

It is better for a city to be governed by a good man than by good laws.
– Aristotle

DAUGHTER OF NEXUS

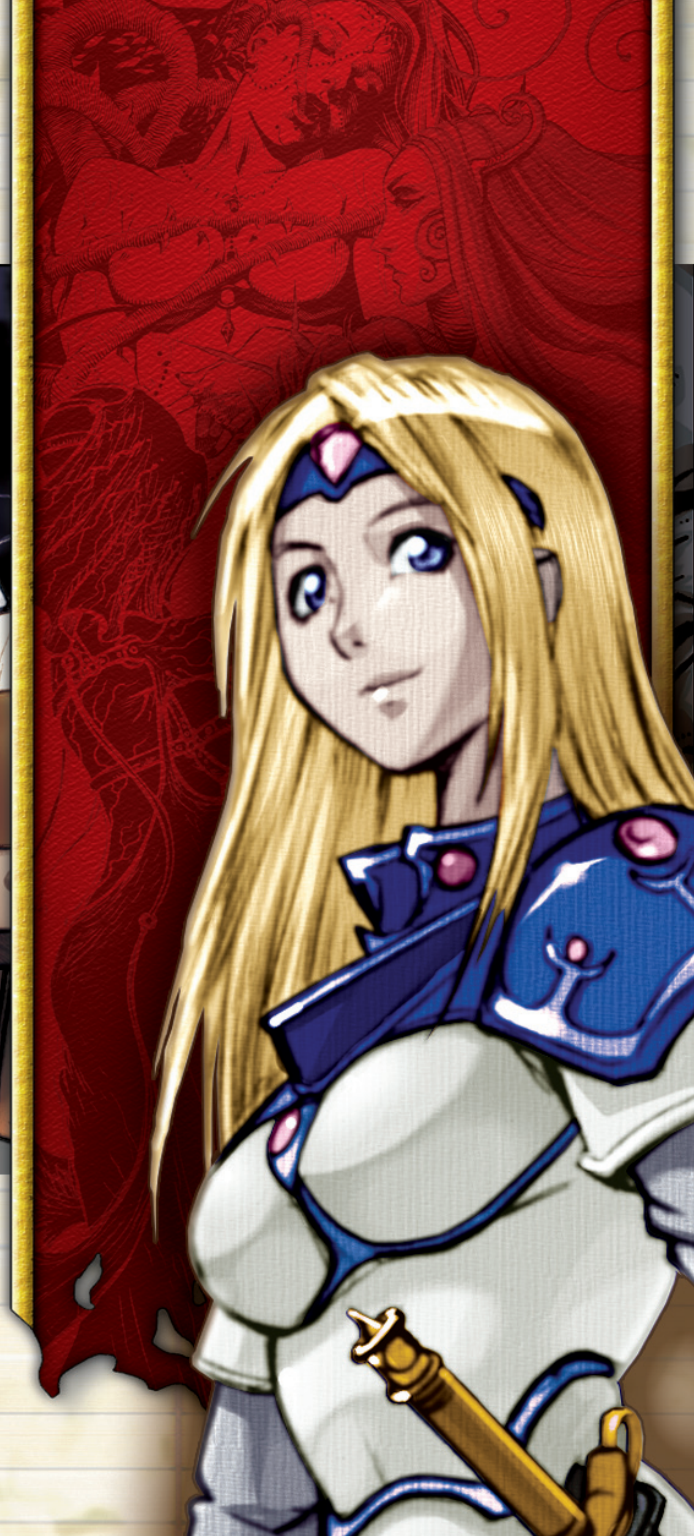
An adventure for Exalted
using the Storytelling Adventure System

Written by Adam Eichelberger Developed by Eddy Webb Edited by Genevieve Podleski Layout by Jessica Mullins Art: Justin Norman, Andy Brase, Ross Campbell, Andie Tong, Shane Coppage, Pop Mhan, Eva Widemann, Brandon Graham, Melissa Uran, UDON, and Imaginary Friends Studio

WHITE WOLF PUBLISHING, INC.
2075 WEST PARK PLACE BLVD
SUITE C
STONE MOUNTAIN, GA 30087

STORYTELLING ADVENTURE SYSTEM

	MENTAL	●●○○○
	PHYSICAL	●●●○○
	SOCIAL	●○○○○



It is better for a city to be governed by a good man than by good laws.
– Aristotle

DAUGHTER OF NEXUS

An adventure for Exalted
using the Storytelling Adventure System

Written by Adam Eichelberger Developed by Eddy Webb
Edited by Genevieve Podleski Layout by Jessica Mullins
Art: Justin Norman, Andy Brase, Ross Campbell, Andie Tong,
Shane Coppage, Pop Mhan, Eva Widemann, Brandon Graham,
Melissa Uran, UDON, and Imaginary Friends Studio

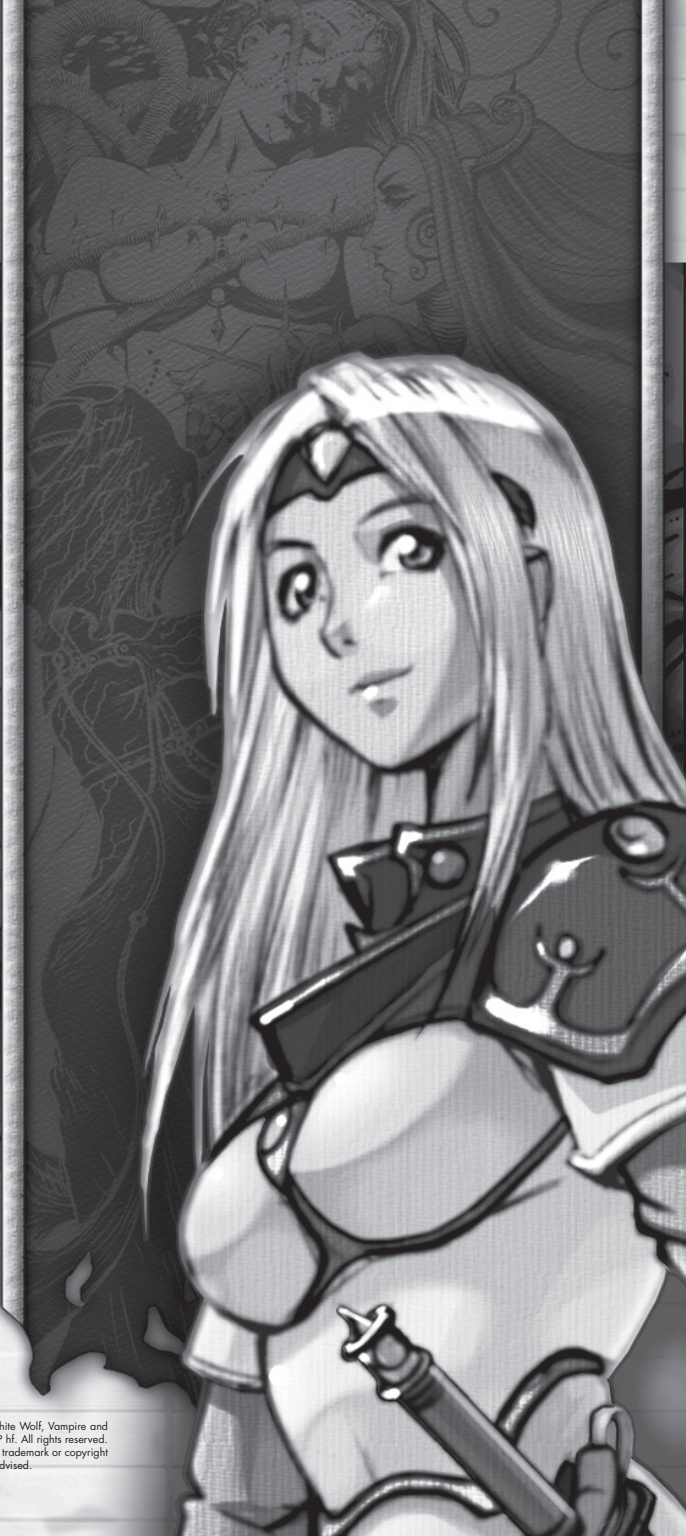
STORYTELLING ADVENTURE SYSTEM			
SCENES 14	MENTAL PHYSICAL SOCIAL	●●○○○ ●●●○○ ●○○○○	XP LEVEL 34

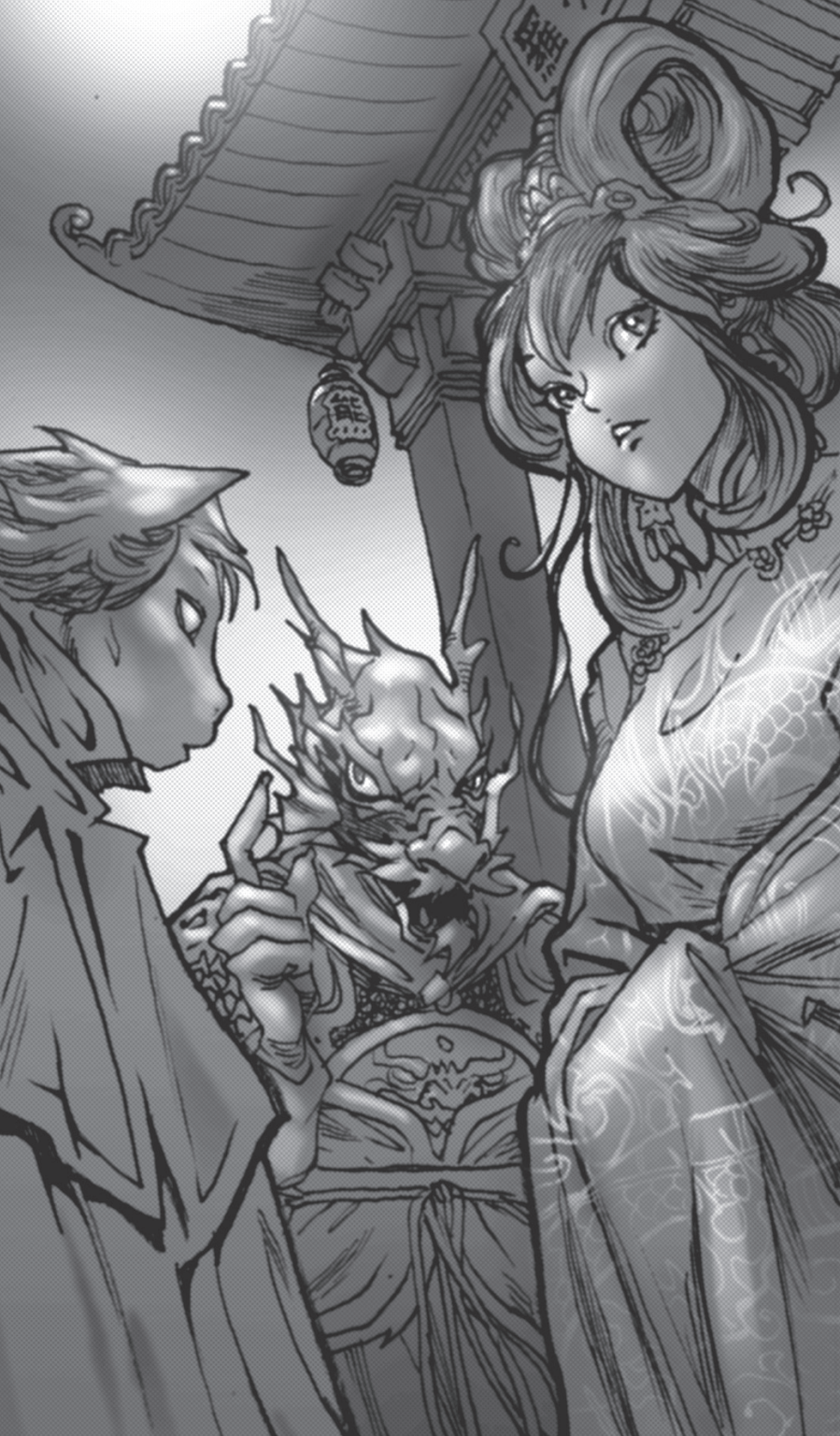


WHITE WOLF PUBLISHING, INC.
2075 WEST PARK PLACE BLVD
SUITE C
STONE MOUNTAIN, GA 30087

© 2008 CCP hf. All rights reserved. Reproduction without the written permission of the publisher is expressly forbidden, except for the purposes of reviews, and one printed copy which may be reproduced for personal use only. White Wolf, Vampire and World of Darkness are registered trademarks of CCP hf. All rights reserved. Vampire: The Requiem, Werewolf: The Forsaken, Mage: The Awakening, Promethean: The Created, Storytelling System and Parlor Games are trademarks of CCP hf. All rights reserved. All characters, names, places and text herein are copyrighted by CCP hf. CCP North America Inc. is a wholly owned subsidiary of CCP hf. The mention of or reference to any company or product in these pages is not a challenge to the trademark or copyright concerned. This book uses the supernatural for settings, characters and themes. All mystical and supernatural elements are fiction and intended for entertainment purposes only. This book contains mature content. Reader discretion is advised.

Check out White Wolf online at <http://www.white-wolf.com>





Introduction

Nexus: jewel of the Scavenger Lands. Though precious, it is a jewel is stuck in the earth, covered in dirt and eroded from the worms and the other vermin who live in the mud. Every time someone tries to dig the jewel up and wash off the mud, they usually find out the vermin have teeth. Nexus has too many stakeholders and schemers who don't want their muck exposed. From Guildsmen to Anathema, Nexus is a safe bet to find a scheming source of trouble or a hidden Exalted hero. Even the gods of Nexus aren't above the petty personal power plays.

Above all, Nexus is the center of the free. Free will reigns here, ranging from the cutthroat economy to the increasing numbers of open Anathema. As for Nexus' gods, even they are examples of free will, representing freedom from the Celestial Bureaucracy. This freedom is the ultimate expression of Nexus, what makes the jewel shine, and the strongest trait of its city god.

For now...

What's Inside

Daughter of Nexus provides the Storyteller with a complete **Exalted** story from beginning to end, which can serve as the genesis for a larger series, or a story unto itself for a short-run game. This story can be a very straightforward tale, with just enough twists to keep new players interested without overwhelming them, or the Storyteller can play the power groups to the hilt and create an enmeshed web of lies, treachery and back-stabbing that only the truly legendary will rise up and overcome.

This Storyteller Adventure System (SAS) product focuses on an exciting, ready-made story for relatively inexperienced characters in **Exalted**. It is not designed to present a plethora of new rules, but to demonstrate the existing rules in action in a coherent and concise manner. This not only helps new Storytellers and players, but also remains easy to modify for any series at the Storyteller's discretion.

ABOUT THE STORYTELLING ADVENTURE SYSTEM

If this is your first Storytelling Adventure System (SAS) product, you've chosen a fine place to start. To keep this lean and focused, though, we haven't included a lot of the core premises and Storyteller suggestions that are at the heart of the SAS. Whether you're a new Storyteller or an old hand, be sure to read the *free SAS Guide*, found at the SAS website:

www.white-wolf.com/sas

Here are some of the features available in **Daughter of Nexus**:

- **Interactive links.** Clicking on anything in red will take you directly to the section referenced, or to an appropriate character sheet or prop. It can also take you to an external website that could be useful.
- **Storyteller characters.** Clicking on a Storyteller character's portrait will take you to that character's sheet. Clicking on the sheet will take you back to the character's writeup.



