilled and professional and anyone who is not will stand out.



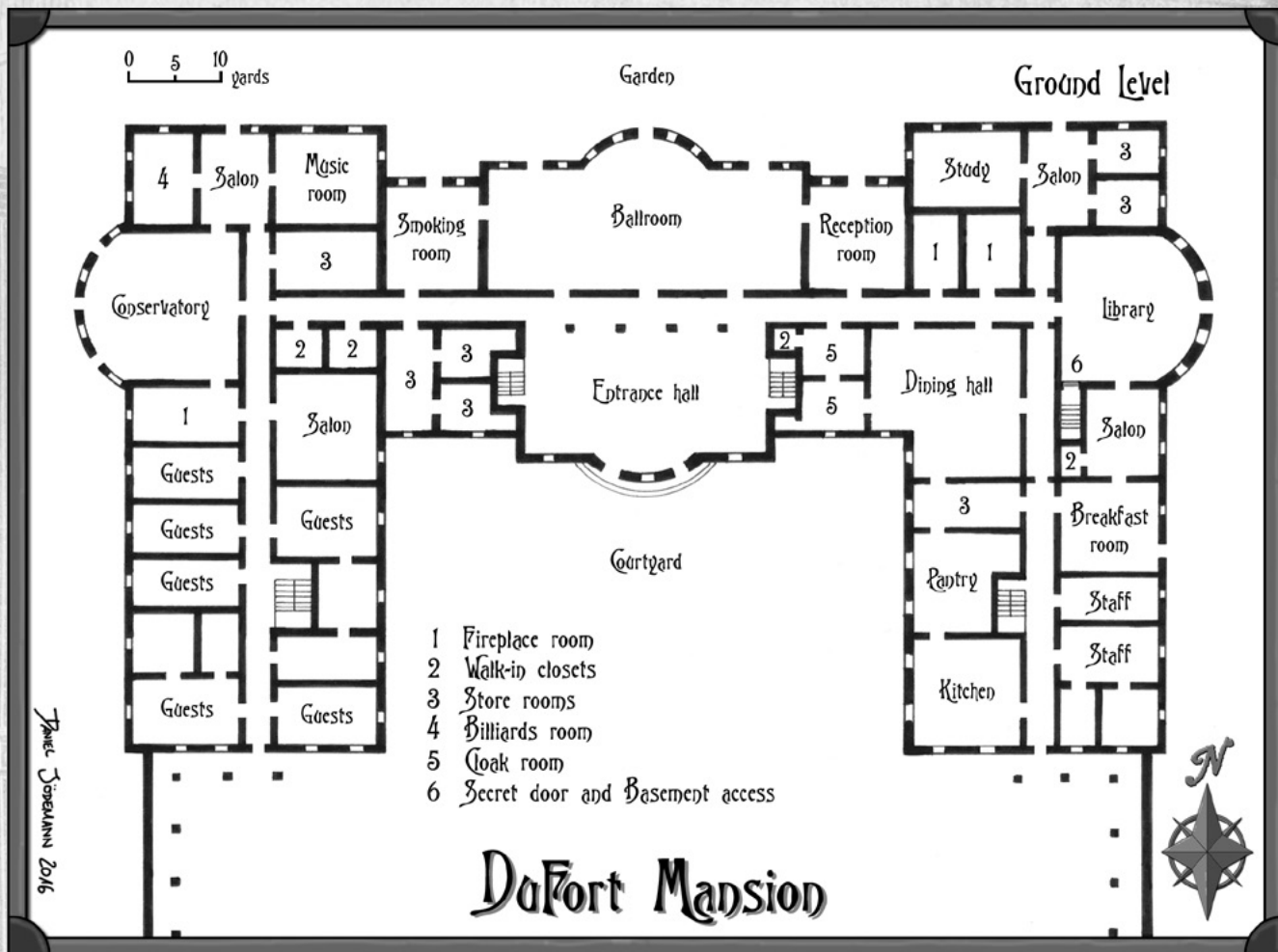
The Party

The guests have been invited in two waves for the evening, depending on their social status. About fifty of them have been invited for dinner at 7:00, meaning most will be arriving just after 6:00 for drinks beforehand. This group of guests will know each other quite well and interlopers will have a harder time with their deceit. Dinner is expected to end between 8:00 and 9:00 when dancing will begin. A second wave of guests (about 100) has been invited to the dance around then. They will be gathering in the main ballroom from 8:00, and be treated to drinks and snacks before the music begins at 9:00. It is in this crowd that the player characters have the best chance of losing themselves.

The Performance

During the evening, guests will be encouraged to look at the DuFort collection of Martian antiquities in the large conservatory in the west wing. Most of them will take the opportunity to see the collection (which the player characters may have already seen) as it has an impressive reputation. Mme DuFort will often act as a guide for those who are favored in society.

At around 11:00, some of the servants will begin to bring a handpicked crowd of DuFort particular friends for a private performance. This will only be about 30 of the guests (all of whom



were at dinner) so the player characters will have to be reasonably alert to notice something is going on. These guests will be quietly and gradually taken in pairs to the east wing and into the library, away from the ballroom and conservatory, to a secret door in a bookcase, where they take a stairway leading under the house. The stairway leads to a short tunnel that ends in a large underground room where the DuForts keep their greatest Martian treasures. Here can be found Alia, shackled to the wall by her ankle with a thick golden chain amidst a collection of rare stolen artifacts. In this room are the DuForts' most precious artifacts, all of which have been acquired illegally or immorally.

While Alia is elegantly dressed and appears well fed and unhurt, she is clearly traumatized. She will perform for the crowd as requested, clinging to the false promise that her compliance will grant her freedom at some later date.

The Rescue

Essentially the player characters need to discover Alia's location, and break her out. How they go about this is up to them. They might discover the secret door to the basement by sneaking about the house or following the invited guests. However, if they make too much trouble before discovering the basement they will be removed very quickly from the area, and probably arrested.

There are only two guards on duty in the basement, and two more patrol the area where the secret door is to be found. DuFort

relies on secrecy rather than muscle. However, there is a bell rope in the basement for the guards to alert the others of any trouble. This will bring more guards in force to the area and alert those in the grounds to be on their guard.

The poor Martian girl!

