

SHADOW CRAFT

MISSION FOLIO



DEFOGGI

FEEHAN

RUTHENBECK

SHADOWCRAFT

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INTRODUCTION

Missions are at the core of a session of Shadowcraft. They are what gives a group of Shadow Agents purpose. In some ways, they are much like the traditional fantasy quest. Missions bind the group together, define their foes, and provide a reward. But missions differ from the standard adventure in principle. Shadow Agents are not itinerant wanderers who meet at an inn; they were chosen by their superiors for their particular skill sets. Shadow Agents are not pitted against random monster, but the forces of a dark foe that seek to end the Noraluan way of life. Shadow Agents are not after wealth, but to free their land from the shadow of Spectres.

Shadowcraft missions require a much tighter focus than a typical fantasy adventure. This supplement gives Game Masters the tools they will need to create mission frameworks, as well as twenty mission briefings. Tell your agents to grab their gear, prepare their expressions, and get to work. Arcadia will not save itself.

SHADOW AGENT TEAMS

Teams of Shadow Agents are often brought together for specific purposes. And if that unique mix of Agents turns out to be successful at a particular type of mission, you can be sure the Ministry will be looking to repeat that kind of success as often as it can. Part of Fate is creating a group identity, a unique story for your characters as one of the lens through which you view the world. As Shadowcraft has a slightly narrower focus than a traditional fantasy game, below are some sample Shadow Agent Teams. These teams have all grown to the point where they have split into a number of smaller teams, each one lead by one of the original members, each still claiming the original title. Plus, establish teams recruit new members when Agents fall, allowing for new recruits to be shepherded by veteran agents, continuing the theme.

The following Shadow Agent Teams can be used as starting points for players and Gamemasters to communicate what type of story they want to tell. Does your group want to play as part of the Crimson Tatters? Expect high-octane monster hunting. Fancy yourselves more a group of relic hunting dungeon delvers? Check out the Lonely Companions as a possible starting point. They also provide Gamemasters with potential allies and rivals to use in their games. The Ministry is not a monolithic organization, and often teams of Shadow Agents can be caught working opposite sides of the same mission.

Additionally, perhaps your table's team is a joint taskforce. An amalgamation of specialists from a variety of established teams brought together for a particular mission. One which may go down in the legends of the Glamour War. A legend which may lead to the creation of a team of its own.

An established team may become a group aspect for all of the members to call on. Members of the Broken Key, whoever they may be at this time, have a history of finding out things better left unknown. Why not make it a joint aspect the group can draw on?

Each team has also been pre-assigned missions from this book which suit its style.

The Broken Key

You are the Broken Key. You know what people wish you didn't. Whether this is the name of the Summer King's lover or an eldritch passphrase, your mind is riven with expressions of memory, and you recall everything. You are an investigator, a code breaker, and a torturer as the need arises. Your mission is to hear without being heard, see without being seen. You know what needs knowing, though it sears your soul.

The Cold Iron

You are the Cold Iron Veil. Charming as you are dangerous, you dance between the courts with the cruel grace and hungry rapine of a shrike. You can smell traitor's blood, and you know their weaknesses. A lover of nothing but justice and freedom, you none the less wear the alluring garb of the ballrooms and boudoirs. You are a blackmailer, a manipulator, a player at intrigues, and a sayer of glammers. Your mission is to hunt down the hexed, the enchanted, the traitors and wipe them out.

The Crimson Tatters

You are the Crimson Tatters. Disgraced Shadow Agents too valuable to retire, too dangerous to release into the wild. Your death would be considered a personal favor to a good half the Noraluan Courts and your name has permanent status on the Winter Court's "Talon Canto" a public kill list turned lullaby. You are a survivor, a hunter, and a butcher in turn. Your mission is to kill it. Large or small, whether you live or not is less important than whether it dies.

The Glint

You are The Glint. Like the secret voice of sparrows on the wing or the spinning flash of minnows, you are the unseen hand guiding seemingly unrelated events. A small army of battle-scarred adventurers, overworked administrators, sweating day laborers, cunning thieves, and kept women all answer to you whether they know it or not. From where you are standing it is all connected, and you know exactly who and where to push, pull, bribe, or threaten. Never in person but never still, you are the spider in the web. Your mission is to know it all and with that knowledge break the Spectres who unwittingly stumble across your ever widening path.

The Lonely Companions

You are the Lonely Companions. You toil alongside the subterranean crypts of your predecessors, their very bones, and your own the keepers of secrets too dangerous for the Winter Court, the Spectres, or even the Ministry to know. You are delvers, smugglers, thieves, and liars, protecting a thankless world. Your Mission is to recover the lost magic of the fey, the reality-bending, world ending, mind breaking wonders of an ageless aeon and put it where no-one will ever find it. Ever.



RANDOM MISSIONS

Sometimes a Gamemaster will have an idea for a mission in mind, and other times, they need something to get the creative juices flowing. Below are a set of tables to craft a mission briefing with a series of 4df rolls. Some of these rolls will produce a tight adventure framework for a game master, while others may still require some thought to figure out how the pieces all fit together. They are meant to help provide a quick outline of a mission, not replace a game master.

**ROLL
4dF**

MISSION TYPE

- 4 **Assassination:** The Ministry has sent the agents after a high priority target. Terminate with extreme prejudice.
- 3 **Retrieval:** A deep cover asset (personnel or relic) needs pulled out before they (it) are discovered.
- 2 **Counter-Espionage:** The Ministry has sent the agents after a high priority target. They must flip the asset through any means necessary.
- 1 **Decoy:** The agents are providing cover for another team's mission.
- 0 **Intelligence:** Someone has information that the Ministry has deemed necessary. The Agents have been tasked with its recovery.
- +1 **Counter-Intelligence:** Spectre may have discovered something damning. Find out what it is, and either steal it, destroy it, or replace it with false intel.
- +2 **Sabotage:** A Spectre operation has come to light. Put an end to it.
- +3 **Delve:** The Ministry has established the location of a Fey relic which must be recovered before Spectres can get their hands on it.
- +4 **Expurgation:** New information has been gained concerning a Shadowland, legendary creature, or curse. Act on it, and cleanse Arcadia from its foulness.