Treatment

In the city of Nexus, a god-blood is about to become more important than the Emissary himself. With powers both mortal and immortal seeking her, what's a lonely little child of the past to do? Will she find hope in the arms of the circle, or suffer a long, slow descent into death's cool embrace? When all is said and done, what stories will she tell of your legend?

Act One opens with a Guild Hierarch presenting the circle with a business proposition – find the god-blood Free Spirited Arvia and return her, intact, to the Hierarch. The Guild has a pretty good idea of where she resides, and wants the circle to seek her down in the depths of Hollow, the ancient First Age city upon which Nexus is built. The circle will have to brave the depths of Nexus and survive the still-active automata and wonders of the First Age in order to find her and bring her to the Guild.

Once Hierarch Artemisia Sapphire and the circle reach an amenable agreement, the circle heads to the Nightwander District, where there's a shaft in the center of a copper foundry that leads into the ruins of Hollow. As the circle descends into the dark depths, the deathknight Veil of Ebon Blades tips over one of the vats, raining down hot slag on the circle. The deathknight then affects her escape before the circle becomes aware of her presence.

Closer to Arvia's sanctum, a group of automata left over from the First Age activate in the circle's presence. Reacting to the Essence of Exalts passing near them after so long, the automata go haywire, executing corrupted instructions from just before the Usurpation. In a mockery of the mistakes of the past, the automata attempt to kill their once-Solar masters.

At the end of act one, the circle arrives at Arvia's sanctum just in time to run off several hobgoblins trying to kidnap the young god-blood. The hobgoblins flee, leaving a grateful Arvia behind. While the circle assists Arvia, the hall the characters battled the automata in collapses, blocking the known way out. As the first act concludes, Arvia suggests they go another way to the surface – through the Firewander district.

The second act picks up with a maze in the Firewander. The circle and Arvia stumble into the den of Lily, one of a twin set of Fair Folk. The den manifests as an ever-warping, self-adapting labyrinth. As the characters wander the twisting corridors, Lily attempts to convince the characters that turning Arvia over to her would be for the best.

After escaping from the fae prison, a group of Guildsmen confronts the circle. They wish to escort the circle back to the Guild headquarters, but the escorts bear different symbols than the men belonging to Hierarch Artemisia Sapphire. These men are the servants of Hierarch



Dvora Odom, Artemisia's rival. The Guildsmen cannot force the circle to come with them, and the mercenaries know that.

From there, the path of the story forks in a number of directions. The following can happen in any order:

- Hierarch Dvora meets with the circle and Arvia. Dvora reveals that Arvia is born of Hollow's city god and may one day grow to represent the power of Nexus. Furthermore, the Hierarch also reveals that her colleague, Artemisia, has been taking payments from Lily and Lilac. Turning Arvia over to Artemisia is, therefore, tantamount to turning her over to the Fair Folk, who would use her to rip Nexus from the fabric of the Loom of Fate. At the same time, a death cult serving a ghost known as Walker in Darkness seeks Arvia, intent on turning Nexus into the next Thorns.
- A death cult following Walker in Darkness attempts to seize Arvia on the streets of Nexus, accompanied by a group of nemissaries.
- Arvia asks the circle if they can have a word alone in a nearby bakery. There, she satisfies her sweet tooth and confesses to the circle her own wish to be free. She's not sure if she's cut out to be the city goddess. She wants to be herself, and she's not quite sure who that is yet.
- Lilac leads a small army out of the Firewander district, daring the wrath of the Council while she tries to seize Arvia. The circle becomes embroiled in the conflict, and may even end up leading mercenary forces against the Fair Folk of the Firewander.

At the end of the act, Veil of Ebon Blades steals Arvia, likely either during the death cult skirmish or the war with Lilac. The Abyssal takes off with the daughter of Nexus, quickly making for the lair of Walker in Darkness. If she is not stopped, then Nexus may very well become another shadowland in the Scavenger Lands, and provide the Mask of Winter's chief rival, the Walker in Darkness, his own stronghold in Creation.

During the third act, the circle pursues Veil of Ebon Blades, ultimately leading up to a climactic showdown with her for the soul of the city, either in the depths of a Solar Tomb or in a shadowlands east of Nexus. At the start of Act Three, Guild mercenaries asking about Arvia find the characters. If the circle met with Dvora in Act Two, then the mercenaries are asking because Dvora managed to set up a meeting with the Emissary. If not, then the Guildsmen are coming to check on Arvia because the Hierarch is worried.

Discovering that Arvia is missing, the Guildsmen may help the circle by attempting to seal off the city in order to quarantine Veil of Ebon Blades. Whether or not they are successful depends on whether the characters made friends with Dvora in Act Two and if they found clues to Arvia's disappearance within enough time. If the circle is able to quarantine Veil of Ebon Blades, the Abyssal makes for one of the Solar Tombs of the city. Wards on the tomb alert the Council of Entities immediately that someone has violated the tombs (and the Council's decree that the tombs shall remain sacrosanct). The Council informs the circle that they have permission to pursue Veil and Arvia into the depths. If the circle is unable to quarantine Veil of Ebon Blades, then the Abyssal escapes into the wilderness outside Nexus. The Guild, at Hierarch Dvora's command, supplies the circle with the finest horses they have. A high-speed chase across the plains of the Scavenger Lands ensues as the circle tries to catch Veil before she escapes.

Either in the bottom of a Solar Tomb or at the edges of a shadowlands, the circle eventually catches up with Veil of Ebon Blades. The Abyssal makes her final stand, shoving Arvia to the side and facing the circle head-on. Once Veil of Ebon Blades is bested and Arvia is returned to the city, Nexus has a lot to thank the circle for. Perhaps the Emissary of Nexus comes to help teach the girl. Perhaps she asks to stay with the circle. Perhaps

her father, the god of Nexus, chooses to take an interest in his estranged daughter. Perhaps she chooses to walk alone on the streets of Nexus.

But those stories are Arvia's. For the circle, their legend has only just begun....

Theme: Free Will

Above all else, **Daughter of Nexus** is a tale of choice. Throughout the story, the circle is given the choice, the power and the impetus over the fate of Nexus. Will they protect the great city's future, or will they damn it and bring another foothold of death to the Scavenger Lands? Stranger still, would the circle turn the city over to the Wyld? Perhaps the circle might lay their power at Free Spirited Arvia's feet and let her decide. *Free will* defines the Exalted. How they exercise that will can set the stage for greater legends or deeper tragedies across Creation.

Mood: Fragile Hope

The Exalted have the power to create a better tomorrow. With the Mandate of Heaven, the Solars in particular were given authority to watch over Creation. They are its rulers, and give Creation hope – just as Arvia gives hope to those aware of her lineage that she might become a fair and just goddess. Unfortunately, Arvia may also become a representation of Nexus' inherent corruption, or shun her godhood entirely. That *fragile hope* is present in Arvia and Nexus itself.

An Episode in Your Series

This story is designed to be run as early in your series (perhaps the very first story). The tale can help create allies or enemies for the circle early on. Those enemies can dog their tracks for many stories to come (ultimately culminating in a battle for the soul of the eastern Scavenger Lands) or serve as smaller villains to be cast off like trash down the Grey River.

The Compass of Terrestrial Directions, Vol. I—The Scavenger Lands can be an invaluable resource for Storytellers wanting to set their series in and around Nexus. Although everything necessary is provided in this SAS, **The Scavenger Lands** contains a great deal of information about the city of Nexus itself, providing Storytellers with a wealth of seeds to help make Nexus grow in the imagination of their players.



Backstory and Set-up

Every city in Creation, no matter how great or insignificant, has a god who rules over the interests of the city in heaven and on earth. Even the forgotten cities of Mount Meru – those brilliant places which once seated the Solar Deliberative – have their gods. Without these gods, a city may be weakened over time. The thread belonging to a godless city can weaken and fray over time in the Loom of Fate. Sometimes, even as a city frays in the Loom, it's temporal power grows as agents of the Wyld feed the city, encouraging its breaking.

Backstory

Since its inception, Nexus' city god has been moderately influential, even though most don't know who he is. The god Gen has managed to hold clout in Yu-Shan and Nexus, having lived his immortal life under the guise of Minister of the Ways with the Council of Entities. Gen takes great care to conceal the fact that he serves on the Council of Entities and in Heaven, for there are those in the Celestial Bureaucracy who would destroy him if they knew he served on Nexus' council (which is a crime, as far as Heaven is concerned). Only the Emissary of Nexus, Hierarch Dvora Odom and Lily and Lilac knew of Gen's position on the council – though how the fae ladies discovered this is anyone's guess. (More about Gen's precarious position can be found in **The Compass of Celestial Directions, Vol. III–Yu-Shan**, pp. 56-57.)

Unfortunately, Gen made a mistake about nineteen years ago. The old city god fell in love (perhaps just lust), and the woman he was with bore him a daughter. The mother of his child was a slave belonging to the Guild. She could not be sold in the city, as the exchange of slaves or impressing someone into slavery is illegal within Nexus. When the overseer in charge of the woman saw she was with child, he had her taken from the city and killed, though he kept the child.

Gen was outraged, but could do very little without risking exposure. Hierarch Dvora offered to take care of the overseer for Gen, and deliver his daughter to him safely. Though the city god loved his daughter, Gen still could not afford to keep Arvia by his side – she was too much of a liability. Instead, he sent her into an abandoned manse underneath Nexus. From time to time, Gen checked on the little girl, and the Emissary did likewise when Gen could not.

Now things have taken a turn for the worst. Unbeknownst to Free Spirited Arvia or her father, several powerful factions in the city have become aware of who and what she is. None of them have her best intentions in mind, and while Gen is distracted in Heaven, the factions make their move.

Set-up

Daughter of Nexus assumes that the circle is a band of Solar Exalted. The Guild Hierarch most interested in finding Arvia, Hierarch Artemisia Sapphire, will probably try to entice the characters with promises of patronage, monetary awards, allies or numerous other perks of possessing high-ranking Guild friends. As for Artemisia's own goals, they are almost wholly materialistic: Artemisia is after Lily and Lilac's rewards, and doesn't really care what she has to barter in order to get them. At the same time, Hierarch Dvora Odom vehemently opposes Artemisia, but the elderly Dvora will not be willing to voice her opposition of Artemisia to the circle just yet.

While the simplest way to get the circle to the Guild is through a character with Allies or Contacts in the Guild, this is not the only way to begin the story. Depending on the character's back stories, perhaps the Guild has come to hear of them for other interesting reasons – after all, they do have one of the best spy networks in Creation. Perhaps, if the characters have no real reason to be selected by the Guild, Artemisia wants some faceless nobodies for the sake of plausible deniability.

The important part is that the story begins with the circle in Artemisia's office. The details of how the circle gets there may or may not be important, depending on the particular story the Storyteller is pursuing.

CHOSEN OF A DIFFERENT TYPE

Changing things up a bit, what if your circle is not a group of Solar Exalted? Here are some examples of things that can be done to change the setup or the story to fit a different type of circle.

Lunars/Terrestrials: The Terrestrial Exalted and Chosen of Luna don't require much of a change at all. Storytellers should take special interest in handling Lily and Lilac for Lunars, as the Fair Folk do not get along particularly well with the mercurial Exalted.

Sidereals: Heaven is concerned with the thinning of Nexus' thread in the Loom of Fate. The Bureau has sent the circle to investigate and take corrective actions to repair the Loom of Fate. The Bureau could have provided the circle with Guild identities to slip unnoticed through the city of Nexus, putting them in Artemisia's grasp. Of course, Heaven might also be a little suspicious of Gen, meaning the circle might be doing the job for a less altruistic reason than repairing the Loom.

Abyssals: Perhaps the most interesting change, playing Abyssals can certainly change the power players' stances. A group of Abyssals may represent the interests of a rival Deathlord to Walker in Darkness, or the dark circle may even work for Walker in Darkness. In the later case, Veil of Ebon Blades would be a rival of the circle, not willing to be outdone by some freshly-Exalted wannabes.



The Cast

Free Spirited Arvia

Quotes: *I always thought Exalts would be shinier than this.*

Look, I'm not that easily distra... is that candy?

I just don't think there should be slaves in Nexus at all. At all.

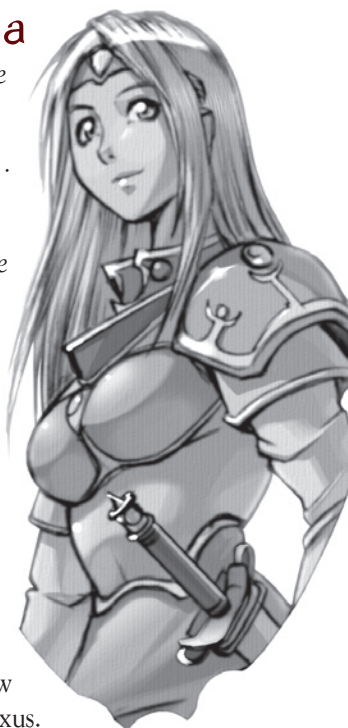
Motivation: Live free for all the people of Nexus.

Background: Born in the squalor of a Guild slum, Arvia is unaware that she would not be alive if not for the actions of Hierarch Dvora. She was too young to remember when the Guildsmen loyal to Dvora smuggled her into old Hollow for safekeeping. Her father spent time with her as many evenings as he safely could (about twice a month), and she grew to know him and (to a lesser extent) the Emissary of Nexus. As a child, the manse handled Arvia's formal education, while she occasionally attended children's social activities in the Cinnabar district to ensure proper socialization. Nobody questioned where the child came from. She had money, and in Nexus, that's all that matters.

Neither Gen nor the Emissary has visited Arvia in some time now, and the god-blood grew concerned. Free Spirited Arvia took several trips to the surface to find out what's going on. She's seen the squalor and suffering in the streets, and done what she can to help, using her father's money. Unfortunately, while making the "nameless beauty" popular among some of the lower class, this is what led Lily and Lilac to realize Gen wasn't watching.

The god-blood is aware that the Guild and the Fair Folk are seeking her, but does not understand why. For the Guild, she can hazard a guess that it has to do with profit, but the Fair Folk confuse her, as they do most people in Creation. She is unaware of Veil of Ebon Blades' pursuit.

Description: Free Spirited Arvia is the pinnacle of ideal beauty in Nexus. She is as beautiful as when the Unconquered Sun rises over the eastern horizon, with hair the color of the blazing sun's rays skipping off



the twin rivers surrounding the city's peninsula. She is a spunky, free young woman with tenacity, veracity and a tiny hint of lusciousness about her. Unfortunately for those who would call her friend, Arvia can also be just as moody as turbulent Nexus.

Storytelling Hints: Though the default assumption is that the circle will like Arvia, this need not necessarily be the case. Arvia is a very open and extroverted person, willing to share a laugh, have fun and speak her mind. She can be very opinionated, but knows that concession to an Exalt is usually in her best interest. The Storyteller is encouraged to change up Arvia's personality towards whatever the circle will accept most easily, but to keep her core qualities: extroversion and a willingness to speak her mind.

Notes: Arvia does not currently display any supernatural powers. While she most likely does have Charms of her own, she has yet to use them. Storytellers are encouraged to give Arvia powers at dramatically appropriate times that won't detract heavily from the characters. For example, if a character is wounded and no one has appropriate Charms, Arvia could develop Wound-Mending Care Technique (**Exalted**, p. 219) and the requisite additional dot of Medicine she would need.