The adventure assumes that DuFort's guests are just as shallow and indifferent as their host and do not care about the fact that Alia is held a prisoner. The Gamemaster might however introduce a guest that pities that poor Martian girl and is pricked by his conscience. He or she will not openly accuse DuFort, but will try and seek help in secret, for example by looking for like-minded people among the guests (more or less discreetly). If the characters keep their eyes and ears open, they sooner or later might hear of a certain Monsieur that seems to be worried about M. DuFort's 'nightingale'.

You can also use this option for troubleshooting, should your players get stuck on the wrong track or if they simply don't find the secret vault where Alia is held prisoner.

The most likely plan is for the player characters to either discover the secret door and investigate, or to hear the guests remarking on the incredible Martian woman's voice upon leaving. None of the guests will be shocked to see a woman chained in the basement clearly against her will, as they don't think of her as much more than a clever animal (being both non-human and foreign, therefore lower class to them!). To them she is little more than a performing monkey that is being treated quite well as a pet.

With Alia's location discovered, the trick is to get her out. She might be disguised in some way, but there are no other Martians here which will be a problem. A running gun battle may be the only alternative (and an exciting ending). While plenty of guards can give chase (on foot or in a carriage) there are not so many in one place as to overwhelm the player characters. A group of around 6-8 might manage to realistically give chase once the alarm is raised.

Epilogue

If the player characters can find Alia and rescue her, she will finally be safe. The police will not swoop down on DuFort, but he will have to deal with some pretty tricky accusations. It is unlikely a Martian woman, even a celebrity one, will find her word more respected than DuFort's. However, his reputation will take a hit and he will have no choice but to leave her alone. L'Agence will

also refuse to kidnap her again, for any amount of money, as she is now far too high profile and they risk exposure.

Alia will reward the player characters as best she can. She is not wealthy but will offer what she can. While money shouldn't be a concern for player characters of breeding, those with a mercenary attitude will be remunerated for their expenses. Alia and her parents will dig into their pockets and offer a decent but not impressive financial reward. What is far more useful will be Alia's undying gratitude (which will be greater if they haven't pressured her for cash). She will happily see to it they get tickets for any show they request, and prove a useful contact in society as her celebrity status gets her close to many influential people. She will be more than happy to recommend the player characters to anyone she knows. Finally, should the player characters ever go to Mars, they will each have a place to stay and as much home-cooked food as they can manage as guests of Alia's parents.

While DuFort will slink away, and spend considerable resources trying to protect or move his illegal artifacts, L'Agence will not disappear so easily. They will make a note of the player characters and keep a close eye. As a pragmatic society they will not seek instant revenge, but they will want to take such dangerous opponents out of the picture in case they get closer than they already have. The shadowy organization might even consider recruiting the player characters if they can find the right angle, or do something to destroy their reputations. Either way, L'Agence will not forget, and one day they will repay the player characters for their interference.



Appendix 1 - NPC Stats

Seigneur Antoine DuFort

The villain of the piece is a man who has never wanted for anything in his life. Born the eldest son to a wealthy and highly placed Parisian family, anything he asked for was his. His parents indulged his every whim, and anyone who denied him was sacked or replaced. So he came to believe that he not only deserved everything he wanted, but that he had a right to take anything he desired. Consequently he values very few things, having been taught that everything, including people, can be replaced.

However, when he discovered an interest in Mars he realized something shocking. Some things were so unique, they could not be replaced. Worse yet, some things were beyond his grasp. Ill prepared for such refusals he reacts like a toddler whenever he is denied. There are no lengths he will not go to get what he wants, even though he will probably bore of it when he has it. The slightest problem sends him into a childish rage though, which would be comical if he were not so vengeful, selfish and vindictive.

Put simply, DuFort is an over-privileged, selfish and nasty piece of work. No one is as important to him as himself and he feels his slightest whim is more important than anyone else's suffering. He also enjoys being the center of attention, something money can buy if you spend enough of it. Most of his friends enjoy his generosity, but few actually like him even if many are secretly jealous.

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 **Dexterity: 2** **Strength: 2**
Charisma: 3 **Intelligence: 2** **Willpower: 2**

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 **Move: 4** **Perception: 4**
Initiative: 4 **Defense: 4** **Stun: 2**

Health: 6

Skills

Academics 6, Brawl 4, Intimidate 6, Melee 4, Ride 5

Talents

Skill Mastery (Academics)

Resources

Contacts 3, Status 3, Wealth 5

Weapons

Punch 4 N, Swordcane 6 L

Amélie DuFort (Née Lavoie)

Amélie DuFort is a beautiful woman who was effectively sold to her husband by her family when he decided he wanted her. This did not surprise her as plenty of marriages between the nobility are made in this way, and DuFort was wealthy enough to provide for her desires. As the middle daughter of the Lavoie family she always craved attention, and this actually made the position of Mme DuFort rather attractive to her. She has no love for her husband (and he no love for anyone but himself) but she does love the lifestyle they have together.

Becoming a married woman also allowed Amélie a greater degree of freedom. She had wanted to study Martian lore but was sent instead to expensive finishing schools who taught few academic subjects. Once married she could take up her own studies, and as Mme DuFort, her husband saw to it she was denied nothing. In

recent years she has become an expert on Mars, with a growing reputation among the academics she corresponds with.

Unfortunately, Amélie's privileged background has left her almost as selfish as her husband. She has little concern for the 'little people' and less for non-humans. Her interest in Mars is academic and while she and her husband have traveled there several times, they have stayed in the best hotels and barely spoken to the natives.

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 **Dexterity: 2** **Strength: 1**
Charisma: 3 **Intelligence: 3** **Willpower: 2**

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 **Move: 3** **Perception: 5**
Initiative: 5 **Defense: 4** **Stun: 2**

Health: 4

Skills

Academics (Martian History) 9, Diplomacy 6, Linguistics 9, Performance 6

Languages

French (Mother Language), English, German, Gaaryani, Son-Gaaryani, High Oenotrian

Alia

Alia's story is almost a classic 'rags to riches' story, although her family was never quite that poor. She was born to an average middle class Canal Martian family. She expected to do little more with her life than marry and continue the family business. But she did discover a love of music, which her parents were supportive enough to encourage. Alia learned to play several instruments, and it was clear she had a brilliant if untrained voice. Unfortunately, her parents couldn't afford to send her to study music, and it would have been improper for Alia to join a troupe of players or wandering musicians.