ROLL
4dF

LOCATION

- 4 **Sidhe (page 98):** The Agents mission will take them to the edge of the known world. To the city of Sidhe, controlled by the Winter Court.
- 3 **Hedge (page 98):** The Hedge extends for many miles along the southern reaches of Arcadia. It is the heart Winter Court's land, and they have many clandestine operations hidden in the shadow of the brambles.
- 2 **Southern Villages:** These are the places lost in the first hours of the Nightmare Hordes arrival. They have been under the sway of the Winter Court since that time, abandoned by the Courts due to the Treaty of Ceol. Also, the Breach is found here, and its corruption demarcates the border of the Winter Courts' holdings.
- 1 **Ironhold Mountains (page 99):** The realm of the Stonekin is deep within the halls of the mountain. Even here, protected by distance and stone, the Glamour War is waged.
- 0 **Ceol (page 96):** At the heart of Arcadia, and the Glamour War, Ceol is a hot bed of espionage activity. The divided city, each side holding half of it, provides the perfect backdrop for any mission.
- +1 **Ban Wood (page 100):** Home to the Sylvan, and strange ancient expressions, the land here is heavy with enchantment. More so than anywhere else in court held lands, nothing is as it seems.
- +2 **Shadowlands:** These areas of poisoned essence congeal throughout the realm, although most are found at site of battle or within the Winter Court controlled lands. Dark expression holds sway within, and Spectre agents love to create them to expand their influence.
- +3 **Fey Ruin:** Scattered throughout Arcadia, these ruins may hold the secrets the Courts need to turn the War in their favor. Built by the Lost Ones' inscrutable masters, they are laws unto themselves. Secrets and danger lie within.
- +4 **The Realm Tenebrous (page 22):** It sounds impossible, but the mission will require the Agents to leave Arcadia behind and travel, in body or spirit, into the Realm Tenebrous. The Quartermaster better have a unique artifact, or the handler some pertinent information on how to cross over.

ROLL
4dF

THREATS

- 4 **Villain:** There are those whose names are whispered. Members of Winter who cause terror in all who know of them. Their reach is long and their attention deadly. See pages 136-146 of the Shadowcraft book for terrible foes.
- 3 **Fey Cursed:** Whether the fallout of a familial bane or the subject of an ancient expression drug up from a ruin, the Shadow Agents must face a fey cursed soul.
- 2 **Monsters:** Arcadia is home to more than just the Lost Ones. Ogres, formorians, and giants roam Winter's lands and often cross north of the Breach. Soldiers of the Lost Ones may be ill-equipped to putting such an incursion down, and Shadow Agents may find themselves acting as a silvered dagger in the heart of these beasts.
- 1 **Spectres:** The dark mirror of the Shadow Agents, these are Winter's elite soldiers of the Glamour War. Wherever Shadow Agents ply their trade, there is a good chance there are Spectres dogging their heels.
- 0 **The Winter Court:** These are the nobles, soldiers, and citizenry of the Winter Court. The vast majority of Kormillians in the north fall into this category.
- +1 **Spectres:** The dark mirror of the Shadow Agents, these are Winter's elite soldiers of the Glamour War. Wherever Shadow Agents ply their trade, there is a good chance there are Spectres dogging their heels.
- +2 **The Hawk:** A constant thorn in the side of the Ministry and its agents, The Hawk constantly root out espionage in Noraluan lands.
- +3 **Agents of the Courts:** There are as many agendas in the Noraluan lands as there are ministers. Sometimes Shadow Agents may find themselves opposing their own countrymen for the greater good of Arcadia. This can be due to deception, machinations, or even vendettas.
- +4 **Double Agents:** Shadow Agents are not the only ones who know the benefits of a well-placed agent. Sometimes the foe they fight against is one of their own who has sold out the Noraluan way of life.

Interest Tables

The above tables provide the who, where, and why for a scenario, but sometimes you need a what. Below are three tables for people, objects, and information of interest to provide the GM with more inspiration. Roll on any or all of the following tables to help generate a mission.

| ROLL 1dF | INTEREST |
|-------------|-------------------------|
| -1 | Information of Interest |
| 0 | Object of Interest |
| +1 | Person of Interest |

| ROLL 2dF | INFORMATION |
|-------------|--|
| -2 | Key to a Shadowland: Could it be possible that this information contains what the Shadow Agents would need to cleanse a Shadow Land? |
| -1 | Study of a Fey Ruin: Whichever side has been working on it, they have discovered pertinent information on how to access one of the great Fey ruins. |
| 0 | Intelligence on the Winter Court: Intelligence of this sort is what keeps the Shadow Agents active. Information on weaknesses in the Nightmare Horde, strategic deployments, potential double agents, or Spectre plans. This information should always lead to more missions. |
| +1 | Intelligence on the Noraluan Court: This is strategic information on the Noraluan court. If it were to get out it could: foster strife between the Lost Ones, expose weaknesses in the Armies of the Lost, or expose secrets the Ministry would prefer to keep buried. |
| +2 | Identity of a Double Agent: The first step to dealing with a double agent is knowing one is there. |