Veil of Ebon Blades

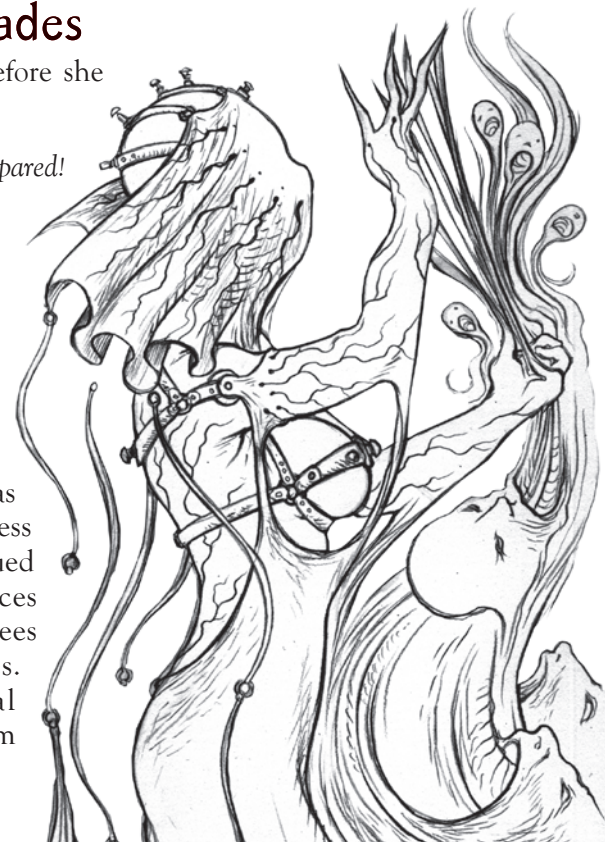
Quotes: (silence just before she strikes)

You are not prepared!

Know me, touch me, and you will be with death.

Motivation: Bring the joy of Oblivion to all!

Background: Once, Veil was a beautiful, healthy young woman, and she was happy running in the darkness of Nexus' streets. She pursued the hidden, forbidden places of the city, against the decrees of the Council of Entities. She risked death several times as a little girl. From



forbidden Solar tombs to Guild warehouses, from Firewander to criminal underground, Veil had a knack for getting into places she didn't belong. She was usually pretty good at getting away with it, too.

Pretty good is not perfect, however, and all it took was her getting caught once for some *thing* to mar her. Not a simple cut or scar, but a heavy mutilation of the left half of her body with fire and steel. The mutilation was painful and brutal as curses and blasphemies were carved into her flesh.

Veil survived and her body recovered, but everything about her innocent curiosity withered and died, replaced by the cruel husk of her vanity. She became a butcher under the streets. Torturing small animals at first, then transients and other people who would not be missed, Veil lost herself in the delight of death.

Eventually, a mercenary company caught Veil and took her before the Council. She never said a word during her trial, and when the Council sentenced her to death by hanging and then drowning in the Yellow River, Veil only smiled. When asphyxiation had almost taken her, Veil heard the Walker of Darkness. She listened to his sweet promises and gave up her name. Darkness took her as she plunged into the river, born again in death.

Description: Now she walks covered in body-length, black veils woven into her voluptuous, scarred body. She views herself as death personified, and even wields a scythe in combat. She keeps her head shaved clean so that she may wear her victim's hair.

Storyteller Hints: Veil is a woman obsessed. She will stop at nothing to follow her master's orders in returning Arvia to the Deathlord. She will let no other earn her master's approval for this mission, and will stoop to any length to get her prey. She is not foolish and will not act rashly, but she will seize upon any weakness she perceives. Perhaps most disturbingly, this includes weaknesses of the flesh – she has Charms to temporarily restore her beauty, and is not afraid to pursue a member of the circle in order to either assassinate him or use him to get at Arvia.

If she's facing other Exalted, Veil is cautious in her opening gambits. Her favored tactic, especially against foes who will rush into combat with her, is to use Hundred Razor Circle to slice any opponent within range. If she has time before anyone assaults her, she uses Ravening Mouth of Melee so that she may drain motes from all her foes for the remainder of the combat.

If her goal is to get away, such as towards the end of the story, Veil will liberally apply Artful Maiming Onslaught to her attacks in order to cripple her opponents. She will also use Melee Essence Flow to take advantage of her Melee Excellencies acting as innate abilities.

Other Notes: Veil's robes, woven into her flesh, provide her the soak listed on her character sheet. Out of combat, Veil uses Void Sheath Technique to keep her scythe Elsewhere, but easily retrievable. Veil of Ebon Blades has two combos. They are as follows:

- **Slicing Through the Veil of Death** (Cost: 5m + 1wp to activate; + parried weapon damage modifier +1m per counterattack): Broken Toys Riposte, Hundred Razor Circle – Surrounded by whirling veils that whip and ripple like scythes, blood runs like lightning from the caste mark and follows the outlined ebon blades. All who enter therein are sliced into ribbons, parting the veils of death.
- **Pain is Only the Beginning** (Cost: 7m + 2wp to activate; +1wp if triggering Cripple effect): Artful Maiming Onslaught, Falling Scythe Attack, Savage Shade Style – Necrotic Essence surrounding the scythe, the whore gives a hideous cry of ecstasy as the blade lashes its victim. Blood and milky bone run together from the wound, causing suffering before true depth of wounding is understood.

VEIL UNDER ALTERNATE RULES

If the Storyteller does not own a copy of **Manual of Exalted Power: The Abyssals**, Veil of Ebon Blades can still be used with minimal changes. The **Storyteller's Companion** will provide a Storyteller with sufficient detail to use Veil.

Should neither of these books be available, here are some guidelines for equivalent Solar Charms: Veil has most of the Melee Charms, except for Blazing Solar Bolt and Heavenly Guardian Defense. She also has a smattering of Presence, Athletics (including Thunderbolt Attack Prana) and Stealth Charms. A few Larceny Charms and most of the Dodge tree are also recommended.

Veil's first combo is built around the idea of brutal Counterattacks and attacking everything in range. It's a maneuver allowing her to hold her ground and punish those who come close to her. This can be simulated with Iron Whirlwind and Solar Counterattack. Although not as thematic, it does suffice.

Her second combo is designed to hurt a lot. Use Hungry Tiger, Fire and Stones and Thunderbolt Attack Prana to generate the largest damage pool possible.

Hierarch Artemisia Sapphire

Quotes: *Tch. Fine.*

Do I need to remind you which one of us is the Hierarch?

*(when she rips someone off)
I'm pleased we could come to this very equitable agreement.*

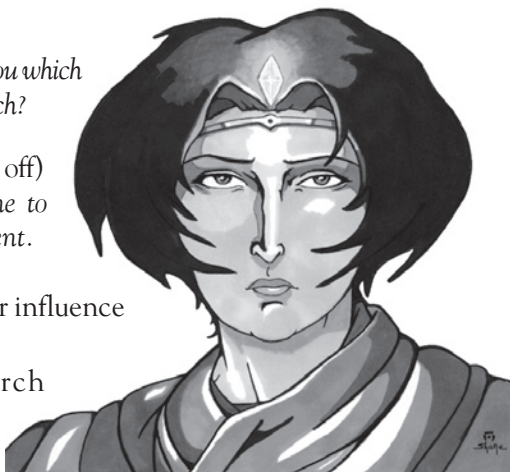
Motivation: Expand her influence in the Guild Directorate.

Background: Hierarch Artemisia is a woman on a mission. As she sees it, her mission is the acclimation of wealth and power for the Guild. She's a recent addition to the Guild Directorate and still not sitting very securely upon her throne. Rumors abound that Artemisia acquired that throne through Fair Folk gifts to begin with, but none can say for certain. Regardless, she is now working with Lily and Lilac to secure Arvia.

Artemisia doesn't really care if she weakens Nexus to the Fair Folk – to her the city is real, and if some stupid flower twins wish to pursue a fever dream like throwing Nexus to the Wyld, so be it. Of course, the Hierarch doesn't understand the full implications of her actions – just profit.

Description: Ever the commensurate businesswoman, Artemisia never appears in public in anything less than impeccable attire. Her hair is always neat, without a stray strand. Her raven curls are always held in place by a golden tiara, and her eyes glint like cool blue steel.

Storyteller Hints: Artemisia is a bitch. That does not mean she needs to come off as bitchy. She is a savvy businesswoman and knows how to deal with people, but she will not be taken lightly, nor will she be walked all over. She is strong, assertive and eschews most coy politicking when dealing with people she thinks have an inferior social status. She views Dragon Bloods as equals, but Celestials only if they are courteous to her.



Hierarch Dvora Odom

Quotes: *Hierarch Sapphire is wrong. She doesn't know what she's doing, and how she will damn us all.*

(When agitated) Oh my my! You need to learn to close that pretty mouth of yours before you look as much like a fool as you sound.

*(To polite people)
Aren't you a dear?*

Motivation: Keep the Guild's finances running smoothly and profitably.

Background: An older, more seasoned woman than her fellow Hierarch, Dvora is the Guild's head in charge of banking and money-lending. Dvora commands the respect of close to the entire Directorate, even if she doesn't see eye to eye with many of them. This is especially true of Hierarch Artemisia Sapphire.

Though Dvora and Artemisia do not get along in Directorate meetings, Dvora usually defers to Artemisia when Artemisia's plans seem a sound means of acquiring more wealth or artifice for the Guild. Dvora has only twice openly opposed Artemisia in steering meetings, when the matronly Hierarch felt the plan was an unacceptable risk to the Guild. The first time the Directorate overruled Dvora, but the second time the Directorate backed Dvora over Artemisia. Artemisia still hasn't forgiven Dvora for that move. Ever the peacemaker, Dvora went out of her way to ensure that Artemisia had other opportunities to prove herself and get back in the Directorate's good graces, but Artemisia still doesn't know that Dvora was behind half of those chances. Dvora doesn't like to take credit when she feels other members of the team would benefit from it more.

Dvora is aware of Artemisia's most recent plot, and how Lily and Lilac play into it. Dvora is also considerably more aware than Artemisia what the cost of losing Nexus' potential city goddess could actually amount to, and it frightens her to the core. Dvora opposed this move in the Directorate, but the Directorate has overruled her. Now Dvora is carefully weighing her options for what to do next.



Description: Over fifty years of service in the Guild has certainly weathered Dvora. She looks her age of seventy-something. Ever stern, the white-haired woman is a constant reminder of the unfailing nature of the Guild's financial institutions.

Storyteller Hints: Dvora has little patience for fools. She is stern, forthright and knowledgeable. She's a mathematician and accountant at heart, and an incredibly efficient woman. She is devoted to the Guild and, by extension, Nexus. Dvora understands how Artemisia's plan would lead to city's eventual downfall, but Artemisia won't listen to Dvora's advice.

Dvora is willing to work with Anathema. Just because they're demon spawn doesn't mean they can't be dealt with. She's dealt with the Chosen of Fate before, and found them lacking. These Chosen of the Unconquered Sun, however, provide her with an option she's curious, yet cautious, to explore.

Lily and Lilac

Quotes: (either sister)
Trust me; my sister never was very good at following my schemes.

(Lily) *I can make this very worth your while. Pollinate me and I can reciprocate.*

(Lilac, when either sister is angered) *I do so detest weeds. They choke my kind. You are a weed.*

Motivation: Tell a good story.

Background: Twin fae from the Wyld, Lily and Lilac are two halves of the same entity. Though given to two different forms, each feels as the other, knowing, despising and loving her. Their actions can be eerily synchronized or incredibly disjointed, depending on their moods. Though sometimes seeming to act in opposition to one another, the twins always work towards the same end. This is not to say that their eldritch designs are too complicated for the mortal mind to fathom, just that the twins are taking two different paths to reach the same destination.



It is possible to get one to work against the other – provided that one felt what was being asked of her would bring her closer to the goal of cutting Nexus from the Loom of Fate and bringing it fully into the Wyld. Unfortunately, it is not possible to gain the aid of one without the other knowing about it. Just because one knows what the other is doing or that the other is working against them, however, does not mean the slighted one will take steps to prevent it – especially not if the double-cross makes for a good story.

Lily and Lilac make their home in a freehold – the fae version of a manse – near to the geographic center of the Firewander district. From there they do not so much plot and scheme as think about how to tell a good story. A good story would be the Wyld consuming Nexus, so that they could weave their stories about the entire city, instead of just one ward.

This is why they seek Arvia. Lily and Lilac know all about Gen and the trouble he could be in should Heaven discover his duplicity. Likewise, they are aware of factions in Heaven who want to depose Gen. They do not know who those people are, nor do they have the proof required to attract these forced (who would believe a fae, anyway?). Perhaps if Arvia were made to serve them, they could supplant Gen with her and have a foothold in Heaven.

Description: Both the twins form their bodies from an amalgamation of their namesake flowers. The petals form slender, fitting skirts about their legs. The stamens wrap about their bodies, only barely covering them. Vines and pollen shape their hair.

Storyteller Hints: Lily and Lilac are a confounding pair. They never quite seem to make sense, and their attitudes often change when they're around each other. They are not foolish enough to attack a full party of Celestial Exalts, but should the circle be comprised of Terrestrials, they'd better be a bit on their toes. If the circle contains an Eclipse, they are very guarded around him, and very careful not to violate the non-aggression pact.

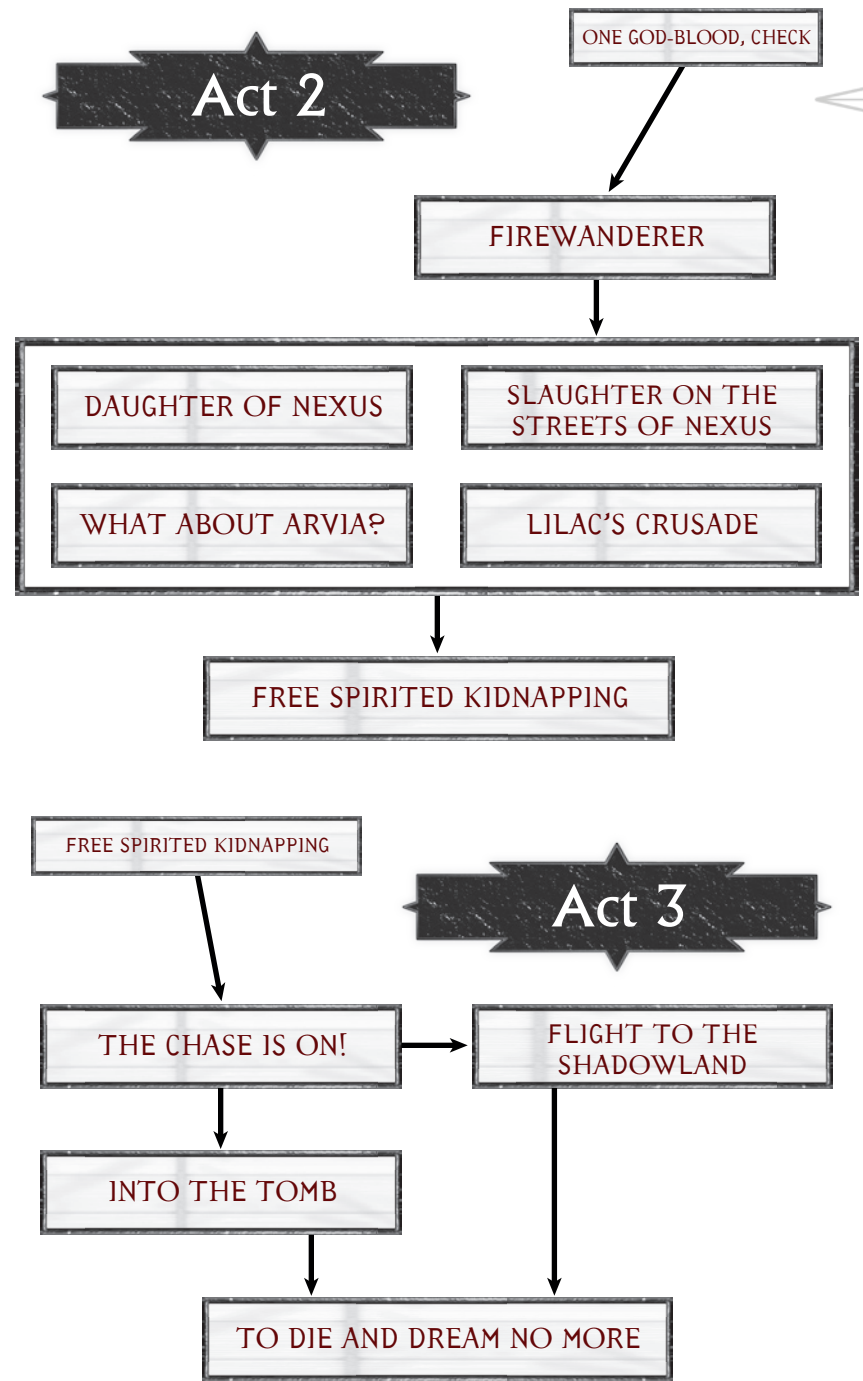
Lily and Lilac can act to directly to serve the Storyteller's needs. In some ways, they can be a voice of opposition to the Storyteller's motives, or seek to twist things in whatever evil pops into the Storyteller's mind. They possess a deep insight and plenty of contacts in Nexus, and use these gifts to tell a good story. Whether they win or lose is irrelevant, they will act in the best interests of the story. In the end, though they wish to undo Nexus, if a circle tells a more interesting story, they're happy.