So, Alia restricted her music to informal gatherings of friends and family or local festivals. While she would have liked to do more, all she really wanted to do was make music, and she was able to do that. She didn't need to make money and cared little for large audiences. Knowing also that talent alone would not be enough to make a living as a performer; she believed she had little chance of really making a go of it.

That was until Marcel Shiveryn discovered her. He understood enough to see the latent talent in Alia's voice. After a long talk to Alia and her parents he made them a proposal. He would take Alia to Earth and see her trained at his own expense. Then he would act as her agent for a percentage of her earnings. Alia jumped at the chance, not knowing Marcel had sold everything he owned to fund the adventure. His gamble paid off though. Once trained, Alia's talent was evident and he had no trouble finding her work. Alia has had many offers from more experienced agents, but she refuses to leave Marcel, who has become part of her family.

Archetype: Celebrity

Motivation: Fame

Style: 2

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 **Dexterity: 3** **Strength: 1**
Charisma: 4 **Intelligence: 2** **Willpower: 3**

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 **Move: 4** **Perception: 5**
Initiative: 5 **Defense: 5** **Stun: 2**
Health: 5

Skills	Base	Levels	Rating	(Average)
Diplomacy	3	2	5	(2+)
Empathy	2	2	4	(2)
Performance	4	7	11	(5+)

Talents

Captivate, Skill Aptitude (+2 Performance)

Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Punch	0 N	0	0 N	(0) N

Marie - Dresser, L'Agence Operative

Marie is a young Parisian woman who has worked for L'Agence for several years. She is a very ordinary looking girl whose forgettable appearance has made her an excellent agent. She specializes in undercover work in low end jobs, such as maids, washerwomen and street sellers. So the assignment in the theatre is proving much more interesting and she'll be sad to leave it.

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 **Dexterity: 3** **Strength: 1**
Charisma: 2 **Intelligence: 2** **Willpower: 2**

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 **Move: 4** **Perception: 4**
Initiative: 5 **Defense: 5** **Stun: 2**
Health: 4

Skills

Con 5, Empathy 4, Melee 3, Stealth 6, Streetwise 6

Languages

French, English

Weapons

Candlestick (or other improvised weapons) 5 N

Phillipe and Gerard - Stage Crew, L'Agence Operatives

These two are employed by L'Agence for their brawn rather than their brains, but are not lacking in the latter department. Both have similar backgrounds in military service and joined L'Agence because the pay was simply a lot better. They are not generally used in complicated plots and so rarely know the full story of any assignment. For this operation they are following Marie's orders should the plan go wrong. They won't say or do anything unless they know it has come from Marie. They too are enjoying the theatre life, but it is proving a little quiet for their taste and both are looking for something with more action.

Primary Attributes

Body: 3 **Dexterity: 2** **Strength: 4**
Charisma: 1 **Intelligence: 2** **Willpower: 2**

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 **Move: 5** **Perception: 4**
Initiative: 4 **Defense: 5** **Stun: 3**
Health: 7

Skills

Athletics 5, Brawl 6, Melee 6, Streetwise 3

Talents

Robust

Weapons

Dagger 7 L, Punch 6 N

Paul and Michelle - Patriotes Thugs

The spies from Les Patriotes de la Terre are little more than good for nothing drunks. They have little in the way of brainpower and no ability to improvise when things go wrong. They are basically members of Les Patriotes de la Terre because the café they meet at often gives free drinks to members during the meetings. However, they do agree with the goals of the organization, having swallowed its rhetoric without much real thought.

Primary Attributes

Body: 3 **Dexterity: 2** **Strength: 4**
Charisma: 1 **Intelligence: 1** **Willpower: 2**

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 **Move: 6** **Perception: 3**
Initiative: 3 **Defense: 5** **Stun: 3**
Health: 5

Skills

Brawl 7, Streetwise 3

Weapons

Punch 7 N

The Phantom

The mysterious Phantom of the opera is actually the mild mannered janitor, Henri. He came to the theatre from the country, hoping to make his fortune as a musician. He does actually have great musical talent as a composer. But with no formal training or references, no one was looking to hire him. He joined the Paris Opera House simply to be closer to the shows, and, because he was unable to find lodgings, made a home in the secret passages there. While he does want to be a composer, and talks about music as a peer to the actors and musicians, it is a dream he has almost given up on. His background stands against him whatever he does, and now he is dismissed as nothing more than a cleaner by the circles he wishes to join. However, he is almost content to live as he is, with the music of the Phantom occasionally making it to the show, and his mysterious notes on the rehearsals taken seriously. These days he wants nothing to jeopardize his life in the theatre, as while he isn't where he wants to be, he is still close to what he loves.

Primary Attributes

Body: 2 **Dexterity: 3** **Strength: 2**
Charisma: 3 **Intelligence: 3** **Willpower: 2**

Secondary Attributes

Size: 0 **Move: 4** **Perception: 5**
Initiative: 6 **Defense: 5** **Stun: 2**
Health: 4

Skills

Art (Music) 10, Con 4, Empathy 4, Performance 7, Stealth 7

Talents

Skill Aptitude (+2 Art)

Weapons

Punch 0 N

Patriotic Assassins

Primary Attributes		
Body: 3	Dexterity: 3	Strength: 3
Charisma: 1	Intelligence: 1	Willpower: 2
Secondary Attributes		
Size: 0	Move: 6	Perception: 3
Initiative: 4	Defense: 6	Stun: 3
Health: 5		
Skills		
Athletics 6, Brawl 6, Firearms 6		
Weapons		
.22 Repeating Rifle 8 L		

Mlle Cecile Chanteuse

Cécile is the daughter of a poor Parisian shopkeeper. She spent most of her life working in her father's haberdashery, with marriage her only real prospect. She didn't dislike the work; in fact she rather enjoyed it. So she was very angry when her father lost so much money at cards he threatened to sell the business. Cécile had a talent for math and found loan sharks to borrow from, then borrowed more money from different loan sharks to pay them off. She built a web of debt so complex that not only did she keep the shop (buying out her own father) but ended up setting the lone sharks against each other.

This complex plot brought her to the attention of L'Agence. They approached her with an offer of more than a good marriage. The promise of both power and independence was too good to pass up. Since then she has become their main operative in Paris which has made her very wealthy indeed.