ROLL
2dF
OBJECT

- 2 **Relic:** These items are powerful enough to swing the balance of power in a conflict. Keeping them out of Spectre hands, or recovering them, are always a top Ministry priority.
- 1 **Formorian Data:** The Formorians are still a mystery to the Ministry. Any information that could be added to the Codex is well worth the risk to recover.
- 0 **Access:** In the Glamour War, overcoming security is often the first step in a mission. This can mean: getting invited to the right party, having a meeting scheduled with the correct individual, learning the passcode to a Spectre safehouse, or sometimes even having a specific key.
- +1 **Incriminating Documentation:** Noraluan or Kormillian, documents this damning are always desired. The Ministry uses them to keep allies in line, recruit blackmailed Kormillians, or justify sanctioned assassination.
- +2 **Map of Fey Ruin:** Fey ruins abound, but not all are known. This map provides the means to find an obscured ruin. Perhaps it lies through a portal in the Banwood, or at beneath the Tower of the Magistrate within Ceol. Or at the bottom of the Breach?

ROLL
2dF
PEOPLE

- 2 **Expressionist:** A powerful expressionist has come under scrutiny and must be dealt with.
- 1 **Soldier:** A member of the Army of the Lost, or its Winter counterpart the Nightmare Horde, must be taken care of.
- 0 **Courier:** The mission targets someone carrying vital messages or information.
- +1 **Courtier:** One of the many nobles within Arcadia has drawn the attention of the Ministry.
- +2 **Minister:** One of Noraluans own is the person of interest in this mission.

Natalie is prepping for her Shadowcraft game and decides to roll up a random mission. Grabbing her fate dice, she rolls 0,0,-1. This gives her an intelligence mission, in Ceol, against the Spectres. A nice standard mission. But then she decides to roll on the objective tables. Doing so she rolls a 0 and a -1. After looking at the objectives, she decides on a courier transporting the study of a Fey Ruin. Not only does this provide a setup for one story, Shadow Agents bravely foiling a Spectre attempt to discover a Fey ruin in Noraluan territory, but succeed or fail the ruin provides the next story for her.

MISSION OUTLINES

Below are twenty mission outlines for you to bring to the table. Each is laid out in the following fashion: Rope, Knot, and Noose. The Rope provides the hook for each mission. The Knot fleshes out the twists and turns of the mission. And Noose provides the climax.

The Banquet of the Sinner King

Rope

Beck Madeyes (see page 138) is hosting one of his annual banquets. The greater courts of the Noraluans and Kormillians will be in attendance, as it is strangely within view of this madman that the Glamour War can be set aside. The Shadow Agents are in attendance as well. Messages are passed, alliances are set, and a year's worth of missions may be mined from this singular evening. The Sinner King sits upon his dais, hand forever on his black blade, searching for some unseen infraction. An excuse to feed someone to his sphinx.

Knot

The intelligence potential of this banquet is mind boggling. The Ministry has a chance to observe Kormillian agents who never travel north of Sidhe. They also must maintain the highest level of vigilance as they are tasked with security of all court members. Spectre roams these halls, so all who attend are at risk for death, blackmail, and enchantment. While Madeyes nominally keeps the peace, he also enjoys a good show, so will only step in before the final blow falls. Many an old score between Spectre and the Ministry are settled in the halls of the Sinner King.

Noose

This is also the time when the courts negotiate with Beck, seeking to turn the mad mercenary into a weapon against the other. The stakes are high, as Beck's army has grown over the winter. The Ministry negotiators are here with the backing of the three courts, and Winter's bids are here as well, having lost last year. Agents are sent to discover what Winter's plan is, steal bids back after late-night thefts, and more importantly, guard the negotiators against Spectre influence.

Big and Friendly

Rope

Sylvan scouts have reported into the Ministry, and teams have been pulled in from all over Arcadia. A giant has come down from the Slatesky mountains, and the Ministry is desperate to recruit it. They know that Spectre is probably already on their way as well. Multiple Shadow Agent teams are being deployed. They must recruit the giant or slay it if Spectre sways it to Winter's cause.

Knot

With multiple teams in the field, tensions are high, and the chances for misunderstandings abound. Especially when it is discovered that one of the teams has turned up dead. Is there a leak, is someone within the Ministry cleaning house or settling old scores, or is something more insidious going on? The Agents must attempt to cut through the layers of misdirection to discover the perpetrator, or else Spectre will cut through them when they all converge on the Giant.

Noose

Finally, on the plains north of Highmount, the giant appears. Graveltone is the giant in question, and it sits in the foothills, awaiting the Lost Ones. Graveltone carries a message and with it a fabulous revelation, it speaks for a being known as the Heart of the Range. The essence of the Slatesky Mountains wishes to see what the Lost Ones have done with their stewardship of Arcadia. Graveltone invites the Agents and the Spectres to journey into the Slateskies to meet with the Heart of the Range, hinting at a great reward to be revealed. The Spectres leap at the chance to prove they are better heirs of Arcadia than their Noraluan brethren. Should the Shadow Agents slay Graveltone or pit themselves against their Winter counterparts? Whatever they choose, should violence break out between the Lost Ones, Graveltone will sadly depart never to be seen again, lamenting the pettiness of the creatures of Arcadia.

The Book of Banded Fate

Rope

Recalled to Lancaster, the Shadow Agents are rushed into a meeting with the Masked Minister himself. Three days ago, the Spring Court convened to discuss the buildup of troops with Ambassador Donogh along the Treaty line. Six hours into the meeting, a bright flash was seen in the Hall of Noralua. When the Hawk checked on it, the Spring Court and Ambassador Donogh were missing. An iron-bound book lay in the center of the hall, resting on a scorch mark. The Book of Banded Fate.