For traits, use the example Fair Folk Diplomat (**Exalted**, pp. 284-285), with the following addition:

Fair Folk Charm: Twin-Spirited Form – Lily and Lilac are the same Fair Folk. No matter the distance, they share the same emotions, mind and reasoning (or lack thereof). Consequently, they share the same Essence pool, but as a faerie is not her body, they do not share the same Health Levels. If one of their bodies is destroyed, the other can recreate it with an (Intelligence + Craft (Glamour)) roll, difficulty 5, as an extended action with rolls occurring every day. The surviving twin must be in the Wyld in order to use this ability. Destroying one of the twins does not adversely affect the other, except to create an immediate Intimacy of hatred towards the destroyer. If one of the twins is slain with iron, then the other cannot reconstitute her sister's body without first conquering, in some form, her sister's slayer.

Scenes

Scene Flowchart





Deals In Sapphire

MENTAL – PHYSICAL – SOCIAL •

Overview

This scene establishes the basic premise of the story: Artemisia meets with the characters in person and parlays with them over travelling into the depths of Hollow to find Arvia. While the tale does begin *in media res*, some Storytellers may wish to have a few scenes or an evening or two leading up to this point. Storytellers using this story as the beginning to a larger series may instead decide to talk with each player beforehand about why their character is in a Hierarch's office.

Description

The Hierarch's office is splendid and rather opulent. The chairs are detailed in ivory, and the desk is of the finest Eastern wood. Clearly, Hierarch Artemisia has some wealth to flaunt, and has gone to great lengths to ensure visitors understand that they are meeting with one who speaks for the Guild. After a few moments of silence, the Hierarch enters from a side room.

Storyteller Goals

Get the players to agree to find Arvia. Secondly, leaving a bad taste in their mouth about Hierarch Artemisia would be a good thing. Both goals can be accomplished by having Artemisia not only purchase the circle's loyalty (through whatever means she must), but ensuring that she drives the hardest bargain she can without losing the deal. The deal Artemisia is offering the characters is roughly this: The circle travels into the depths of Hollow, retrieves the god-blood Free Spirited Arvia and return her to Hierarch Artemisia directly. As compensation, Artemisia offers Guild securities, jade coin and other materials worth roughly Resources 2. She will also offer the circle a route she believes will head almost directly to Arvia's hiding place – a passage in the Nightwander district. If pressed, Artemisia can go as high as Resources 4 rewards (land, estates, large herds, servants, etc.), but is loath to do so.

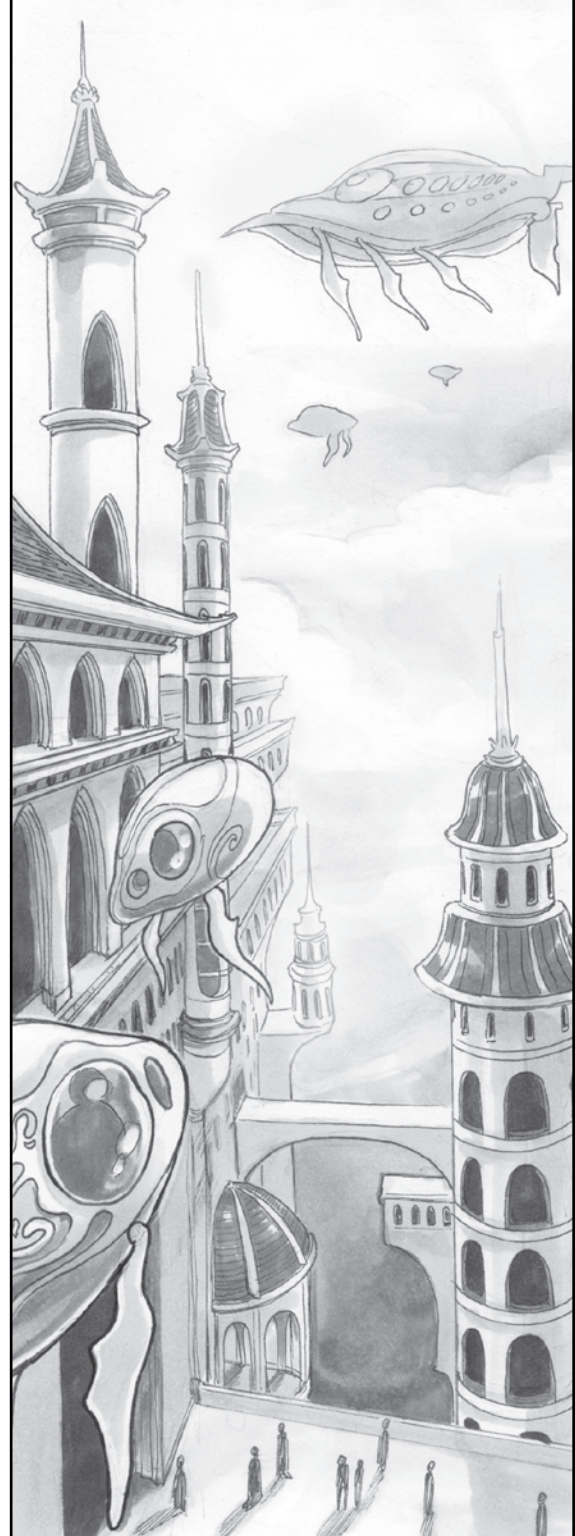
Use this scene to help the more social characters cut their teeth. It allows the talkers, coordinators, wheelers and dealers of the circle to try their hand at Social combat. It is important not to tip Artemisia's hand here or make the characters overly suspicious of her motives. She is a businesswoman out to make a deal – try to keep the focus of the scene on making the characters feel like they've gotten the best deal they could (or make them feel like they secured a great deal, only to realize later they agreed to do something for dirt cheap; just be careful not to overly cheapen their victory).

If one of the circle has personal issues with the Guild, that character might serve as a voice of distrust or dissent if the other circle members prove to be too trusting of Artemisia. Alternatively, if a character has Allies, Contacts or Influence among the Guild, they might be taken aback with Artemisia's abrasiveness.

Be careful not to frustrate the characters in this scene.

Character Goals

Find out what Artemisia wants, and cut a deal in your favor.





Actions

Cutting a Deal

This is a Social combat (**Exalted**, pp. 169-175). While certainly valid to call for a Join Debate roll and proceed with hard-and-fast long-tick based timing, it may also equally be valid to allow the character's speeches and arguments and your judgment to dictate when the rolls are made. Just remember to track Mental DV penalties associated with making those attacks.

If Artemisia has initiative, she will make her opening offer of a ludicrously low sum (comparable to Resources 1) and then defer to the circle, waiting for them to respond. She is a veteran of negotiations and knows that he who speaks first after a bid often loses.

Hindrances: Character has no dots in Bureaucracy (-2 internal penalty to negotiating a price only).

Help: Character has three or more dots in Bureaucracy (+1 to MDV when haggling over price).

Useful Charms: Judge's Ear Technique can determine the truth of how Artemisia will pay. Know the Soul's Price can end the combat

very quickly, but will not inform the characters that Artemisia is taking payments from the Fair Folk.

Example Social Combat Roll Results

Botch: "Were you trying to insult me?" Apply an -1 external penalty to future rolls by the circle.

Failure: Artemisia taps her chin thoughtfully. "No. Not that much—keep talking though." Continue the Social combat.

Success: Leaning back in her aged leather chair, Artemisia thinks for a moment, then nods. "You drive a hard bargain, but I think we can accommodate you." The Hierarch offers her slender hand with a sly smile to seal the deal.

Unnatural Mental Influence: The Hierarch closes her eyes for a moment, squaring her jaw in frustration. "Very well," she finally concedes. "We will honor your payment, pending delivery."

Consequences

At the end of this scene, the circle should be on their way to a Guild-owned foundry in the Nighthammer district – the industrial section of Nexus. Move to the scene "Nighthammer Chaos."





Nighthammer Chaos

MENTAL ••

PHYSICAL ••

SOCIAL –

Overview

The Nighthammer district serves as Nexus' predominant industrial sector. Metals are smelted here, and craftsmen ply their trades. Nighthammer is always covered in ash (the main ingredient in "Nexus snow") and smells foul, even at the Nexus University. This scene takes place in a foundry close to the Nighthammer Pool – a large cooling water intake and outtake pond connected to the rivers.

When the circle enters the Guild-owned copper foundry, a floor manager will direct them over to the vent shaft leading down into old Hollow. The foundry uses the vent shaft to dump slag every now and again, but today they're supposed to be shut down. The slag just sits, stewing in massive vats, since they knew people would be descending into the shaft, to the tunnel at the bottom.

However, once the circle has begun their descent, a wave of molten metal comes spilling over the edge of the shaft towards them. Investigation of the accident may reveal that someone or something purposefully tried to kill the characters.

Description

The heat of the foundry is blistering. The entire factory is bathed in a dull, red glow which glows brighter and clearer towards the massive iron vats which hold tons of molten copper. Even without the men working the forges, the sound of clanging hammers hangs in the air. In the center of the foundry is a massive shaft with two channels leading into it. The channels glisten with a thin layer of dried copper, as does the edge of the shaft and the adjoining walls.

When the circle descends into the shaft:

The earthen walls feel almost like a tomb, especially as the stone path descends around the shaft circumference. The air below is cool and breezy, hinting at a larger cave system. Suddenly the air above your head warms, then becomes stiflingly hot, and the shaft starts to brighten noticeably. As you look up, you see liquid copper spill over the shaft's lip, coming straight for you!

Storyteller Goals

Create a brief adrenaline rush for the characters by placing them in unexpected danger. Immediately thereafter, create questions – via the foreman, if necessary – about how the accident occurred. Create a feeling of either suspicion or certainty that this was not accidental; someone tried to kill them.

Make sure that their attacker, Veil of Ebon Blades, escapes before the circle finds her. She makes liberal use of her Stealth and Larceny Charms (such as Face-Drinking Bite – see *Abyssals*, pp. 169-170) to ensure her getaway.

Character Goals

Survive! Afterward, figure out what happened.

Actions

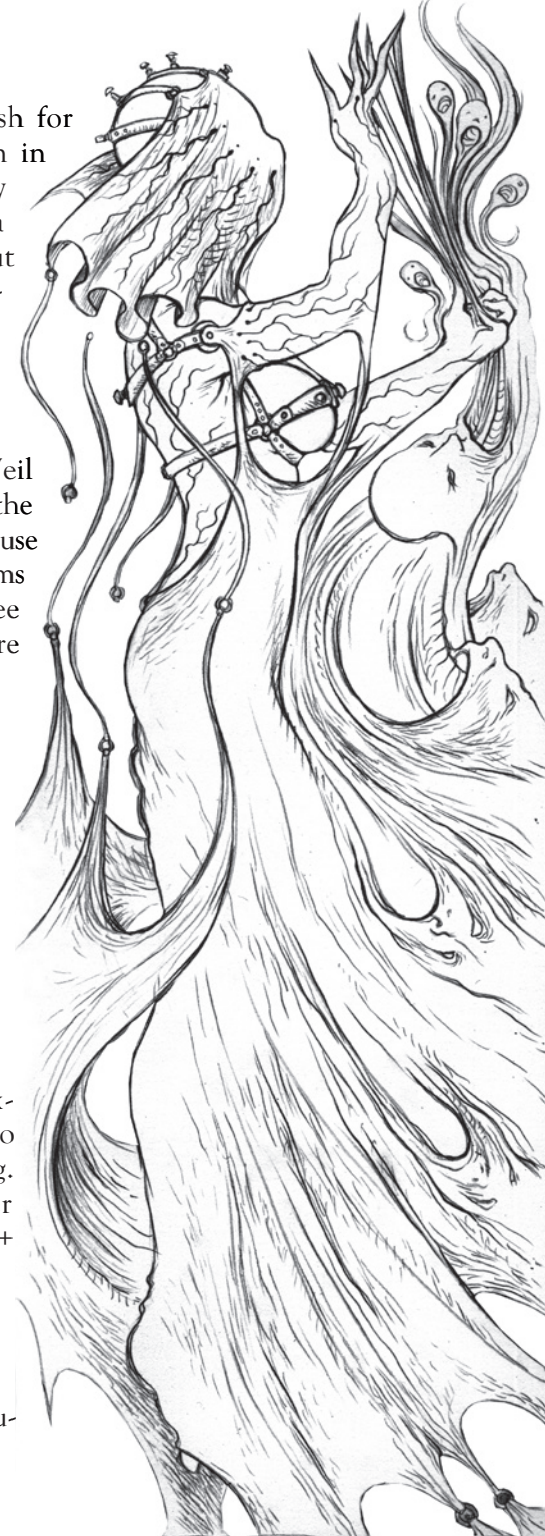
Dodging Slag

Dice Pool: (Dexterity + Dodge) or (Strength + Athletics), difficulty 3.

Action: Normal.

The default dice pool is (Dexterity + Dodge) to attempt to leap out of the way of the slag. With a good stunt, a character could attempt to use (Strength + Athletics) to make an impressive lunge, not just a dodge. The difficulty for either of these rolls is 3.

Hindrances: No room to maneuver (-1 external penalty)



Help: Character noticed that something was wrong earlier (+1 bonus die)

Useful Charms: Surprise Anticipation Method can reduce the difficulty to 2.

Roll Results

Botch: The character not only suffers the effects of a failure (listed below), but the slag flow also lifts him off the stone path and carries him on its way down to the bottom of the shaft. If the character can't figure some way to get off the ride, he might be buried alive in molten metal!