Archetype: Criminal		Motivation: Power	
Style: 2			
Primary Attributes			
Body: 2	Dexterity: 2	Strength: 1	
Charisma: 3	Intelligence: 5	Willpower: 3	
Secondary Attributes			
Size: 0	Move: 3	Perception: 8	
Initiative: 7	Defense: 6	Stun: 2	
Health: 5			
Skills	Base	Levels	Rating (Average)
Con	4	2	6 (3)
Diplomacy	4	3	7 (3+)
Empathy	4	2	6 (3)
Firearms	2	3	5 (2+)
Intimidate	4	2	6 (3)
Stealth	2	3	5 (2+)

Talents				
Calculated Defense, Intelligent				
Weapons	Rating	Size	Attack	(Average)
Pocket Revolver	2 L	0	7 L	(3+) L

Gustave the Bodyguard

Cécile's body guard is a giant of a man, but also no fool. Born into the lower class, he had a promising career as a prize fighter which brought him to the attention of L'Agence. They offered him more money as a bodyguard, and he was happy to leave boxing. He had no love for the sport, only seeing it as a means to a living. Gustave rose to become Cécile's bodyguard as she recognized a kindred spirit, someone else who is perceived as something other than who he is. While he is no genius, Gustave is actually very clever and does not enjoy violence. Actually he avoids it when he can, despite this sometimes making complicated situations more difficult. This discretion and ability to think before wading in is another factor that impressed Cécile.

Primary Attributes		
Body: 4	Dexterity: 3	Strength: 4
Charisma: 1	Intelligence: 1	Willpower: 2
Secondary Attributes		
Size: 0	Move: 7	Perception: 3
Initiative: 4	Defense: 7	Stun: 4
Health: 6		
Skills		
Athletics 7, Brawl 8, Firearms 7, Intimidate 4, Melee 7		
Talents		
Guardian		
Weapons		
Double Derringer 8 L, Dagger 9 L, Punch 8 N, Brass Knuckles 9 N		

Storehouse Guards

Primary Attributes		
Body: 2	Dexterity: 3	Strength: 3
Charisma: 1	Intelligence: 2	Willpower: 2
Secondary Attributes		
Size: 0	Move: 6	Perception: 4
Initiative: 5	Defense: 5	Stun: 2
Health: 6		
Skills		
Brawl 5, Firearms 7, Melee 7		
Talents		
Robust, Strong		
Weapons		
Dagger 8 L, Revolver 9 L, Punch 5 N		



Appendix 2 - Life at the Paris Opera House

Theatre can be a strange and arcane business, with an array of jobs and procedures that make little sense to those outside the business. Plenty of people know what the work of an actor might be like, but remain unaware of the myriad backstage and management roles that ensure a production can run. To help the Gamemaster bring life to the Paris Opera House and other theatres in their game, we've added this appendix. It is designed to give you an overview of theatre life, the work each department does, and how together they put on a show.

Parts of the Theatre

While most people know what a stage or a dressing room is, there are a few places most people are unfamiliar with which we should define. There are plenty more, but these are some of the more common terms.

Auditorium: the seating area where the audience sits, composed of the stalls on the ground floor and several circles or balconies above.

Fly Tower: the area above the stage where many pieces of scenery hang. These are hauled down to their positions on stage by a combination of ropes and counterweights known as the flying system.

Green Room: a common room for actors and backstage staff. Sometimes used as a function room for backstage gatherings. How often it is used and who uses it will depend on where it is and how large it is. Several legends are given for its name, from stages usually having green floors to green being an unlucky color and so kept in its own room.

Orchestra Pit: a trench under the stage where the musicians play during the show. It is open at the front into the auditorium. Usually the only musician the audience can see properly is the conductor, as he is raised up so that the musical performers on stage can also follow him.

Proscenium Arch: the opening between the stage and auditorium often gilded and lavishly decorated. The arch forms a frame for 'the fourth wall'.

Wings: the sides of a stage set that an audience cannot see. Actors wait here for their entrances, and they are often cramped with stored scenery and props (small items used on stage such as newspapers, books, lamps etc.).

Theatre Jobs

There are many more people working in a theatre than the actors. While in days past actors and stage managers divided the work among themselves, by 1889 a legion of specialist jobs had developed. Many technical jobs in the theatre have developed to make use of new technology, such as a lighting department to operate

the gas lamps and limelights. However, you'd be surprised how little has changed in the modern theatre since the Victorian era.

The various departments in theatre have a (usually) friendly rivalry. Performance and backstage staff are often very different kinds of people. Contrary to popular belief, few backstage staff actually have any desire to perform. However, all theatricals have a certain camaraderie by virtue of being part of the same industry. Theatre can be very isolating, with very unsocial hours that have you working when the rest of the world are relaxing. Few of them ever get to interact with non-theatricals with any regularity. However, those only required for the evening show often do extra work in some other industry to make ends meet.

Actors: Acting is a very difficult profession to do well in, and depends as much on luck and connections as it does on talent. Many actors have to basically beg to get a part in some small show, in the hope they prove their worth and get offered a bigger part. Lead actors can command good salaries and many perks. But if they fail to attract an audience to the theatre they can quickly find themselves discarded.

Dancers: There are many different kinds of dance and dancer. Ballet companies tend to be highly specialized and perform to the wealthy. However, there are plenty of less rigorous companies that require groups of pretty girls moving in sequence. Male dancers are less common as many dance performances are providing 'eye candy' for the male patrons. There are many exciting Wild West shows and extravaganzas that include dance troupes. However, the most renowned dance in Paris is the shocking 'Cancan' where the dancer's high kicks might offer a glimpse of underwear. Generally, unless they perform ballet, dance is a profession few fathers wish to see their daughters entering.

Singers: The performers at the Paris Opera House are mainly singers. Opera singers have to train for many years, molding their voices to a certain kind of performance that makes them unsuitable for anything else. While operas are well known for their 'arias' (specific solo songs or duets usually delivered by the lead) each opera house will also employ a chorus of singers to deliver the grander, more orchestral parts of the show.

Musicians: Every theatre needs an orchestra of some form, and the larger the show the bigger the orchestra. Musicians come in all shapes and sizes, and few find themselves out of work for long. However, musicians are often very separate from all the other staff in a theatre, and rarely socialize with the backstage or performance staff.

Stage Management: A production is run by the stage managers. They watch over the stage crew and make sure everything happens as it should. They are also responsible for organizing the logistics of the acting company (making sure everyone knows where they should be) and overseeing rehearsals, keeping directors on schedule.