Knot

The Book of Banded Fate is the obvious starting point for the investigate. It seems completely inert at this point. Within the book is the strange script of the Fey, and pictures of the Minsters of the Spring Court and Ambassador Donogh. Each scene is beautifully rendered and depicts the delegates in various torments. Some are trapped within the burning Hall of Noralua, while others are running across the moors of Highmount being chased by ogres. The pictures seem to shift with every glance, bringing the tormentors closer to the Minsters. How much time the Agents have to solve the riddle of the book is unknown, but finite.

Who used the Book? That is left purposely vague. It could have been the Ambassador, who has already shown a penchant for cheating death, but that is on the nose. The Hawk trying to implicate Shadow Agents, a misguided member of one of the courts, or even a disenfranchised Sylvan all make for better twists.

Noose

Retrieving the trapped delegates is dangerous, as any Agents risk being trapped within the cursed tome as well. However, that is the only way to save the delegates, one at a time by journeying into the book. Meanwhile discovering who was being this assassination attempt is also a primary goal of the Shadow Agents. Someone crept into the Hall of Lost One power and took out the entirety of the Spring Court. That cannot go unpunished. If Agents take too long in their attempts, and the torments catch up with those trapped in the pictures, those pages become blank, and the Lost Ones in question are consumed by the text. When all of the pictures are blank once again, the book can be activated again. What the Agents and the Ministry do with such a weapon is left up to you.

The Cleansing of Dimhollow

Rope

Near the end of the war, the town of Dimhollow fell to the Nightmare Horde. A traitor was instrumental in the fall of the town, and the betrayal lead to the formation of a Shadowland. Every new moon, the spirits of the dead rise to reenact the terrible slaughter. Dimhollow is remote enough that the Courts have left it alone, but now the Ministry has uncovered information about Dimhollow, more importantly about a secret lost during the end of the war. The mission is straightforward. Get to Dimhollow, unravel the truth about what happened, and expurgate the shadowland.

What was lost in Dimhollow? Short answer: whatever you need. A Fey Ruin, the location of a Kormillian artifact cache, the lost load of iron (page 92), etc. The 'secret' is whatever fits best in your story. The important part is that it is carried by the spirit of a dead Shadow Agent currently locked inside the Shadowland.

Knot

The battle of Dimhollow lasts from sundown to sunrise, which is problematic.

Mainly because battle did not occur during those hours. The best records state that the battle took place sporadically over three days and that the betrayal took place around noon. Any leg work the Agents do to research the town should be used but should be changed. Events take place out of order; time is compressed, the days shift and twist during the nightly reenactment.

The key to unraveling the Shadowland, and enabling an expurgation is discovering the traitor, exposing him, and then slaying him. That will break the hold on the spirits. However, if the traitor's spirit is not dealt with through an expurgation ritual, the tainted essence will slowly reform the Shadowland after a year and a day.

Noose

The Agents will find that the Dimhollow Shadowland is possessive of all within its boundaries. If the Agents do not take steps to leave the Shadowland before dawn, they find themselves trapped within the Realm Tenebrous during the day. If they fail to escape by the third night, they find themselves trapped, unable to escape the Shadowland. As far as the Ministry knows, no Shadowland has been cleansed from within. This leaves the Agents trapped forever, or until the next expurgation squad comes around.

Who was the betrayer of Dimhollow? None other than the Shadow Agents of Arcadia. A group of agents was working to discover and keep the secret of Dimhollow out of Spectre hands. When all seemed lost, a desperate plan was concocted: throw open the gates to the town, and in the ensuing chaos, take

out the Spectres and escape with the secret. In the end, both sides found their essence bound to Dimhollow, doomed to play out their part of the Glamour War in perpetuity.

The Faceless Man

Rope

A Ministry Agent in the Bânwood has gone missing. One of the members of the Pride of the Bânwood council, this disappearance is disturbing as the Pride is planning to make her annual trip to the Falls of Lands End, on the anniversary of both her ascension to the chieftainship and the prophecy which announces her end. Her defiance of prophecy is well known, but the Ministry takes it quite seriously. Especially when a highly-placed Shadow Agent disappears.

Knot

The investigation into the missing agent must be handled discreetly, as technically the Ministry is not supposed to have placed agents in the retinue of the Pride. Investigations into the Agent's disappearance leads the agents into the Pale Wood. There they soon discover that several other Sylvan has gone missing as well. The missing Sylvan are all connected to the Pride's journey to the Falls: The husband of the Pride's chief huntress, the brother of her hound master, etc. Deep within the Pale Wood, beneath a single tree scarred black by dark expression lie the bodies of the missing. It is then that the Agents discover that the Pride's retinue has been infiltrated by none other than Scriptor Bann, Taker of Faces (see page 144 in the *Shadowcraft* core book).

Noose

The Shadow Agents must race to the Falls of Lands End before Scriptor Bann completes his bloody work. But to just storm in would reveal the Ministry's presence in violation of the Pride's prescription. In addition to that, how do you reveal a man who can flawlessly impersonate anyone? Clues may abound, but the Agents will have to be canny and discreet, epitomes of the name Shadow Agent, to uncover the assassin and prevent the prophecy of Pride's Fall.

Full of Stars

Rope

Chatter suggests that the Spectres has dug up a key piece of information concerning the resting place of relic known as the Veil of Forever. The Ministry still has no information on the relic itself, but anything which Winter wants as badly as this is something the Ministry wants to keep out of their hands. A group of Spectres raided a museum in Windcliff and are making their way to Farreach. The mission requires the Shadow Agents to track down a group of Spectres traveling south of the Treaty Line and prevent the information from making it to Farreach.