The character will fall for another 100 yards, granting him one more chance to make some sort of escape from the slag (the details and mechanics of how should be based on how the character stunts this efforts). If he fails to escape, he not only takes damage as described below, but also takes 25B piercing damage from the fall. Then the slag will bury the character, continuing to deal damage until it cools. After cooling, suffocation sets in.

Escaping from the hot slag is a feat of strength totaling 7 dots (**Exalted**, p. 127). Escaping from the cooled, solidified copper is a feat of 11 dots.

Failure: The slag rushes over the character, burning him badly! This is an Environmental Damage (**Exalted**, pp. 130-131) of 6L/action, with a Trauma of 5.

Success: The character hops out of the way, suffering no ill effects.

Investigating the Accident

Dice Pool: (Perception + Investigation) versus Veil of Ebon Blade's (Wits + Investigation); if she garners no successes, the default difficulty is 1.

Action: Dramatic, Resisted.

Investigating the scene of the accident, the characters discover it was no accident at all: someone rigged the vat to fail, and set it off when the circle began their descent.

Useful Charms: Crafty Observation Method (reduces the time it takes to search)

Roll Results

Botch: The character not only fails to notice anything wrong, but through his sloppy investigative techniques he creates a ruckus and accidentally destroys key pieces of evidence. Inflict a -2 external penalty to any other character's investigation attempt.

Failure: It looks like it was an accident.

Success: This was no mere accident or foul portent; someone tried to kill the circle. Gaining 2 or more successes above the difficulty rating means a character finds a piece of black gauze wrapped around a tiny broken skull.

Consequences

At the bottom of the shaft, the circle finds a tunnel leading into the depths of old Hollow. Though there are several branches leading off from an obvious main tunnel, it is fairly obvious that only the main tunnel has seen any traffic of late. Exploration of these side tunnels is beyond the scope of this document, but could lead to your own tales of the wonders of a lost city. Otherwise, move to "Wonders of the Lost Hollow."



Wonders of the Lost Hollow

MENTAL –

PHYSICAL ••

SOCIAL –

Overview

Hollow was ruined during the Usurpation and its ensuing wars. What remains above the surface is a few buildings in the Nighthammer district and the Firewander district. Most of the city has been lost to time or replaced by the earthworks and buildings of Nexus. However, under several of Nexus' hills (now sunk below sea level), several pockets of Hollow are preserved as they were.

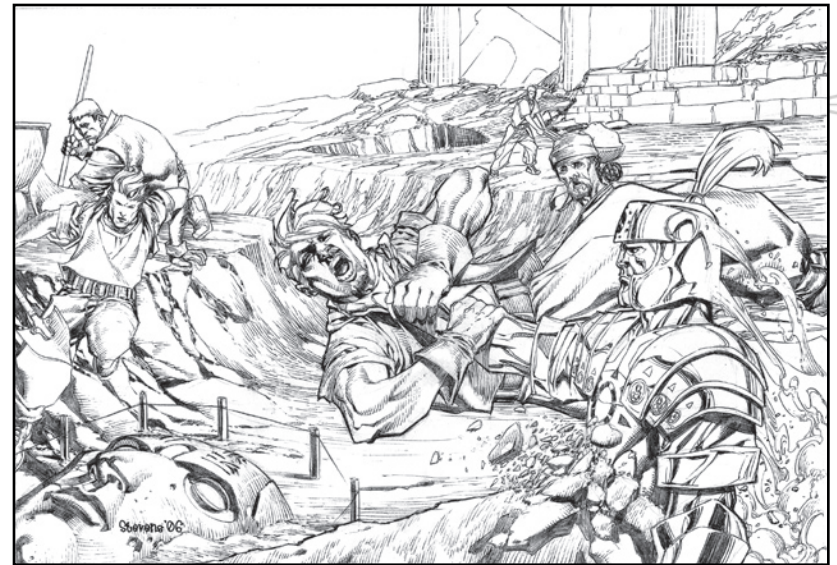
It is in one such pocket that this scene takes place. Having come to a dead end in their tunnel, the circle must make their way through a relatively well-preserved First Age hall. Unfortunately for them, the stone hall is still inhabited by relics of the past. Ancient automata awakened upon the circle's entrance into what the machines view to be sacred ground.

The automata were once guardians and servants of the Exalted who ruled this place before the Usurpation. During the Fair Folk invasions of the Great Contagion, the fae corrupted the magitech guardians' programming, and now they've become mindless killing machines. The automata lash out at any Essence users who enter their hall, but they do not pursue past the front of the hall if trespassers retreat back into the tunnel.

Note that there is no light in this part of the ruins. Storytellers should remember, however, that a Solar can spend 1 mote to make her caste mark flare up; it doesn't take much to lift the darkness here.

Description

The corridor comes to an abrupt end in what appears to be a ruined city square. To the left, up a flight of rough stairs and past a group of columns, lies the only open path. Pursuing that path leads the circle into a long, wide hall. Five columns line the inside of the hall, each with a stone warrior leaning up against it, and each stone warrior bears a metal blade. At the end of the hall stands a brass statue carved in the likeness of a legionnaire.



When the circle reaches about the midpoint of the hall:

Stones crack and metal screeches as the stone statues come to life. Each moves with a slow and blocky gait, hefting its weapon and moving forward with a murderous purpose. At the end of the hall, the brass legionnaire lifts a spear with clockwork precision, leveling it towards the circle and emitting a metallic shriek.

As the combat progresses:

The automata smash into pillars as they fall, stumble or lash out, cracking the marble columns and spreading dust through the air.

Similar lines should be used sporadically throughout combat to infer that the combat is damaging the building's structural integrity.

Storyteller Goals

Further the tension and difficulties created in the previous scene. Ensure that when the characters find Arvia in the next scene that the difficulties of their task are made clear by this combat and the action of "Nighthammer Chaos." Just as "Deals in Sapphire" was a quick nod to the socially-oriented characters, this combat should help the martially inclined feel like a part of the story.

As a secondary goal, the Storyteller should also seek to do some collateral damage to the hall itself through description of the stone warriors' attacks to set up "One God Blood, Check."

Character Goals

Give these things a good thrashing! Alternatively, save the automata somehow without destroying them (which is difficult without an impressive plan and accompanying stunt).

Actions

This is a straightforward combat – the automata believe they’re here to protect the hall from intruders. They’ll stop at nothing to slay those who trespass in old Hollow, and are quite mindless about it. Though they fight intelligently on their own, they do not coordinate their attacks. They also won’t attack each other, even if they accidentally strike one of their own.

The twelve stone soldiers’ relevant combat traits are listed below. They are intended as extras in this scene. The brass legionnaire is detailed in **The Books of Sorcery, Vol. I–Wonders of the Lost Age** (p. 103). He is not intended to be an extra, but is at full capability. If you don’t have **Wonders of the Lost Age** or want to use another creature, see the sidebar “Automata Without Wonders.”

Str/Dex/Sta	Per/Int/Wits/Will	Health Levels
4/2/7	1/1/1/10	-0/-1/-1/-1/-2/-2/-2/-4/I
Attack (Spd/Acc/Dmg/Def/Rate)		Dodge DV/Soak
Punch: 5/6/4B/7/3		1/7L/14B
Sword: 4/8/9L/6/2		
Abilities: Athletics 1 (Feats of Strength +3), Awareness 2, Martial Arts 3, Melee 5, Resistance 5.		

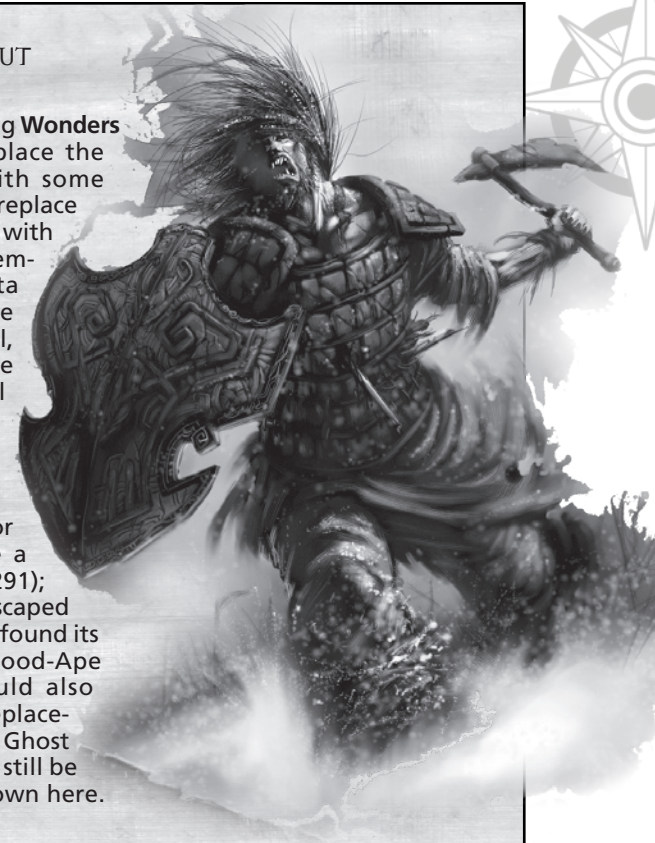
Consequences

The fight in the hall will weaken this building’s structural integrity, causing it to collapse in “One God-Blood, Check” This serves to block off the route the circle took to get down here and set up the scene “Firewanderer.”

AUTOMATA WITHOUT WONDERS

For Storytellers lacking **Wonders of the Lost Age**, replace the Brass Legionnaire with some other creature. If you replace the Brass Legionnaire with an Essence user, remember that the automata awaken once an Essence user sets foot in the hall, so have the creature waiting outside the hall on the other end and aggressively leap into battle once the stone warriors wake.

Some suggestions for replacements include a Gryphon (**Exalted**, p. 291); the beast could have escaped from Lily and Lilac and found its way down here. A Blood-Ape (**Exalted**, p. 310) could also serve as a sufficient replacement, or a restless War Ghost (**Exalted**, p. 318) could still be rummaging around down here.



One God-Blood, Check

MENTAL • PHYSICAL – SOCIAL –

Overview

Fresh from their victory in the hall, the circle comes to the manse buried under the geographic center of old Hollow, deep under the Firewander district. As they arrive in the manse, a group of hobgoblins threatening a pretty girl flees the scene, leaving the girl behind. The girl is understandably shaken after being man-handled by the least of the Fair Folk. After getting her to calm down, she proves to be a very amicable and likeable person. Unfortunately, things don't stay calm for too long, as the hall the circle came from collapses, leaving their way out buried under several tons of earth.

The girl, Free Spirited Arvia, knows another way out, which is the same way the hobgoblins fled: right into the heart of the Firewander district.

Description

The magnificent structure ahead has seen better days. Its statues and marble colonnades are long since collapsed, leaving behind a shadow of what they once were. Suddenly, a woman's scream comes from inside!

When the characters arrive inside:

A group of hobgoblins is assaulting a beautiful young woman. When they see the circle coming, the squat, cowardly brutes flee, their unkempt toenails clacking against the broken marble as they run.

Storyteller Goals

Let the characters bask in the victory of getting to Arvia, while simultaneously building dread for what's coming in the second act of the story – traversing the Firewander. This is also a good scene to let characters mend their wounds and recharge their batteries if, for whatever reason, the circle was badly wounded or expended the majority of their Essence.

The circle may well wish some rest and relaxation at this point. Since they're in a manse, some among the circle may wish to acquire the manse's hearthstone. Arvia has the hearthstone and is not willing to give it up, barring unnatural mental influence (which would upset her considerably). However, if the Storyteller wishes to reward the players, he may do so by awarding one the Hollow manse's hearthstone instead of leaving it with Arvia. The manse is one of Earth, either level 4 or level 5. The level and powers of the hearthstone are up to the Storyteller.

Character Goals

Find out who screamed, and then who the beautiful young woman is.

Actions

Plotting a Course to the Surface

Dice Pool: (Intelligence + Lore or Survival), difficulty 2.

Action: Dramatic.

Hindrances: Characters are new to Nexus (-2 internal penalty).

Help: Characters have been friendly with Arvia, who will help them plot their course (+1 bonus success).

Roll Results

Botch: The character plots a course so wrong that the circle ends up incredibly lost. What happens here is best left up to the deviousness of the Storyteller. Some suggestions include running into a small shadowlands, one of the Solar tombs under the city or possibly even a point where the Labyrinth of the Underworld joins into Creation.

Failure: The character plots a false course, and will probably be aware of this fact after following it a few hours.

Success: The character has plotted a course to the surface that will take them safely to the Firewander district.

Consequences

Unless the circle has been extremely rude to Arvia, by the end of this scene they will have the quiet admiration and vocal help of the most wanted God-Blood in Nexus. As act one closes, a general sense of foreboding settles in on the manse. As they find their way to the Firewander district, go to the scene "Firewanderer."



Firewanderer

MENTAL •••

PHYSICAL •

SOCIAL •••

Overview

The Firewander district is a bastion of the Wyld nestled away in the center of Nexus. In Firewander, the laws of reality are gone, and the laws of a god mean nothing. The rule of the Wyld is everything. Even though the circle has plotted a successful course to the surface, it seems the Firewander district is not willing to let them go so easily.

In this scene, the circle finds themselves smack dab in a maze created by the freehold – a form of fae manse (see **The Compass of Celestial Directions, Vol. II–The Wyld**, pp. 29-33, for more information) – in the Firewander. The maze is not a fair puzzle, for it continually changes in form, design and layout. The Fair Folk Lily controls the puzzle by through her voice and her force of will, speaking with the characters and attempting to convince them that she can free them if they hand over Arvia.

Once the characters escape, a group of Guildsmen bearing the symbol of Hierarch Dvora approach the circle, asking the circle to return with them to the Hierarch.

Description

The depths of Hollow give way to the surface light, but it is neither the Unconquered Sun nor Luna who greets the circle. A false sun rests high in the sky, as rows upon rows of hedges spring up from nothingness. The hedges glisten oddly, with leaves made of glass and stems of brass. Instead of the usual scent of plant life, the branches smell of city dirt mixed with the blood of the fallen.

Example descriptions for when a shift to a new type of maze occur:

- *Glass melts and runs in rivulets around the circle, a shimmering pool of mirrored liquid. The glass sprouts its own fungus, forming a canopy of thick mushrooms and fungal corridors.*
- *The maze shifts again, becoming a corridor of lace and silk that's stronger than steel. Brilliant crimson hues adorn the seductive lace, drawing the eyes to their sumptuous, sensual patterns that evoke the thinly-veiled promise of a lover's bed.*

- *Again, the walls whisk away. Flowers form into giant petal walls, towering up as far as the eye can see. Stamens form prison bars, creating the illusion of a cage. Wind whistles through the bars, sounding like the sad laughter of a defeated woman.*

Storyteller Goals

Formally introduce Lily (and through her, Lilac) to the circle. Play up the area's discord, and try to create a sense of powerlessness. Be sure not to emphasize this too much, however, as the circle should eventually realize Lily has no real power over them. If they wish to escape without turning over Arvia, the characters must come to the realization that the maze can be solved, either by confronting Lily's social prowess, or by outpacing her changes and solving her maze. By the end of the scene, the characters should have questions as to why the fae are after Arvia, which will probably prompt questions of why Artemisia and Veil are after Arvia as well. If Lily admits to why the twins want Arvia, the circle may start asking questions which will help propel the plot forward.