Wardrobe: The wardrobe department sees to the construction and upkeep of all costumes and wigs. In many theatres this also involves looking after a store of costumes kept for use in new shows. Wardrobe staff includes many washers and dressmakers,

who spend their days in the cramped and hot environment of the wardrobe department. Several of the wardrobe staff work during the show as 'Dressers', helping actors change costumes when speed is required, or with bulky or complicated costumes.

Stage Crew: If something needs to be moved, and it is big and heavy, the stage crew are usually required. This small army hauls the ropes or pushes the wheeled trucks that move scenery into place during the show. While many crew are simply employed to move heavy things, the more experienced members are skilled carpenters. Some work on the stage, but others are required to operate the 'flies'. Most flymen come from a sailing background, making them experts at knotting and rope work. Many orders to bring in scenery are given using nautical whistles. This is why it is unlucky to whistle on stage, as a flyman might hear you and accidentally drop something on you!

Lighting: While there is no electrical department, some of the stage crew will be responsible for the lighting in the theatre. This technology is still pretty basic, only really adding a bit of atmosphere to the stage and ensuring the actors can be seen. However it does include operating a 'limelight', a very bright spotlight used to follow a lead actor. These limelights are extremely dangerous to the operator, as they involve a flame burning a piece of calcium oxide (quicklime) to produce the light, which can explode.

Front of House: Most theatres refer to the audience areas as the 'front' and the performance areas as the 'back' (backstage). To manage getting an audience in, selling them programs and refreshments, and getting them out again, you need an army of ushers. Most ushers are very poorly paid and do the job in the hopes of something better, or a chance to act. A few of the more experienced ushers will act as lieutenants for the management to deal quickly with troublesome patrons.

Management: Theatre managers are sometimes retired actors, but usually businessmen. Few have ever been on stage and fewer still have any clue how anything backstage works. Most do love the theatre though, even if many do not understand it, making them the most susceptible to the myths of glamour and showbiz. Having said that, the business of making the theatre profitable is still a business, and sometimes it is an advantage not to be too precious about the show.

Cleaning Staff: For all the glamour of the acting company and the mystery of the backstage staff, there is also more to running a theatre than the show. Audiences make a horrific mess, and someone needs to keep the place tidy and shine all the brass fittings.

Creating a Production

The business of the theatre is, of course, putting on a show. The problem facing all managers is that you need time to build a new production and any time there is no show, you are not making any money. For this reason most shows are built and rehearsed during the day while the current show plays in the evening. With luck, there will be separate staff for each show, but otherwise the staff can expect some extremely long hours. Where possible, the theatre will keep a store of scenery and costumes that might fit several eras and shows (especially true for Molière). This not only reduces cost but also speeds up swapping over the shows.

When it comes time to replace the show, it is taken down on the Saturday night of the final performance. This 'get out' is done by the stage crew while wardrobe collects and washes the costumes before storage. For a large show, this deconstruction might take all night, or even longer. Once this is done, bringing in the new show commences the next day (often meaning no sleep if there is only one crew).

It will take a day or two to get the new scenery in place. This will mostly be a case of assembly rather than construction as it will have been built in kit form during the previous show. Even so, fitting it properly in the theatre, despite taking copious measurements beforehand is always a tricky business.

Once the scenery is in place and the set is ready, the actors can begin their final rehearsals. This begins with the technical rehearsal, which can often take two or more days. The technical rehearsal (or 'Tech') is to make sure the scenery and functionality of the show works. While this is mainly for the stage crew, the actors also need to know they can use their props efficiently, have time to change costume and get to where they are meant to be in time. The Tech begins at the start of the show, and if something doesn't work that scene or scene change is repeated until it does. This might take several attempts, and can be interminable.

After having run the technical rehearsal, one or more dress rehearsals are done. These are full runs of the show with the actors in costume for the first time (unless a particular quick change required a costume during the tech). While a dress rehearsal will be stopped if something goes badly wrong, the idea is to run the show as if it is in front of an audience. If it goes smoothly then everything should work well on opening night, but there is an old adage 'good dress; bad first night' as a good dress rehearsal can promote overconfidence.

After the first dress rehearsal it's a good idea to run another, but there is rarely enough time. The Tech will undoubtedly have taken longer than expected. So the show moves into 'previews' which are live shows in front of an audience. Preview tickets are usually sold at a discount, as the show is not entirely finished. In some cases parts might be rewritten and replaced after rehearsals the next day, but in other cases the show is basically done. The audience won't know which when they buy a ticket, but that's the luck of the draw.

Eventually the terror of 'press night' or the official first night of the production will come around. At this point the show is considered finished, but in reality it is just the date past which no one should be changing anything. Creatives will tinker with the details of a show forever given the chance unless someone stops them. While the performers and crew will have done the show several times already, this is a nerve wracking night as this is when the press and critics first get a chance to see it. On this night, and this night alone, will hang every review that will be written by the major critics. It is not a night for anyone to make a mistake.

Once the show is up and running (if the reviews don't kill it) the theatre can get into a normal rhythm again. Those running the show come in for the evenings and those who are spare move onto building the next show, with everyone helping out in the afternoons. The show will run every day except Sunday, with a matinee during the week (often Wednesday) and Saturday. Sometimes, two or more shows might run together, with the crew required to change the entire set from one show to the next each afternoon. These can be a nightmare to organize, and there is never enough time, but it brings in more audience.

This is really the bottom line in theatre, or as they say 'bums on seats'. Productions are very expensive to put on and if no one wants to see them that money is gone. No one, no matter

what they say, knows how to guarantee a hit either. Producers and managers are always looking to cut costs, often among the backstage staff rather than performers. But this oddly leads to a quite relaxed environment, where the watchwords are: as long

as it doesn't affect the show, its fine. Theatricals get away with many things unheard of in other industries, as long as the show doesn't suffer. But never forget, cross that line and you will be gone before the curtain falls.

Appendix 3 - The Sights of Paris

While a complete guide to Paris is a little beyond the scope of this adventure, we didn't want to leave you without some detail on the various sights of this historic and beautiful city. The city is divided into 20 districts called 'arrondissements', and as you might expect, some are considered more desirable than others. While Paris is the capital of France, it functions more as a separate state. Many French people see Parisians as from another country and vice versa. So there is a lot of antipathy, and attitudes can be very different once outside the capital.