Knot

The information is a relic in and of itself. It is carried by a Wraith, who will use every means at her disposal to get it to Farreach, including sacrificing the rest of her team. The relic the Orb of the Heavens. It is a Faeglass orb etched with the constellations of the Arcadian night sky (all of them, as each season's stars, are represented). If held up to the eye while looking into the night sky, the orb highlights for the viewer several constellations. These are unknown to the Lost Ones, as the fey held far different patterns for the stars than their children do. It is unclear what the orb is trying to convey, or how it relates to the Veil of Forever.

Noose

Finding the Spectre team behind enemy lines is a tough enough mission. It becomes much harder when the Agents realize that there are multiple decoy teams and ogre squads between them and their quarry. Discovering the correct Spectre group is vital to completing the mission before the orb gets to Farreach. When they do discover the orb, getting it off of the Spectres becomes the main goal. Finally, if the group fails to stop the Spectres from reaching Farreach, they may have one last chance to get the orb before it disappears, using their contacts and resources within Farreach. However, the person who wants the orb is none other than the Winter Weaver.

Hunt in the Dark

Rope

Shadow Agents are the subtle knife, while the Armies of the Lost are the broadsword. Sometimes both need to work together to win a larger victory for Arcadia. Such is the case of the hunt for the formorian known as The Remembrance in Flesh. It has hunted along the Whiterun River for the past three months, attacking any Noraluans who come near its hunting grounds. The Ministry has lost two teams to the creature, and the Army of the Lost has seen squads slaughtered. The time has come to put an end to The Remembrance in Flesh.

Knot

The Agents are assigned to a joint task force with the Armies of the Lost. The Army will act as bait, containment, and support while the Agents are to bring the beast down. Tracking the formorian is nearly impossible as it lives in the Whiterun, and river runs deep for the majority of its journey to Baymark. Luring the formorian out will take an extremely clever plan, as it seems far more intelligent than other formorians. But slaying The Remembrance in Flesh is vital to keeping Ceol supplied through the winter.

Noose

The fact of the matter is The Remembrance in Flesh is not a singular intelligence, but an amalgam of intellects all bound to one terrible will. Remembrance is a strange being who consumes the bodies of those he slays, and whose he slays appear as images on its flesh. No trace of any Lost One so slain is ever seen again, despite the expressions employed. This is because the beast aggregates their souls into its. Information, expression techniques, and skills all join its gestalt consciousness. This hunt may be the most difficult mission the Shadow Agents will ever attempt.

The Lament of Malice

Rope

Long ago, before the Fey vanished from Arcadia, the Lost Ones waged war against their masters. Until they discovered the Red Poison, however, they possessed no teeth with which to bite the hand of the Fey. But iron provided, at least in their minds, the weapon of their revenge. It was tested by luring one of the fey into a prepared chamber beneath Aileach. There Noralua and her conspirators tricked the fey into bands of iron and tested their new weapons on it. Long was the experiment, and slow was their vengeance taken this first time. In the end, it is said that the fey lord died, but not before its final song was sung, slaying itself and all who heard it.

Knot

The force of the words of the song, known as the Lament of Malice, echo in the stones of the chamber where they were sung all those years ago, the words cut into the stone by the power of the fey lords dying breath. Someone has now uncovered that chamber, drawn there by the pain in their own heart, and unwittingly becoming the vessel for the lament's power. Learning the words to ancient lament, the Lost One is slowly being overcome by its power, the death song of the fey driving the bard to greater recitals of the song, leaving a trail of bodies throughout Lancaster.

Noose

The Shadow Agents are drawn in during an investigation of deaths in a local tavern, frequented by those of Winter sympathies. All those within the tavern were slain, their essence annihilated. Only black shadows, still writhing, were found at on the scene. The Shadow Agents must race to discover who is behind this terrible new weapon, and what they must do to stop it. The Lament drive the bard to greater and greater massacres, soon the whole of the City of Glass is imperiled. The implications of the song, and the effect it has on those who learns its words has dark implications for all of the Lost Ones of Arcadia, no matter the court which holds their allegiance.

A Much Needed Rest

Rope

Most of the time Shadow Agents operate in isolation, in highly intensity situations, which often end in life or death situations. Sometimes Agent teams are tasked with longer missions. These tend to be deep cover, long term asset protection, and in one case baby-sitting a crazed expressionist. The Cracked Glassers are the team tasked with making sure Winter stops manipulating Jobar Cricket-song (see page 138), and to try to curb some of Jobar's more dangerous experiments. When it is time for their annual week of rest and recovery, another Shadow Agent team steps in temporarily. Most other teams scoff at the Cracked Glassers thousand-yard stare or grim gallows humor. After all, how hard could guarding one Glassborn be?

Knot

Chaos reigns at Jobar's estate. Nowhere outside of the Realm Tenebrous or the heart of a fey ruin is reality so fluid, and the expressionism so flagrantly flaunted. Jobar himself is a genius who is distracted by new ideas at the best of times and completely ignores Arcadia when in the throes of creative invention. Much as he was during the briefing when the Cracked Glassers explained how they would be away for a week and a new team would cover his security. The changing of the guard happens at midnight, and Jobar is already passed out, having completed his newest invention. When he awakes, his team is missing, and strange new Lost Ones are roaming his home.

Noose

Jobar immediately goes on the offensive. Within Jobar's estate, he is king, and the Shadow Agents are faced by strange constructs and expressions, the crazed tricks of a mad man, and the dangerous expression of a Glassborn who has forgotten more about the trade than most Shadow Agents ever discover. To make matters worse, the latest invention of Jobar is one that Winter believes could aid in discovering the Veil of Forever. A particularly viscous team of Spectres have been dispatched to slay the expressionist and recover the treasure trove of his estate, before destroying the whole thing in an explosive climax of Siphoning expression.