The circle walks out of the Firewander, and finds itself face-to-face with Hierarch Dvora's men. The Guildsmen offer to take the circle to Dvora. They assure the circle that Dvora is not allied with Artemisia, and will say nothing to her fellow Hierarch. The men do not want an altercation and will avoid combat, so try to make this as peaceful as possible. Note that they can't force the circle to go with them (and won't try to).

Character Goals

Escape from the Firewander district with Arvia, safe and sound.

Actions

Solving the Maze

Dice Pool: (Perception + Awareness) or (Perception + Survival). The difficulty threshold is 3 – every success beyond the first 3 counts towards the running total.

Action: Extended (every roll represents 15 long ticks).

Hindrances: The maze shifts (-2 external penalty; the maze shifts every three rolls).

Help: Outrunning Lily's changes once they realize she can only change the maze so fast (-1 to difficulty).





Roll Results

Botch: Not only does the character fail, she also suffer a random environmental effect (**Exalted**, p. 131) as Lily's sudden shift of terrain catches them in something particularly deadly.

Failure: The character manages to get the circle a little lost. Lose a number of successes off the cumulative total, equal to the difference between the difficulty threshold (3) and the number of successes rolled.

Success: Add successes above the threshold to the running total. At a total of 30 successes, a character notices that the maze isn't shifting as quickly as it was before – it lulls every now and again, implying that the maze can be outrun.

Solving the Maze: A character who realizes the maze can be outrun must score another 20 successes, after which they arrive at the exit and the maze vanishes.

Being Social With the Sociopath

Just after a character makes his first navigation roll as above, Lily begins to speak through the walls. She sometimes forms herself a body out of whatever material is around, but if attacked, she simply fades back into the walls and continues speaking.

This is a social combat, and Lily's objective is to convince the characters to surrender Arvia to her. If the line of questions leads the circle

to ask why she wants Arvia, Lily is honest: she wants to use Arvia to release Nexus from the Loom of Fate, drawing the whole city into the Wyld (as well as to confound her sister).

For ease of record-keeping, line up the timing of the social combat with the rolls for the maze navigation: The first roll for maze navigation should coincide with long tick 0 of this social combat. Thus, when enough attacks, parries, dodges and other moves have been made for 15 long ticks to pass, another maze roll can be attempted.

Should the maze roll and the social combat take place on the same long tick, characters may notice (**Wits + Awareness**) that the maze is sluggish to change when Lily is busy bantering. This allows the circle the time to solve the maze. Characters particularly knowledgeable of the fae might come to realize that Lily has not intentionally harmed the circle with her maze; any environmental hazards are the result of the character's rush, not purposeful malice on Lily's part. As beings of higher reality than the Fair Folk, the Exalts can deny the existence of this glamour and assert their power over the maze. This realization grants a (**Charisma + Presence**) roll, adding the character's Essence in automatic successes. If this roll beats Lily's Dodge MDV, then her maze is broken and the circle is deposited on the edge of the Firewander.

Consequences

At this point, the story can go in several directions. The remaining scenes ("Daughter of Nexus," "Slaughter on the Streets of Nexus," "What About Arvia," "Lilac's Crusade" and "Free Spirited Kidnaping") are in no particular order, and can be strung together as the Storyteller wishes before leading up to Act Three. Not all scenes are required – only as many as the Storyteller so chooses.

If the circle wishes to accompany the soldiers, move to "Daughter of Nexus." If they do not, then "Slaughter on the Streets of Nexus" continues the action with little break from mind maze and social combat to real combat. If pacing demands a break in the action, then move to "What About Arvia?" for a breather.

Daughter of Nexus

MENTAL – PHYSICAL – SOCIAL •

Overview

Hierarch Dvora has reached the circle first, and they've agreed to meet with her concerning Arvia and Hierarch Artemisia Sapphire. Dvora intends to explain what she's pieced together so far in a non-threatening and non-confrontational manner. The Guild Hierarch wants what's best for the god-blood girl, and wants the circle to know why.

This scene takes place in Dvora's sitting room. There, she sits and chats with the circle and Arvia. Dvora explains to the circle what city gods do: manage the interests of cities for Heaven. Then she explains that Free Spirited Arvia is the daughter of Nexus' city god.

Dvora further explains that Arvia, who could rightly be called the Daughter of Nexus, could someday supplant her father, if the wrong people used her. Or, she may complement her father and heal his mental instability. Artemisia, on the other hand, just wants to make a profit, and doesn't understand what turning Arvia over to Lily and Lilac might do to the city.

The Hierarch also knows that there's a death cult in the city. The cult claims to follow some powerful ghost named the Walker in Darkness, which apparently wants to turn Nexus into a new shadowland. Dvora will work to ensure that this not be allowed to happen. Unfortunately, Dvora knows nothing about the Abyssal, Veil of Ebon Blades.

Description

The sitting is warm and welcoming, and smells vaguely like a comfortable kitchen. Small puffs of steam rise from a nearby kettle, which rests on a ceramic plate in the center of the coffee table separating the circle from the aged Dvora. The wrinkled old woman leans forward and pours herself a cup, then offers the kettle to the circle. "Tea?"

Storyteller Goals

This is an informational scene. Let the characters know just about anything Dvora knows. Dvora's contacts are wide and deep – even among the dead. Use this scene to bring to the fore the fate of Nexus and the danger or blessing that Arvia represents.

Character Goals

Learn what's really going on in Nexus, and how the pieces of the puzzle fit together.

Actions

Simple Pleasantries

Dice Pool: (Charisma + Socialize), difficulty 1.

Action: Dramatic.

Dvora enjoys the little pleasantries, formalities and niceties of culture. Any character who meets her baseline expectations, even unknowingly, will garner her favor. Storytellers should not allow this roll to characters who have been excessively rude to her.

Hindrances: Character behaving rudely (-3 internal penalty).

Help: Characters minding civilities (+1 bonus success).

Roll Results

Botch: Though she does not say anything, Dvora quietly withdraws her support. She may send mercenaries to collect Arvia from the circle by force at a later time, fearing what they will do with the god-blood.

Failure: Dvora finishes the meeting politely and ushers the circle out, wishing them luck.

Success: Dvora offers to help put the circle in contact with the Emissary of Nexus – though it will take her some time to gain his attention.

Consequences

This scene's consequences vary depending on their Simple Pleasantries roll. If the circle garners Dvora's help or is dismissed with no ill intentions (a failure, but not a botch), then "Slaughter on the Streets of Nexus" can be used to kick the story back into high gear. Otherwise, if the circle is concerned (or has shown concern before) about Arvia's opinion, then move to "What About Arvia?"

If Dvora sends her mercenaries to collect Arvia, the Storyteller can pick a mercenary unit from **The Compass of Terrestrial Directions Vol. I-The Scavenger Lands** (pp. 36-37) or use the stats for Regular Troops or Elite Soldiers (**Exalted**, pp. 279-280). The unit is lead by a Mortal Hero (**Exalted**, p. 280).



Slaughter on the Streets of Nexus

MENTAL •

PHYSICAL ••

SOCIAL –

Overview

Veil of Ebon Blades is not the only agent Walker in Darkness has on the streets of Nexus. Over the past few years, the Deathlord has also grown a sizeable cult by sending his proxies and loyal followers to Nexus, intent on recruiting (or brainwashing) cultists. At dusk, when the circle is on the streets of Nexus, the cult attempts to seize Arvia and make off with her.

If the circle resists, then the cultists have no qualms with killing them. The cultists don't understand the raw power these Anathema carry, but unfortunately for the circle, the cultists are not comprised wholly of mortals. Two nemissaries (**Exalted**, p. 319) accompany the dozen mortal cultists, and they have no qualms with recklessly using their host bodies as weapons.

The cultists are acting under Veil of Ebon Blades' orders. The Abyssal knows she cannot win in a straight fight against an entire circle if they're at full capacity, so she's willing to throw away a few lives to wear them down.

Description

The filthy streets are quiet as the sun sinks below the horizon. A gentle wind whips through the passages, lifting up trash and casting it aside. The shadows grow long in the fading light, and the smell of blood – probably from the nearby slaughter houses – hangs in the air. Arvia looks a little jittery, disturbed by the quiet.

Storyteller Goals

Force the circle to use valuable resources. Though the mortals are extras, the nemissaries are not, and may require Essence expenditure to defeat – if only to burn the bodies of fallen cultists (through the Zenith anima power, for instance) to make certain the nemissaries cannot possess them.

As a secondary or alternate goal, this scene can be used to distract the circle while Veil of Ebon Blades steals the girl away (see “Free Spirited Kidnapping”).

Character Goals

Defend Arvia from the cultists.

Actions

It's Quiet...

Dice Pool: (Wits + Awareness), difficulty 2.

Action: Reflexive.

Hindrances: Fading light (-1 external penalty).

Help: Anyone who takes notice of Arvia's agitation (+2 bonus dice).

Roll Results

Botch: The character slips in a pool of blood, urine or other muck on the street, causing her to fall over unless she makes a (Dexterity + Athletics) roll at difficulty 2. Either way, the character suffers from failure as well.

Failure: The character does not notice the cultists or imminent attack. The first attack made against her in the combat below is unexpected (see “Unexpected Attacks,” **Exalted**, pp. 155-156).

Success: The character is aware something is about to happen. She may or may not have seen a cultist or the coming attack, but she senses that this is an ambush.

The Fight

The combat here is a skirmish on the open streets of Nexus. The dozen or so cultists are just citizens (**Exalted**, pp. 278-279) and are considered extras. The cultists are all equipped with knives or similar weapons (although the cultist's Accuracy with a knife is only 4, and extras automatically miss any character who has a higher DV than the extra's Accuracy pool).

At the start of combat, the nemissaries inhabit two extras' bodies. The nemissaries are not extras, and if their bodies are slain, they will try to inhabit the corpses of the cultists. If an extra's corpse was sufficient mangled (through a descriptive stunt or burned by a Zenith's anima), then the nemissaries will not bother with that corpse, instead seeking another. Only if all the corpses are destroyed do the nemissaries flee.

Though the brainwashing has rendered the cultists immune to normal social combat, it has done nothing to prevent unnatural mental influence. A cunning Exalt might realize and exploit this situation through the use of certain Charms, such as Mob-Dispersing Rebuke (the cultists are Magnitude 1 in this case, and the nemissaries automatically pass valor rolls).

Performance Charms that could end combat early would be Memory-Reweaving Discipline and Husband-Seducing Demon Dance. Useful Presence Charms include Hypnotic Tongue Technique, Authority-Radiating Stance (causing the cultists to believe the circle are their masters) and Worshipful Lackey Acquisition. The Socialize Charm Gathering the Congregation is also capable of turning the cultists into loyal followers.

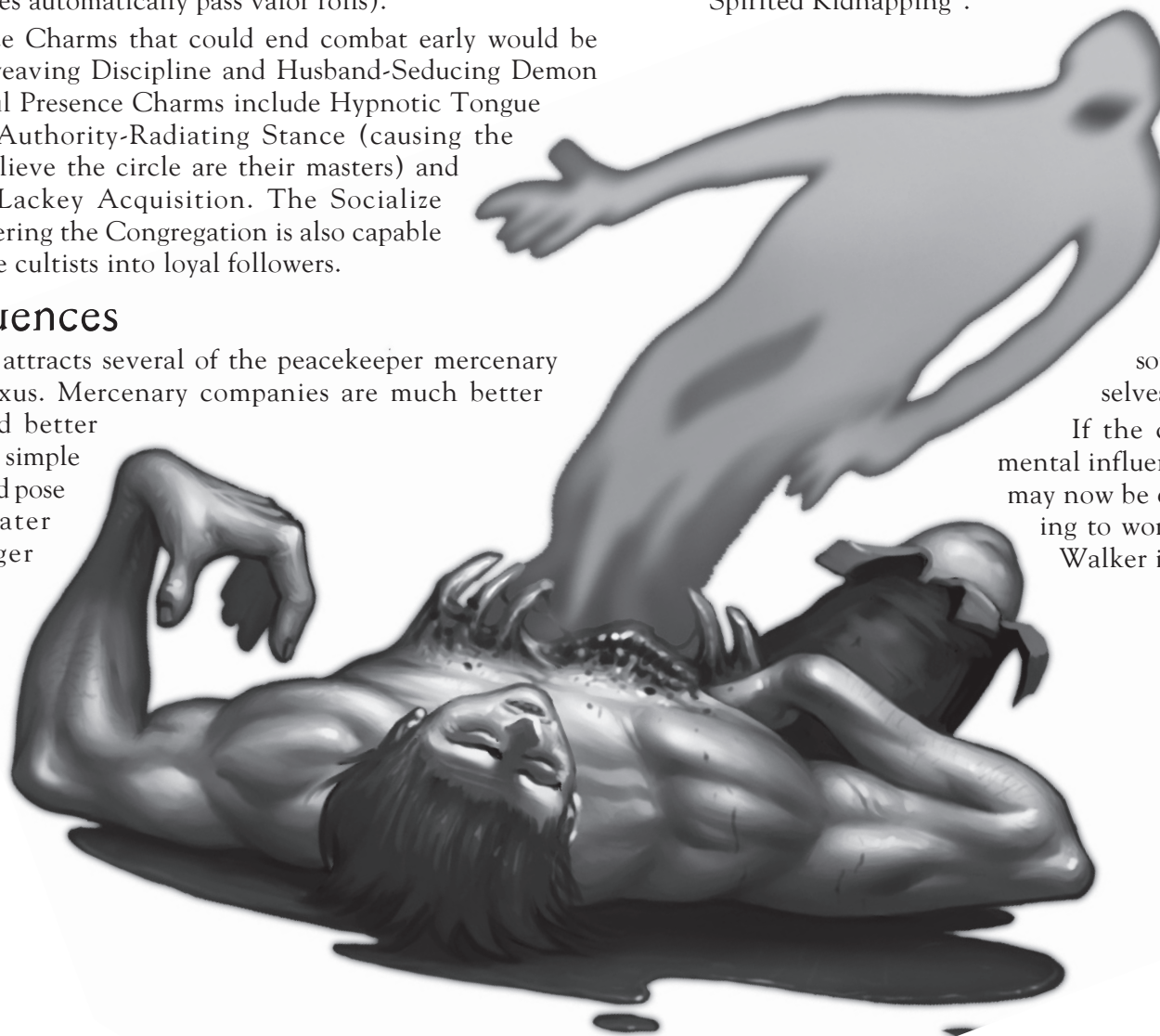
Consequences

The battle attracts several of the peacekeeper mercenary forces of Nexus. Mercenary companies are much better equipped and better led than some simple cult, and could pose a much greater risk of danger

to the characters. If the circle leaves quickly, they can avoid a confrontation with the mercenary unit. If they chose to stand their ground, Arvia flees – she’s mortal and not in any particular hurry to meet the sometimes cruel police of Nexus. This may also set up her kidnapping at the Storyteller’s discretion, per “Free Spirited Kidnapping”.

Nothing says the encounter with the mercenaries needs to end badly, however. If the circle did not meet with Dvora, then this might lead to “Daughter of Nexus.” It could just as easily go to “What About Arvia?” after the circle puts some distance between themselves and the mercenaries.

If the circle exerted unnatural mental influence over the cultists, they may now be equipped with a cult willing to worship them instead of the Walker in Darkness.





What About Arvia?