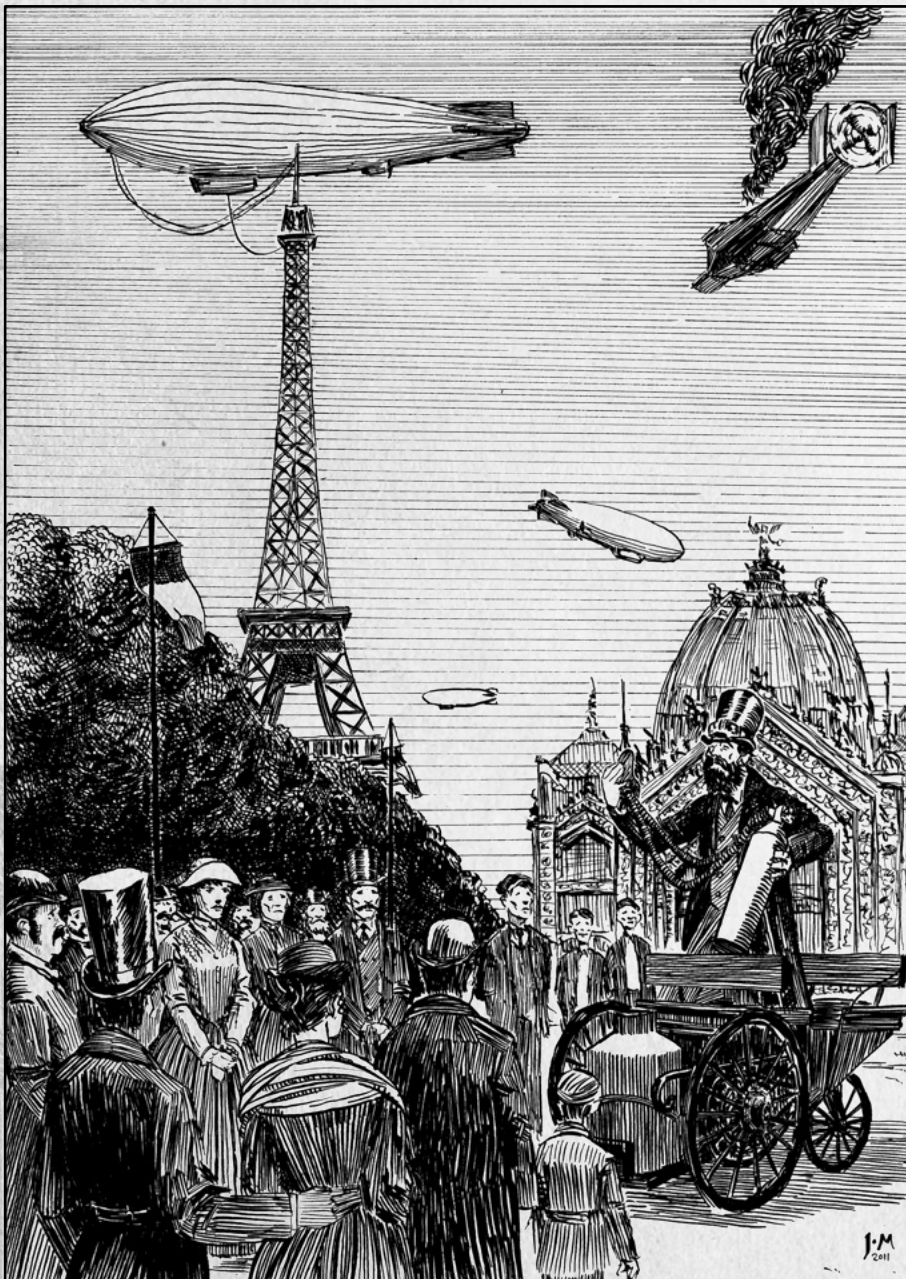
Paris suffered during the French revolution of 1789-1799. Many buildings were destroyed or torn down by the new regime. But this did lead to the city being extensively rebuilt in the early 19th century. While, many of its proudest landmarks remain, many have become repurposed for use 'by the people'. Given the new ruler of France was Napoleon, many new buildings were military monuments, but in 1849 a new program of public works was introduced. Boulevards were widened and new markets, aqueducts, sewers and parks were built. So Paris has been reborn anew, ready to face a new century.

We have already mentioned the Paris Opera House, the Catacombs and the Great Exposition that has created the Eiffel Tower. Another attraction that draws many to Paris is the Palace of Versailles, although this beautiful Palace is actually over 20 miles to the southwest of the city! Not everything of interest in France is to be found in Paris! The following are a few of the popular tourist destinations your player characters might like to visit. The history of each is ripe for new adventures with a little research from the Gamemaster:

Champs-Élysées: If Paris has a 'main street' it is the Champs-Élysées. This road runs from the Place de la Concorde to the Place de l'Étoile where the Arc de Triomphe is located, a monument to Napoleon's conquests. The trees lining the side of the road and wide spaces make this a popular boulevard for walks. In 1889 it sits at the heart of the Great Exposition and many temporary buildings have been built here to house the exhibits.

Conciergerie: One of Paris' oldest and most notorious prisons. During the revolution it held most of the nobles condemned to death, but continued to serve as a prison afterwards as well.

Les Invalides: A military hospital and museum built in 1670 to honor the soldiers and military minds of France. Many famous military heroes are buried here, including Napoleon.



The Louvre: Set in the center of Paris, this art gallery was once the palace of the King of France. It was originally built in the 12th century as a fortress, and was gradually expanded over several centuries. When the King moved his court to Versailles in the 17th century, the Louvre remained the house of the royal art collection. After the revolution the new regime decided to keep it as such, and even expand it as the main repository of France's artistic treasures. Even in 1889 it is an incredible collection and contains many noteworthy pieces, the most famous being the Mona Lisa.

Moulin Rouge: This risqué gentleman's club and cabaret theatre opened this year and has already caused a stir. It is set in the Pigale district, a place renowned for 'adult entertainment' and the bohemian set. The Moulin Rouge is easily located by the red windmill that marks its location. It has become famous already for performances of the provocative and suggestive dance called the 'Cancan'.

Muséum national d'histoire naturelle: The Natural History Museum of France was founded during the French Revolution, as part of a new dedication to science and reason. It has an origin as part of the King's gardens of medicinal plants and so it is set in beautiful parkland, which is still used to grow healing plants.