Operation: Silenced Swallow

Rope

The Shadow Agents are the Ministry's tools in the Glamour War. But what happens when the glamour is thrown over the eyes of the Agents? Not every mission is for the good of Arcadia, or the defense of the Noraluan way of life. Not every one is for the greater good. The Ministry is filled with Lost Ones who would use the Glamour War as a cover and the Shadow Agents as tools for personal gain. When the Agents are briefed on Silenced Swallow, they are stepping into one such mission.

Knot

Terraven, a Sylvan member of the Summer Court, has had her eye on the seat of fellow minister Jallana. Their clans have been rivals for four generations, and Terraven is in a position to claim what she believes is hers. Having become aware of the Ministry's activity and the existence of the Shadow Agents, she plans to have Shadow Agents assassinate Jallana. The Ministry has inklings that this may be the case, but proceed anyway, as Jallana has been stonewalling key Ministry efforts in the Summer Lands, and Terraven has been clear that if she had the seat, the Ministry's acquisition of Banwood would be much simpler.

Noose

The Agents are tasked with assassinating Chief Jallana on her way back to the Sylvan lands after returning from a meeting in Lancaster. They are given very specific instructions. The Shadow Agents are to make it look like a Formorian attack slew the minister and her retinue, while making sure to capture Jallana and deliver her to a villa outside Ceol. Do the Shadow Agents have the moral ambiguity to assassinate loyal Noraluans on the promise of one Minister? If they manage to capture Jallana, they must escort her to the villa of her rival, and deliver her to her execution.

Recruitment Drive

Rope

The Dank Street Dozen is a group of street toughs in Ceol. They have made a name for themselves as extortionists and protection racketeers. Dank street is located south of Straight Street, therefore is south of the treaty line. The Dozen, closer to three times that number, in reality, operates on both sides of the line, and have very little to do with Dank Street. The Ministry knows the value of having local eyes and ears in service, and have sent the Shadow Agents in as recruiters and handlers.

Knot

Finding the home of The Dank Street Dozen is difficult, even for Shadow Agents. Their members are Ceol natives and have lived on the city's streets their whole lives. They gather at a small bakery called Stone Loaves. The gang as a whole reports to someone by the name of Mistlark. Mistlark

informs them of their targets, organizes the crews, and takes a cut of the action. If the Agents want to recruit the Dank Street Dozen, they need to recruit the Mistlark.

Noose

Complicating the matter of recruitment is Minster Orlathian, a Glassborn bureaucrat who is tired of hearing complaints about the Dank Street Dozen. The Minister has been setting the Watch to find and arrest the Dozen, and without knowing has captured the Mistlark. Where it to become know that he has the leader of the Dozen, Orlathian would set her up for a sudden drop and a sharp stop as a warning to all such gangs in Ceol. His hardline stance will require a delicate hand dealing with the Mistlark and the Dozen, especially if the Agents want to handle this under the Minister's nose.

Relocation Opportunities

Rope

The Shadow Agents are sent to the town of Brightlake to resolve a potentially bloody crisis. A clan of Ogres emerged from the Ironhold Mountains and had taken the town. The Ministry is unsure the status of the town, but to lose a settlement on Lake Kyre is a blow to efficacy of the Ministry. They want the ogres dealt with, and anyone still alive in Brightlake saved.

Knot

It turns out that the ogre chief took the town as a message, and all the townsfolk are safe. Toothripper was part of the clan who sought took Baymark in 345 A.V. Since its razing, Toothripper has longed for the security the city provided his clan and has come to a startling decision. Assuming they would allow his clan to settle in one of the ruins in Noraluan lands, the ogres of Toothripper's clan would provide the Courts two services. The first is they would offer their services against the Nightmare Horde, and the second is that Toothripper believes he knows what happened to one of the fabled Four Treasures. He assures the Shadow Agents that the ogres would pledge a geas to the Noraluan never to raise arms against them.

Noose

If the Shadow Agents believe Toothripper, they still have to convince their superiors. Although the fact that Toothripper will release all the hostages to the care of the Shadow Agents should go a long way. Granted they would have to find the ogres an acceptable ruin, and clear it out of all fey and Lost One artifacts beforehand. This could establish a Shadow Agent team as a group of skilled delves or non-Lost One negotiators, providing a new group aspect for the team.

Setup for a Fall

Rope

Called in by a handler by the name Minster Clarke, the Agents report to the quarters of a high-ranking general in the Army of the Lost. There they are tasked to deliver reports to a deep cover asset across the treaty line in Ceol. The documents, provided by Clarke indicate troop movements and redoubts in the treaty area of the Army of the Lost recon units for the next six months. This will provide the asset his drop sites and field assets for the same period. It is a simple jaunt across Straight Street, and back.

Knot

The Agents are met on their return to Noraluan held Ceol by The Hawk and her men. The Agents find that they have much to answer for. Namely the death of an Army general and stolen intel. They were clearly seen leaving the general's quarters, with the missing documentation. And who is this Minister Clarke they keep speaking of, there is no one by that name? The Hawk attempts to arrest them, charging them with treason and the punishment for said crime is death.

Noose

Hunted by the Ministry, the Shadow Agents have only a short time to clear their names, and bring Minister Clarke, whoever they are, to justice. They must do so from behind enemy lines, and without their usual aid. To complicate matters the Ministry prepares contingencies for occasions when Shadow Agents go rogue. Geasa, blackmail, true names and special counter-agent teams are all options which the Ministry will deploy to preserve its secrets in the face of a double agent, or ones they believe have turned. Their only ally in this is Ambassador Donogh, who makes contact and would willingly help the Shadow Agents. Perhaps he has issues with Minister Clarke, or maybe the Agents saved him from the Book of Banded Fate. Or maybe he has other agendas at play. If they accept his help and backing to clear their name, the Shadow Agents just end up looking worse in the eyes of the Ministry.