MENTAL – PHYSICAL – SOCIAL •

Overview

Up until this point, the circle has been dealing with everyone else's desires concerning Arvia. Now, Arvia would like to make her own wishes known. When an appropriate opportunity presents itself, Arvia asks the circle to take her to a café she knows nearby, sit down with her and have a drink. There, she explains to them that she doesn't feel she's ready to be the city goddess, and she certainly doesn't want to be turned over to the Fair Folk or the dead. She wants to be free for a little longer and maybe grow up a little more. Once that's done, maybe then she'll be ready to become the city goddess.

This scene is designed to help build Arvia's character a bit and make her more three-dimensional to the circle. It's also intended to provide a break in the action and intrigue for the characters (and players) to catch their breath. "What About Arvia?" is therefore purely optional. This scene could be a very touching and heartwarming moment of camaraderie, but it might not make sense for your story. Arvia could also be played purely as the damsel in distress. Use or discard the scene as you deem appropriate.

Description

As the circle rounds a corner and begins to ascend a hill, the aroma of freshly baked goods fills their noses, followed by the heavenly scent of cinnamon butter and delicious yeddim's milk. It puts a smile on Arvia's lips as she walks towards the source of the smell: a hole-in-the-wall bakery.

"Mmm, that smells good. Hey!" she calls back to the circle. "Can we talk? I want to say something without all those bizarre people around."

Storyteller Goals

Instill a sense of empathy and understanding between Arvia and the circle. This connection should help bolster the players to come to Arvia's aid swiftly in the third act.

Character Goals

Listen to Arvia's point of view.

Actions

There aren't any key actions in this scene apart from talking to Arvia.

Consequences

If the circle honestly listens to Arvia in this scene, then they have probably secured an ally for the remainder of the series. After such a touching scene, a solid action scene like "Slaughter on the Streets of Nexus" or "Lilac's Crusade" can pick up the action. Follow that upswing with "Free Spirited Kidnapping" to keep tensions high and move straight into the third act.



Lilac's Crusade

MENTAL –

PHYSICAL ●●●●

SOCIAL ●●

Overview

Lilac is tired of waiting. Her sister failed to capture Free Spirited Arvia, and now she is going to do it herself! Lilac has gathered an army of hobgoblins and now marches out from the Firewander district into the streets of Nexus. The mercenary companies of Nexus move to protect the city, and what would be a simple search for the God-Blood becomes a skirmish in desperate need of heroes and leaders.

Lilac has studied the tactics of the Nexus mercenary companies enough to know who to kill in order to turn the mercenaries into disorganized mobs. Unfortunately for Lilac, the circle is considerably more resilient than the heroic mortal leaders of the mercenary companies.

Description

A horn blasts across the city. All business stops and all eyes turn towards the Firewander. A pillar of green fire erupts into the sky, bathing the city in an eerie glow as several flights of griffons screech and swoop through the air. Hobgoblins march in perfect lock step through the streets, slaying all who stand in their way. At their head is a flower-woman, whose petal armor and stamen-blade are stronger and deadlier than steel.

Storyteller Goals

Put the circle in position to protect Nexus. Run a fast and exciting mass combat scenario (see Actions for more details).

Character Goals

Defeat Lilac and push her army back into the Wyld.

Actions

This is a mass combat on the streets of Nexus. In the opening stages of the combat, before the arrival of the circle (and before

the Join War roll), Lilac's forces slaughter the heads of several Nexus mercenary companies, preventing them from organizing their units effectively against the fae. If the circle moves in, they can attempt to take command of the soldiers. This is essentially a Rally action (**Exalted**, p. 165), requiring a (Charisma + War or Performance) at a difficulty of the unit's (Magnitude – Drill), minimum 1.

The Storyteller is encouraged to use any of the Nexus mercenary companies either he or the circle feels like. Mercenary companies can be found in **The Compass of Terrestrial Directions, Vol. I-The Scavenger Lands**, pp. 35-37, or use the stats on page 24. Lilac's army is comprised of **two Wings of hobgoblins**, lead by goblins heroes (use the hobgoblin traits on **Exalted**, p. 286). Lilac herself has a personal Scale of **gryphons as an honor guard**.

Consequences

If the circle successfully routes the Fair Folk army, then Nexus certainly owes them a boon! During the chaos of the battle is also when Arvia is most likely to disappear, taken by Veil of Ebon Blades (see "Free Spirited Kidnapping").

On the other hand, Lilac might overcome the circle or distract them long enough to kidnap Arvia. Storytellers can improvise a scene (or an entire story!) following Lily and Lilac. In this case, the Firewander district expands and the Crusade pauses only to resupply before pushing on. If Arvia is taken, then the strands of Nexus begin to fray in the Loom of Fate, and the Chosen of Fate may come to aid the circle in finding the god-blood and facing the Fair Folk in their own domain.

Either way, it's likely that someone will have alerted the Wyld Hunt to the fact that Anathema are in Nexus by now.

ALTERNATIVE MERCENARIES

The following traits can be used for the scattered mercenaries.

Magnitude: 1-3 (Storyteller's discretion).

Drill: 3

Close Combat Attack: 2

Close Combat Damage: 2

Ranged Attack: 2

Ranged Damage: 2

Endurance: 6

Might: 0

Armor: 1

Valor: 3

Free Spirited Kidnapping

MENTAL ••

PHYSICAL –

SOCIAL –

Overview

Arvia is gone!

Either during the chaos of one of the earlier scenes (such as “Slaughter on the Streets of Nexus” or “Lilac’s Crusade”), or at some other point of distraction, Arvia vanished when no one was looking. The god-blood never made a noise or cried out.

Fortunately, she wasn’t completely foolish, and did manage to leave behind a clue or two. Astute characters may find these clues and realize just who has taken Arvia: Veil of Ebon Blades.

Description

If this scene happens after “Lilac’s Crusade”:

In the midst of the revelry and rejoicing over pushing the Fair Folk back into the Wyld, there is an odd hollow ring to the sound of their voices. It is as if the spirit of the city is missing. Then, all at once, the realization settles in: Arvia is gone!

If this scene happens after “Slaughter on the Streets of Nexus” (if the circle killed the cultists):

The scent of human blood mingles with the stench of slaughtered animal as the cultists lay dead. The last cultist inhales for the final time, a twinge of mockery is on his dying breath. The unexpected derision causes the circle to look around them and realize the source of the mockery – Arvia is missing.

At another point in the story:

Arvia stops and looks down an alleyway. There, she sees a little old woman, struggling to make it up the stairs into her slum. Before anyone can object, she runs off to help the old lady, disappearing into the woman’s abode. The circle starts to go after her, and both her and the old woman are gone.

Storyteller Goals

Create an immediate mystery of who stole Arvia, then snap the players’ attention to chasing Veil of Ebon Blades. This sets up Act Three. It is critical that the circle be ready to pursue Veil immediately.



If necessary, Veil of Ebon Blades uses her Stealth and Larceny charms to either vanish or look like someone else (such as an old lady). Veil has been planning how to kidnap Arvia for some time, and is very prepared for this scene.

Character Goals

Figure out what happened to Arvia.

Actions

Finding Clues of Arvia’s Abductor

Dice Pool: (Perception + Awareness or Investigation). Awareness is at a difficulty of 3, while Investigation at a difficulty of 2.

Action: Instant (Awareness), Dramatic (Investigation). Players may attempt both rolls.

Hindrances: Chaotic aftermath of battle (-3 external penalty to either roll).

Help: Characters are taking a long time to carefully study the scene (+1 bonus die to Investigation roll).

Useful Charms: Eye of the Unconquered Sun immediately reveals all clues below, and even acts in an almost post-cognitive fashion to inform the character that it was a deathknight who took Arvia, probably the same one who tried to kill them back in the Nighthammer District. (This last part assumes the circle figured out that someone was trying to kill them during “Nighthammer Chaos”). Crafty Observation Method can speed the Investigative process up if no one successfully uses Awareness to figure out what’s going on.

Roll Results

Botch: The character is unaware of who took Arvia, and may believe that Arvia has run away of her own free will.

Failure: The character overlooks some crucial piece of information and misses the clue Arvia hastily left behind. If all characters fail the Awareness rolls and any subsequent Investigation rolls, then see “Consequences” for one potential way to handle the situation.

Success: A tiny broken skull wrapped in gauze is lying on the ground, intentionally cast aside. If the circle found the skull during “Nighthammer Chaos,” then they will probably notice immediately that this skull matches the other one. The person who tried to kill them back then has taken Arvia now! If they haven’t found that skull, the Storyteller can rule that Arvia has spontaneously acquired a Charm allowing her to leave behind memories in objects. In this case, a character holding the skull gets a quick flashback to Veil of Ebon Blades kidnapping Arvia.

Consequences

The race to save Nexus begins; go to “The Chase is On!”

Storytellers who know their group can stand a little failure might use this as a point to break away from the story. If the circle really believes that Arvia has left on her own or simply have no clue where to begin looking, they might miss the opportunity to stop Veil of Ebon Blades. Alternatively, a member of the Guild or a good Samaritan (or a Sidereal disguised as one) may come along and point the circle in the right direction if they absolutely

cannot catch a break. (Of course, if the circle’s luck is that bad, they might want to think twice before running off in pursuit of an Abyssal.)

Instead of the showdown at the end, this might lead to the Walker in Darkness actually succeeding in his plan to turn Nexus into a shadowlands and place the circle right in the middle of a war in the Underworld and on Creation! What that war would look like is beyond the scope of this story, but would be an epic tale in and of itself.



The Chase is On!

MENTAL – PHYSICAL – SOCIAL ●●●

Overview

Shortly after the circle realizes Arvia is gone, Guild-hired mercenaries approach. They've come on behalf of Hierarch Dvora Odom. What happens next depends on if the circle met with the Hierarch in "Daughter of Nexus" or not.

If the circle met with Hierarch Dvora and did not seriously offend her, then the mercenaries are here to check in on Arvia and inform the circle that the Emissary is ready to meet with them. Once they find out Arvia is gone, the mercenaries spread the word to block off the city as quickly as possible. With the circle's help, they can spread the word to the other mercenaries in Nexus.

If the circle did not meet with Dvora or if the meeting ended poorly, then the mercenaries are here on her behalf to see Arvia. Once they find out she's missing, the mercenary captain may accuse the circle of negligence, blaming them for Arvia's loss. The mercenaries are not enemies, however, and will back off swiftly, especially if threatened. The circle is not the mercenaries' target right now – whoever kidnapped Arvia is.

Having not spoken to Dvora puts the circle in a more difficult predicament. The mercenaries are less likely to follow the orders of the circle if they're not certain they'll be paid. If the circle is not aware of who stole away Free Spirited Arvia, then the mercenaries can drive the plot forward by telling the characters about Veil of Ebon Blades and that she must have stolen the girl away.

Description

In the midst of the panic, the sound of marching feet can be heard. Another group of soldiers of fortune, bearing a symbol of one of the Guild Hierarchs, is marching towards the circle. The mercenary captain approaches and asks "Where is Miss Arvia?"

Storyteller Goals

Set the stage for the final battle – either pursuing Veil into the tomb or through the wilderness. Create a sense of urgency in the circle. Every second they wait is another second that Veil of Ebon Blades is escaping with Arvia. Also reward the circle for their efforts to this point if they have made friends in Nexus.

For those Storytellers who aren't interested in running "Into the Tomb", this scene can also be used to stall the circle a little, giving Veil of Ebon Blades the time needed to escape.

Character Goals

Pursue Veil of Ebon Blades before her trail goes cold. Alternatively, get the mercenaries to seal the city, drastically cutting down the area the circle will have to search for Veil.

Actions

Convincing the Mercenaries

Dice Pool: (Charisma + Presence); a character's Socialize acts as a limit on their Presence score. The difficulty for this action is the leader's Dodge MDV of 4 plus his unit's Magnitude of 2, for a total difficulty of 6.

Action: Dramatic (5 long ticks, should timing matter).

For characters who have not met Hierarch Dvora, the mercenaries can still be convinced to help. This is attempting to influence a social unit, per the rules in **Exalted** (p. 175). Storytellers can also use this roll to help reinforce that the character's actions matter. Storytellers might consider substituting War for Presence if the characters are trying to coordinate the mercenaries instead of trying to convince them.

Hindrances: The mercenaries know (or suspect) they won't be compensated (+3 to unit's MDV for being against Policy).

Help: The circle makes an offer that matches the unit's Policy (-3 to unit's MDV); the circle has met and formed an amicable relationship with Hierarch Dvora (-1 to unit's MDV).

Useful Charms: Know the Soul's Price can inform a character of the unit's Policy. Gathering the Congregation can be used to skip the roll entirely and simply convince the unit to follow.

Roll Results

Botch: The character might have said or done something so offensive that the unit either turns the cold shoulder to the circle or becomes violent – perhaps irrationally so. No further rolls can be made without the use of unnatural mental influence.

Failure: The unit responds with a no-can-do attitude. Continuing attempts to influence the circle will probably result in having to go into social combat (including a Join Debate roll). In the end, this will probably just waste more time, allowing Veil of Ebon Blades to escape the city.

Success: The mercenaries quickly quarantine the city with the help of other mercenary groups throughout the city.

Consequences

Assuming that the mercenaries are convinced in time, the circle has successfully quarantined Veil. The Abyssal's next move is to go underground, into one of the Solar tombs of Nexus. Once she crosses the threshold, the Council of Entities is aware that someone is trespassing in a tomb.

Should the mercenaries refuse to help the circle, or the circle spends too much time in social combat with them (around 15 ticks or so), then Veil escapes and the circle will have to pursue her into the wilderness. If the circle does get the mercenaries to help, but not before Veil escapes, they will provide fine horses.

If Veil goes down a Solar tomb, then proceed to “Into the Tomb.” If she escapes, then see “Flight to the Shadowlands.”



Into the Tomb

MENTAL ••

PHYSICAL ••

SOCIAL –

Overview

Delving into a Solar tomb is an incredibly dangerous affair. Most tombs were built after the Usurpation to ensure that the murdered Solars would pass on peacefully, (or at least wouldn't rampage around the city as ghostly monstrosities). Veil has pressed her way into the depths of an old Night caste's tomb, ignoring traps, locked doors and sealed treasure, in a desperate attempt to reach a sealed door to the Underworld. When the Terrestrials struck down the Night caste buried in this particular tomb, the Solar died with such hatred that her passing created a tiny shadowland.

Once Veil crossed the threshold, the Council of Entities was immediately aware someone had violated their prohibition. They waste no time in getting word to the circle, sure that only this Abyssal would be foolish enough to attempt such an escape. It's not particularly difficult to follow Veil's trail through the tomb – she's not trying to cover her tracks, and leaves open whatever she passed through. This scene is not so much a single scene as it is a series of vignettes that can be used to build tension and anticipation for the final battle. The vignettes are intended to last no longer than a single roll, and are only samples of what obstacles might stand in the characters' way. Not all these rolls are necessary, and they're presented in no particular order.

Description

The tomb has seen better days. The lumber and stonework that make up the walls have been shattered very recently. Cobwebs lay torn from their archways, and what vermin have not yet fled skitter to their hiding places in anticipation of the circle's steps. Veil of Ebon Blades has been here already.

The sun has entered twilight and will set within the next hour. If Veil truly is seeking a passage into the Underworld, it will be when the sun crosses the horizon.

Storyteller Goals

Build drama and a sense of danger as the circle approaches their final showdown. If the players are growing frustrated or annoyed, then move along to the final scene, "To Die and Dream No More".