Notre Dame: The most famous of France's cathedrals is Notre Dame, which was completed in 1345. It is an incredible example of Gothic architecture and sits in the heart of Paris. It is currently undergoing restoration work, with a few controversial additions.

Sacre Cœur: This new Basilica set high on Montmartre is still under construction, but is already an impressive sight. As it sits on one of the highest points in Paris it can be seen for quite some distance.

The Sorbonne: One of the great universities of Paris dating from 1257, it is also open to women. It was closed during the revolution but opened again afterwards, and is being rebuilt in the 1880s—with the exception of the theological faculty that is currently closed.

Tuileries Gardens: This royal garden situated by the Louvre and the Place de la Concorde was opened to the public after the French Revolution. It has become a popular promenade spot for the wealthy.

The Cemeteries of Paris: Paris had the same problems with the disposal of dead bodies that London did. They simply ran out of room. At the start of the 19th century, Napoleon bought new land on the outskirts of the city (and one in the center) to found new cemetery space. They became Montmartre Cemetery (North), Père Lachaise Cemetery (East), Montparnasse Cemetery (South) and Passy Cemetery (near the Eiffel Tower). There were many problems with different people of different religions refusing to be buried next to each other. So Napoleon saw to it several famous people were buried there, leading many to clamor to find their final rest near such celebrities. The graves of many famous people are there still and have become tourist destinations.

Appendix 4 - L'Agence (The Agency)

The Agency is an organization, cloaked in secrecy and shadows. It was founded soon after the first ether flyers set off for other planets by a group of underworld masterminds. They all realized one simple fact: travel to other planets would change everything. New territories and new commodities were going to become available, but none of them were going to be keen to share. Looking to set some ground rules before things got too far, the representatives of leading organized gangsters from all over the world met to talk terms.

It was a tense meeting at best, but much to everyone's surprise it produced results. War was going to be bad for everyone's business. So they were willing to talk, if not co-operate entirely. None of the gang leaders were interested in conceding territory, especially as no one knew what might be out there. So what was mainly agreed was to start small scale and not make too much noise about any new operations. They would also inform each other where they created new operations to avoid treading on each other's toes, creating a 'first come, first served' policy. Of course, they all knew that if someone found something lucrative, this policy would be the first to go. But it was worth letting your rivals test the waters while you did the same somewhere else.

The other problem with operations on other planets was logistics. Interplanetary travel was more heavily monitored and in the early days the various militaries all operated more patrols. So the criminal council decided to fund a new organization to manage the movement of their goods. This new 'Agency' would smuggle whatever the council needed moving between worlds. They created contacts aboard military ships and traders to secret their goods among the cargoes. With one group organizing the

entire operation, there was significantly less danger of too much merchandise changing hands and alerting the authorities.

Unfortunately, everyone gets greedy eventually. No one knows what caused the Agency to go rogue. Some say it was one of the criminal council looking to take control of the entire operation. Some say the Agency got greedy. Some say the authorities discovered too much and took them down. What is known is that one day the criminals running the Agency on behalf of the council turned up dead, all of them, in a variety of ways. Agency ships vanished, as did several cargoes that were expected. Records vanished and any documentation about the Agency's resources disappeared. It was enough to tear the fragile criminal council apart. Each blamed the other, demanded recompense and turned to violence when they were refused. A vicious war that almost no one has ever heard about flared briefly. Luckily, the war was only fought to save face, and each mastermind was keen to get back to rebuilding their own operations before the others moved in. So with much growling and bad feeling, things gradually went back to how they had always been.

But the Agency had not vanished. While its original leaders had been chosen for their loyalty to their gangs, their underlings had been chosen for their skill. It was these underlings who realized they didn't need the upper levels of management and constructed a daring plan for independence. Once it was complete, no one knew who they were, or what resources they commanded. They dug in, making secrecy their watchword lest their previous owners find them and take revenge. There could be no mistakes, they had basically stolen from the worse criminals of the time and they would be dead if they were found.

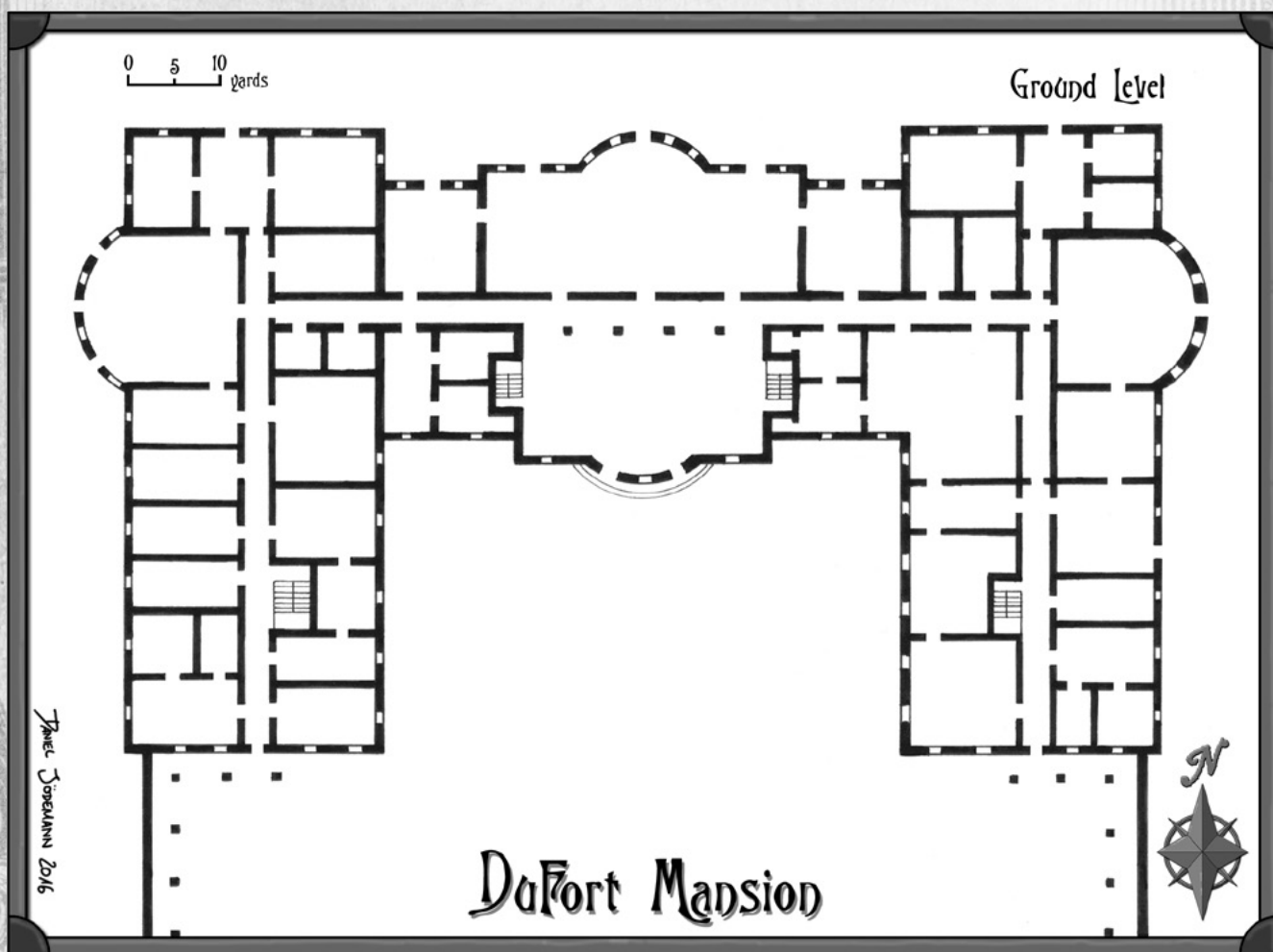
The Agency itself has prospered since going independent. It is primarily a smuggling operation, but it has contacts across the solar system. It owns ships through shell companies and even runs a few legitimate shipping lines. There is no central office, and it maintains operations by ensuring no single person is in charge. The plan is simple; every operative knows they can make a lot of money working in their area of the organization. But the labyrinthine structure of the Agency ensures everyone has someone they report to. You could go mad trying to find the top; although there are always rumors that in truth, one person sits in the center of the web.