Singular Friend, Double Agent

Rope

Note: this mission works best if Samasin has been introduced long before this mission.

The Shadow Agents find themselves in the Training Grounds, with some other teams. It is a time of relaxation, training, and comradery. The Agents can reacquaint themselves with old friends on other teams, including Samasin, a Shadow Agent who is well known to the Agents. He leads a team which saves the Agents at one point, early in their career.

Knot

They are all in the midst of training, rest and recovery, etc, when the Masked Minister enters the Training Grounds surrounded by Ministry soldiers. It has come to the attention of the Ministry that they have a double agent in their midst. If the characters have played through 'Setup for a Fall' eyes may turn towards them. But the information points directly at Samasin. Samasin is taken into custody, leaving the chamber in dark still silence.

Noose

The Agents will no doubt attempt to clear the name of their friend. Searching for mind controlling fey artifacts, Hexer expressions, and the like. The truth of the matter is Samasin is guilty. He has been a double agent since the first day he stepped into the Training Grounds. Slowly, over the years, he began to doubt his loyalty to the Kormillian cause. His reports have become less useful, his actions to protect the Ministry more truthful, and his saving of the Shadow Agents indisputable. The Winter Court discovered this information and decided to out Samasin to let the Ministry deal with him and the chaos of discovering a Winter agent in their midst. It is not a matter of whether or not the Shadow Agents can prove his disloyalty, but whether they can prove Samasin's change of heart. And whether that matters to anyone, including them.

Slaying of the Fiend of Ironhold

Rope

The Autumn Court has requested aid from the Ministry, which is an unusual event. Normally the Stonekin handle their internal security, but the King of the Ironholds reached out through back channels. The Agents are informed that Spectre activity is suspected.

Knot

Bound within the deep vaults of the Ironholds is a golem from the early days of the war. This golem, known as The Fiend, was one of the early prototypes. Hearing about the strange new expression project, a Spectre agent by the name of Griss was dispatched to steal it. She attempted to Hex the pilot as the Stonekin Earthwright was melding into the golem, but was discovered and slain.

The Fiend activated, and the hex took hold. The golem went on a rampage, slaughtering all within site. The screams of the pilot could be heard within, but even when The Fiend was captured, none could retrieve him from within the stone frame. Uncontrollable and indestructible, the golem was locked away where its torments could not be heard, and the Earthwrights created lesser golems in imitation of The Fiend, to be better able to deal with a compromised unit.

Noose

Griss died during the attempt to hex the pilot, but her spirit lives on. Griss' spirit is entangled with that of the Stonekin pilot, which is has been fighting the Spectre for eight years. The trained Spectre agent is holding up far better than the Pilot and has started to gain control of The Fiend. The Hexer has bound access to the pilot's Earthwright powers, and thanks to her training and dark expression, has broken The Fiend out of the vault. The powerful war golem has been working its way towards the surface ever since. It randomly retreats or goes catatonic, whenever the unnamed pilot asserts control over Griss. This control is slipping, and soon Griss will be in full control. So far, The Fiend has been limited to the lower vaults, but soon Griss will make her way to the inhabited sections of the Ironholds. All attempts to stop the golem have failed. So the King of the Ironholds reached out to the Ministry, making promises of Scathan and iron for dealing with the Fiend.

Terror of Highmount

Rope

The Ministry has been preparing for Highmount's opening for almost a decade. The ruin held the artifacts which bought the peace of Ceol. The ruin is one of the largest in Arcadia, a complex of interlinked buildings both above and below ground, existing both in this world and the Brightlands. The best delvers in the Ministry have been assembling on the grounds for the last month, readying for the geas upon Highmount to retreat and grant them access. One of the teams reported that they discovered an area that was opened before the rest, and went into the ruins to scout them out. They were found the next morning, covered in dew and naked as the day they were born, and catatonic. All of their memories were missing. The Ministry sends the Shadow Agents to Highmount for a sit rep on the team and the ruins.

Knot

When the Shadow Agents arrive, the camp is in turmoil. The Delvers were attacked in the middle of the night by a pack of creatures seemingly made of shadows and claws. They ambushed the camp, wreaking havoc with complex tactics and sinister intelligence. The creatures show up again each night, fighting their way towards the catatonic delvers. Expression will quickly discover that the delvers are cursed with some magical contagion, and the beasts are the vector. Freeing the Delvers from the contagion curse should be a priority for the Agents. This requires traveling through the breach in the geas around Highmount, and discovering the artifact which the delvers disturbed, which bestowed the curse.

Noose

The mission becomes more complicated if one of the beasts is slain by a Shadow Agent, as the curse will transfer to the slayer. While they do not suffer catatonia, they will collapse at sunset. Their essence, tainted by the curse, will rise from their still form like a shadow beast and rush to join the pack. Their body will also become a target for the beasts, as if they slay the body they are linked to, the shadow beasts are freed to roam the Realm Tenebrous.

Through the Mirror

Rope

Rumors of a secret Spectre safe house and training ground within a major Noraluan city have been pervasive since the close of the war. The Ministry has run many deep cover operations attempting to discover the truth behind the rumors for years. Finally, intelligence has shown that the Spectres seem to be operating out of a small governmental building in Clearwater. However, while the Ministry has been able to nail down the building, they have yet been unable to pinpoint the safe house's location.