So far the organization has managed to grow and prosper. Everyone works for the Agency rather than one kingpin, and if they get greedy that's fine, as long as they keep the money flow-

ing back to the organization itself. However, there are rumors of an oversight organization. People within the agency disappear now and again. Maybe they were discovered by the Agency's rivals, maybe the authorities got to them. But maybe they said too much, or took too much, or just didn't do their job very well, and someone decided their usefulness was at an end.

The Agency operates in several countries and planets. It works as an agency for moving merchandise and now as a bespoke service for unique objects. It remains highly secretive, its clients rarely knowing who they are dealing with. But if you know the right people and earn their trust, you might get an invitation. The price will be steep, but they promise to find you anything you might possibly desire.

Appendix 5 - Handouts



Everything Jules Verne could have written.
Everything H. G. Wells should have written.
Everything Arthur Conan Doyle thought of
but never published – because it was too fantastic.

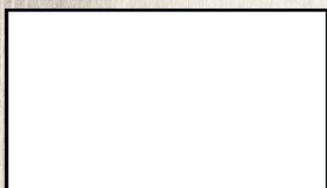
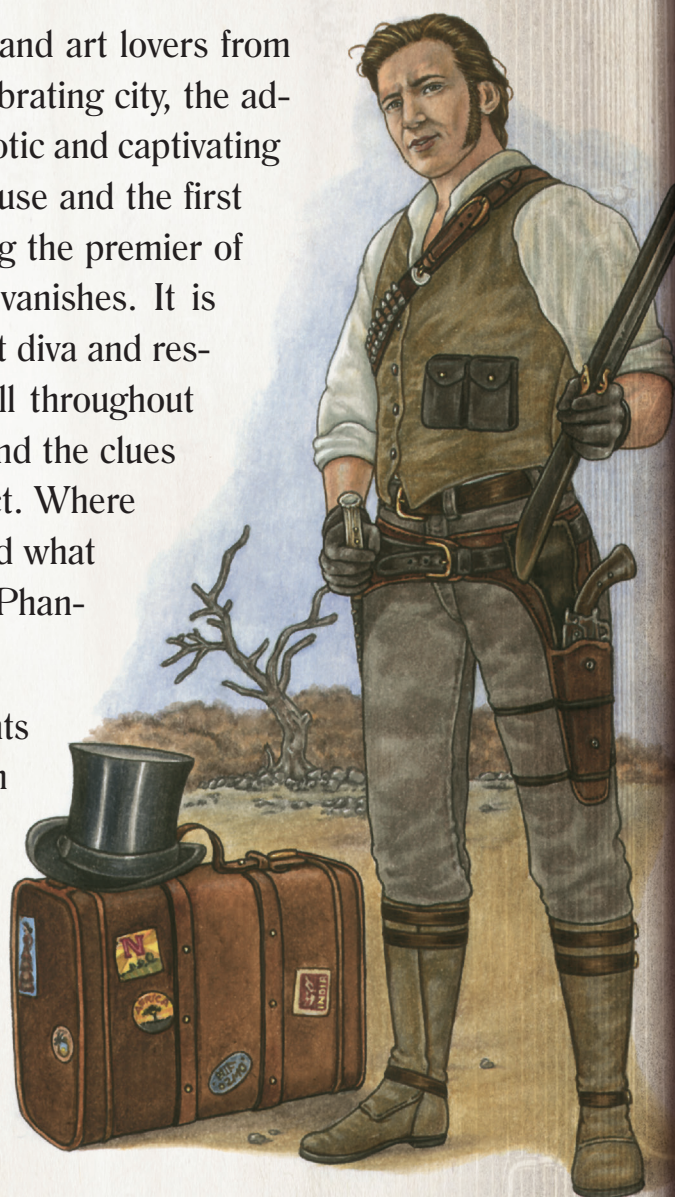
SPACE

1889

Nocturne in the City of Lights

Paris, the ‘city of lights’, home to artists and art lovers from all over the world—and beyond. In this vibrating city, the adventurers make the acquaintance of the exotic and captivating Alia, the latest star at the Paris Opera house and the first Martian opera singer on Earth! But during the premier of her latest opera, the songbird suddenly vanishes. It is now up to the adventurers to find the great diva and rescue her. Their investigations lead them all throughout Paris but some things just don’t add up and the clues seem to lead to more than just one suspect. Where is Alia? Who is behind her abduction? And what does it all have to do with the mysterious ‘Phantom of the Opera’?

This adventure includes a description of sights and points of interests in Paris as well as an overview on life and work in theatre.



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