Knot

The safe house referred to in Winter missives as The Dark Respite, is an expression crafted pocket within the Realm Tenebrous. Built before the Nightmare Horde was first identified by the precursors of the Spectres, this safe house exists within the Brightlands. Accessed through an artifact in the shape of an ivory bound, full-length mirror. It was gifted to an especially vain member of the Spring Court, and it has remained in her family since. Currently, the mirrored is stored in the office her niece, a minor official in Clearwater who spends very little time away from her estates.

The mirror has a number of properties. The first is it always reflects a better image that is truly there. Reflections are grander, people more beautiful. It entraps the unwary by appealing to their vainglory. The second function of the mirror is to allow access to The Dark Respite. The Spectres have been exceedingly careful to ensure that the safe house is never at risk of turning into a Shadowland, as that would alert the Ministry of its presence.

Noose

Gaining access to The Dark Respite requires the Agents to locate the mirror and discover how to activate it. Tailing Spectres, staking out the office, or perhaps some old fashion percussive persuasion will grant the agents the information they seek. Once they discover The Dark Respite, do they shut the mirror down, trapping all within for eternity? Or do they attempt to clear out the pocket of the Brightlands, a well defended Spectre safe house, and use the enemies' artifact against them?

Two Can Keep a Secret

Rope

Dearin Caul is dead. The Agents are called in by the Ministry on a murder in Ceol. A merchant of fey artifacts, maps, and purveyor of recovered goods, there are many who would have wanted to see the Glassborn dead. However, the existence of a secret Ministry built vault beneath Dearin's shop should narrow the field. In fact, the evidence all points to the hand of one man, in particular, Ram Jenson (see page 140).

Knot

The Shadow Agent's handler will inform them that Dearin was a Whisperkeeper, one of the Ministry's many listening posts throughout Arcadia. And the Recondite Archive, the artifact which stores the secrets he has collected for the Ministry, is missing. That alone is troubling, but if Ram unlocks its storehouse of intelligence, then he would sell it to the highest bidder. These things are locked behind the best cypher wards, and puzzle traps the Ministry's expressionists can create, but Ram is known for his ingenuity.

Noose

When the Agents finally track Ram down, it is too late. He has already sent his men into the Recondite Archive to access it through the use of a little-understood story glamour. It creates a pocket within the Brightlands for his men to encounter the wards as physical obstacles for them to overcome, essentially an expression work around for the Ministry's safeguards. It would be an easy thing for the Shadow Agents to join Ram's thugs in the Brightlands and race to prevent them from unlocking the final access to the Archive. Ram is also always willing to make a deal, trading the Ministry's secrets for access to something even more lucrative, assuming the Agents can broker a deal.

Too Close for Comfort

Rope

A fey ruin has been recently discovered by another team of Shadow Agents within Ceol. They also managed to work their way past the entry seals, leaving the way to the ruin open. However, all the Agents save one were slain by strange figures of shadow and mist within the Ruin. To make matters worse, this ruin lies only two blocks from Straight Street, well within the patrol range of the Spectres.

Knot

The Ministry is uncertain what lies within this ruin. However, the fact that it went undiscovered for over 300 years is disconcerting. The Ministry has been over Ceol, and never detected it. The first part of the mission is simple. Whatever the ruin contains must be recovered by Shadow Agents. No fey ruin is safe, and the Ministry has already lost one team. But the mission orders also contain a very strange directive. They are to leave as many of the traps in the ruin active and foes they encounter alive. Tying their hands with mission directives like this is something the Agents should be used to, but still, increases the difficulty of a successful mission.

Noose

A ruin so close to the Treaty Line poses is the perfect bait for a Ministry operation. Once the ruin has been sacked, the Ministry wants the Agents to deliver a set of specially prepared artifacts to the ruin, reactivate the traps, and seal the door. The location will then be leaked to the Spectres. This serves the double purpose of thinning the ranks of Ceol Spectres, as well as having Spectres take relics which will enable the Ministry to scry and tracking their whereabouts into their camp. Assuming, that is, that the Spectres did not think of that first.

The Wayward Tavern

Rope

Jonessa is a Glassborn who grew up in the city of Bluewall. Her family runs the Listing Goose, a large tavern that quickly became the officers' club after Bluewall fell to the Nightmare Horde. The young Jonessa was soon serving drinks to the elite of the Winter Court's soldiery and passing information off her handler, a Sylvan Shadow Agent by the name of Seven Shadows. Seven Shadows believes that the time to pull Jonessa out is rapidly approaching, and she is not far off. She has contacted one of the Agents, someone who owes her a favor and requested a deep infiltration and extraction.

Knot

The situation is that Jonessa, Seven Shadows, and the Agents are in grave danger. A commander of the Nightmare Horde has discovered that someone has been leaking information and has been conducting his investigation for the last couple of months. He has traced the leak back to the Listing Goose and is going to make an example of the Inn. The commander is a hammer, not a scalpel, and he plans to have his attached squad of ogres burn the inn down, along with all who work at the Goose. Enter the Shadow Agents.

Noose

When the Agents arrive, they meet their contact Seven Shadows and are informed that the inn seems particularly quiet recently, most of the officers have not been in for the last two nights. She also informs the group that the extraction got much more complicated as Jonessa refuses to leave without her family. One person just jumped to six. When they arrive at the Listing Goose, flames have already begun to creep up the sides of the inn. A group of ogres are inside fighting with the inn's employees, and leading the attack is Jonessa. She has locked the whole group inside the inn and is fighting the commander, who is also trapped. The mission becomes one of finishing off the ogres, getting the family out of Bluewall, and perhaps investigating the new intelligence Jonessa discovered. The Nightmare Horde is apparently receiving a shipment of artifacts from beyond the Hedge within the next fortnight.

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