Character Goals

Reach Veil of Ebon Blades quickly, before she can escape into the Underworld once the sun sets.

Actions

Many tomb-delving actions are possible. Below are a few examples, but Storytellers are encouraged to add their own scenarios or unique setups for this scene. The idea is simple: provide a quick description, ask for a roll (allowing for the player to stunt his character's action) and then move on.

Stuck Door: A wooden door sits stuck in the circle's path. Requires a feat of strength (6 dots), or a Charm such as Door Evading Technique.

Gaping Maw: A wide chasm is torn into the floor, preventing passage. Requires a (Strength + Athletics) roll, difficulty 2 to leap across, or a Charm such as Monkey Leap Technique.

Optical Illusion: The corridor appears to stop at a dead end. However, there's a hidden passage at the end, obscured by the fact that the stones back there are larger than the ones in the foreground. A (Perception + Awareness) roll, difficulty 2, sees through this illusion, as do Charms such as Eye of the Unconquered Sun.

The Harrowing: Images assail the circle – bloodshed, death, violence and gore. They come from a magical trap left to disgust would-be thieves into leaving the tomb alone. Treat this as an attack against a character's Dodge MDV. The attack automatically garners 6 successes and is an Illusion effect, as well as unnatural mental influence. Failure to defend causes a character to freeze in his tracks and begin screaming wildly. Spending 1 Willpower resists the effect.

Poison Gas: Gas leaks into the hallway from various cracks in the tomb floor and wall. The gas has similar effects on the body as Coral Snake Venom (see **Exalted**, p. 131). This requires a (Stamina + Resistance) roll at difficulty 3, or Charms such as Immunity to Everything Technique.

Consequences

Once the circle has moved past all of the obstacles, move to the scene "To Die and Dream No More."



Flight to the Shadowland

MENTAL ••

PHYSICAL ••

SOCIAL –

Overview

Veil of Ebon Blades has escaped Nexus! She is fleeing upon a deathly steed, and making for a shadowland west of the city. Unlike “Into the Tomb,” Veil is not trying to reach the shadowland by nightfall – it’s too far away for that, even on an undead steed. However, she believes this is still the safer route of escape, because it gets her out of the city and into the open where she has more room to maneuver and can make use of her steed.

Veil tries to obscure her path by following game trails and sticking to very dry land to hide her passing. She doesn’t plan to make it easy for the circle intent on following her.

Veil also knows that while she may be able to stay ahead of the circle, she cannot put enough distance between herself and them to give her enough time to wait for the sun to set in her chosen shadowland village. She sets up several traps and snares designed to slow the circle and buy her more time to ready herself for the coming onslaught.

As with “Into the Tomb,” this is not a single, unified scene. Rather, it is intended to be played as a dramatic sequence of events. Presented below are vignettes: describe the problem, provide a single roll to overcome it, then move on. The obstacles are presented in no particular order, and Storytellers are encouraged to add their own obstacles. The exception to this is tracking Veil of Ebon Blades: Establishing an initial trail to follow is a fully fleshed-out action.

Description

Like the heroes of old, the circle thunders across the plains towards their destiny. Not a cloud remains in the sky, as if the Unconquered Sun has cleared the path before you. Over rolling plains, alongside cool blue water, the circle races, every hoof beat bringing them closer to Free Spirited Arvia.



Storyteller Goals

As with “Into the Tomb,” use this scene to create drama and build a sense of danger as the story approaches its final battle. If the players begin to grow frustrated or bored, then move the story along to the final scene: “To Die and Dream No More”.

Character Goals

Reach Veil of Ebon Blades before she escapes into the shadowlands with Arvia.

Actions

Tracking the Dead

Dice Pool: (Perception + Survival) versus Veil’s (Wits + Survival). This roll is made twice a day until one side or the other garners three threshold successes (see “Tracking/Evasion,” *Exalted*, p. 140).

Action: Extended and resisted.

Useful Charms: Unshakeable Bloodhound Technique can ensure that the characters never fail in their tracking effort.

Roll Results

Botch: A botch for either side typically results in the other side winning. If the circle botches, then Veil may escape with Arvia.

Failure: If neither side achieves enough threshold successes, then continue to roll. To spice up the action, switch between the tracking roll and one of the vignettes below, alternating between the two.

Success: Once one side achieves three threshold successes, it is declared the victor. Should the circle accomplish this very early, that does not mean that they have caught up to Veil, just that Veil will be unable to shake them. This allows the Storyteller to throw in as many vignettes as he wishes before continuing to the next scene. If Veil wins, then she escapes.

Vignettes

Fording the River: Veil’s path crosses a raging river. This requires a (Dexterity + Ride) roll, difficulty 2, to successfully navigate the horse through the river. If a character possesses Sometimes Horses Fly Approach, they can simply walk over the water.

Dying of Dysentery: Veil’s passing tainted the river water, angering the spirits so much that they’ve begun to spread disease to all who pass through the river. This requires a (Stamina + Resistance) roll, difficulty 4, to resist. Alternatively, a Charm such as Immunity to Everything Technique fixes the problem.

Brush Fire: A brush fire leaps up around the circle, spooking the horses. This requires a (Wits + Ride) roll, difficulty 2, or use of the Master Horseman’s Technique or Spirit-Steadying Assurances Charms.

Foraging: Perhaps the circle didn’t bring enough food in their rush to pursue Veil of Ebon Blades. Foraging for food requires an (Intelligence + Survival) roll, difficulty 2, or the use of Food-Gathering Exercise. If characters do not have appropriate hunting tools, apply a -2 internal penalty (see “Endure Wilderness,” *Exalted*, p. 139). Failing this roll may call for a Resistance roll (see “Enduring Hardship,” *ibid*, p. 129).

A New Steed: If one of the circle’s horses dies, fortune favors the Lawgivers, and a simhata (*Exalted*, p. 349) crosses their path. A character may use (Charisma + Presence or Ride) at difficulty 2 to control the lion-horse. A character who flares his anima automatically succeeds.

Consequences

If the circle fails to track Veil, this need not be the end of the story. Though she escapes into the Underworld, Veil is not as untouchable as she thinks. Nothing is preventing the circle from entering the Underworld after her. The Storyteller could take the tale to the Walker In Darkness’ fortress (see *The Manual of Exalted Power—The Abyssals*, p. 78, for more information).

If the circle succeeds, move to “To Die and Dream No More.”

To Die and Dream No More

MENTAL – PHYSICAL ●●●● SOCIAL –

Overview

Either in the depths of Nexus or the burnt ruins of a village, Veil of Ebon Shadows has realized she cannot outrun her pursuers. The Abyssal has decided to make her stand, and she will ensure the living do not tread upon her. Before the circle arrives, she places Arvia safely out of the way – after all, it would not do to have her prize killed before she can be properly sacrificed.

Veil of Ebon Blades sets herself up to ambush the circle, either hiding behind tomb pillars and sarcophagi or with the bodies of the dead in the burnt village. She fully expects to get the first strike in and slaughter (or at least gravely wound) one member of the circle right off the bat. Unfortunately for Veil, she has not had much time to study the circle's fighting styles, and does not have sufficient time to prepare against as many eventualities as she normally would.

If the players are the type who enjoy the melodramatic final speech before engaging in combat, Veil obliges. Even though this conversation can help the circle locate Veil, she still responds to their jeers with quick and incipit comebacks: she's covering her fear with arrogance.

No matter if she's being fought in the tomb or in the ruins, the tools at Veil's disposal remain the same – namely, corpses. Veil's mere presence agitates the dead, who may rise up and assault those who they view as too bright or too full of life. This is most likely the circle, but Storytellers wishing to play up the drama might have them go after Arvia as well.

Description

If the circle pursued Veil of Ebon Blades into the Solar Tomb:

The tomb-tunnel comes to a large, open bowl-shaped room. Stones hewn by Earthen Terrestrials during the Usurpation dip low in nearly perfect quarter-spheres. A fine layer of dust and cobwebs weaves across the floor, up ancient pillars and criss-crosses a fouled sarcophagus. While the

cool stones around bear no outward signs of corruption, the sarcophagus' stones have turned black over the ages. Whoever died within did so with great hatred.

If the circle pursued Veil of Ebon Blades into the wilderness:

The land ahead is covered in a pale gray fog – not thick enough to truly impede vision, but enough to set an eerie, deathly haze across the ruined village. A strong odor of rotting corpses and burning stone assail the olfactory senses. Something awful and terrifying took this village and destroyed it so completely that the very earth itself moans with the burden of the dead.

Storyteller Goals

This is it: the big battle that will pit the circle against a single Abyssal whose sole purpose is in doling out death. Don't skimp on the big details or the over-the-top stunting. Now is the time to make the circle fear for their lives and push them to the limits of their capability. Use the combat to create a thoroughly enjoyable sense of victory for the circle. Make them earn their triumphs.

Character Goals

Show this foul creature what it means to oppose the Chosen of the Unconquered Sun.

Actions

Before the combat, Veil makes use of her Stealth Charms to prevent the circle from locating her. Once she has a good vector of attack, she leaps from her hiding place and makes an unexpected attack upon her foe. Like all unexpected attacks, the character should get a (Wits + Awareness) roll, opposed by Veil's (Dexterity + Stealth). Storytellers should be aware that Veil can dish out a decent amount of damage, especially on an unexpected attack; Grimscythes tend to hurt.

Storytellers can also have the dead rise and come to Veil's aid (though inadvertently, as they're just attacking the living). Use zombies (**Exalted**, p. 314) as extras in this fight – sprinkling them into the combat liberally if the fight with Veil is proving to be too easy. The dead can also attack Arvia's resting place, heightening the dramatic tension by putting the god-blood's life in danger. Again, this takes some of the heat off of Veil of Ebon Blades by splitting the circle's attention.

Lastly, keep Veil's combos in mind. If backed into a corner, then her counterattack combo can be particularly devastating against all characters pushing her into that position. Never corner an Abyssal who knows Hundred Razor Circle.

Consequences

Defeating Veil marks the end of this story. When the Abyssal dies (feel free to make it dramatic), Arvia regains consciousness. Her first words are "I want to go home."

Aftermath

The circle has saved the daughter of Nexus! Though most in the city will probably never know this, the influential people most certainly will. Potential rewards and plot threads include:

The Guild: Hierarch Dvora owes the circle a debt of gratitude for saving Arvia. This could translate into Influence or Allies within the Guild. At the same time, Hierarch Artemisia is most likely pissed at the circle not coming through on what she feels is a perfectly valid contract. While Dvora can and will protect the circle from Artemisia's official machinations, Artemisia has more than enough unofficial channels to mess with the circle for some time to come.

Lily and Lilac: The Fair Folk are simultaneously pissed and excited by the circle. They lost their (immediate) opportunity to seize Arvia, but were given a good story for it. For Storytellers wishing to explore the Wyld, these twin fae have many allies in the bordermarches and middle marches, including a very powerful raksha warlord by the name of White Fang Devourer who happens to owe the flower girls a favor.

Anathema in Nexus: After "Lilac's Crusade," someone will inform the Wyld Hunt of the Anathema in Nexus. The ramifications this has for the circle are up to the storyteller.

Walker in Darkness: The Deathlord is most likely very upset at the circle's interference. Arvia was his, as far as he was concerned. He'll make sure she comes around eventually. Perhaps a wedding is in order....

The Emissary of Nexus: The most potent being in Nexus, the Emissary offers to take Arvia in after the Abyssal's fall. The Emissary recognizes the potential pitfalls and blessings Arvia could bring to

the city, depending on who influences her. He does not want her supplanting Gen in a way that endangers Nexus. The Emissary may also have a truly altruistic intention at heart – keeping a sweet girl from becoming lost to death or the Wyld. The Emissary understands what lengths the circle went to in order to protect Arvia, and he will not soon forget that.

Father of Nexus: If the circle has proven themselves trustworthy, then Gen may choose to reveal himself as the god of Nexus. Gen does not do this lightly, as it means that the circle could expose him in Heaven, but he does owe them for saving his beloved daughter. Gen can be a powerful and loyal ally to those who protected his family.

Experience

Each session awards 4 experience points per session of play. **Daughter of Nexus** has a few extra awards after the story is over:

- Characters who successfully convince Artemisia to deal on their terms (besting her in social combat) gain 1 experience point.
- Characters who talk Lily into letting them go or working against Lilac should be rewarded with 1 bonus experience point.
- Remember that any character who comes up with a three die stunt also has the option of gaining 1 experience point.
- Storytellers who run Daughter of Nexus as a multiple-session story should also give strong consideration to giving out a 5 experience point Story Award (per **Exalted**, p. 273).

SCENE: Deals in Sapphire



MENTAL — PHYSICAL — SOCIAL •

HINDRANCES

HELP

OTHER

No Bureaucracy
(-2 internal penalty to
fee negotiation)

Bureaucracy 3 or more
(+1 to Mental DV during
fee negotiation)

Useful Charms:
Judge's Ear Technique,
Know the Soul's Price

STs

Get the players to agree to find Arvia.

PCs

Find out what Artemisia wants, and cut a deal in your favor.

SCENE: Nighthammer Chaos



MENTAL •• PHYSICAL •• SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

HELP

OTHER

Dodging Slag:
No Room to Maneuver
(-1 external penalty)

Dodging Slag:
Character noticed that
something was wrong
(+1 bonus die).

Useful Charms:
Surprise Anticipation
Method (Dodging Slag),
Crafty Observation Method
(Investigating the Accident).

STs

Raise adrenaline and suspicion of foul play. Also make sure Veil of Ebon Blades escapes.

PCs

Survive, then figure out what happened.

SCENE: Wonders of the Lost Hollow



MENTAL — PHYSICAL •• SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

HELP

OTHER

Automata are attracted to
Essence

Automata do not coordinate
their attacks

Brass Legionnaire can be
replaced with a Gryphon,
Blood-Ape or War Ghost.

STs

Provide an exciting combat scene. Also, set up the idea throughout the combat that the hall might collapse.

PCs

Trash the automata.

SCENE: One God-Blood, Check



MENTAL • PHYSICAL — SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

HELP

OTHER

Characters are new to Nexus
(-2 internal penalty)

Arvia offers her knowledge
to friends (+1 bonus success)

None

STs

Foster sense of victory for the players while building dread of Firewander.

PCs

Discover source of scream and ascertain identity.

SCENE: Firewanderer



MENTAL ●●● PHYSICAL ● SOCIAL ●●●

HINDRANCES

HELP

OTHER

Maze shifting (-2 external penalty every third roll)

Outrunning the changes (-1 to difficulty)

A Solving the Maze roll occurs on every 15 long ticks of social combat.

STs Introduce Lily and Lilac. Foster a sense of hopelessness before the realization that the Fair Folk have no power over them. Prompt questions about Arvia's nature.

PCs Escape the Firewander district.

SCENE: Daughter of Nexus



MENTAL — PHYSICAL — SOCIAL ●

HINDRANCES

HELP

OTHER

Rude behavior (-3 internal penalty)

Minding civilities (+1 bonus success)

None

STs Give information about Arvia's nature to the characters.

PCs Learn what's really going on in Nexus.

SCENE: Slaughter on the Streets of Nexus



MENTAL ● PHYSICAL ●● SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

HELP

OTHER

It's Quiet...: Fading light (-1 external penalty)

It's Quiet...: Jittery Arvia (+2 bonus dice)

Useful Charms:
Mob-Dispersing Rebuke,
Memory-Reweaving Discipline,
Husband-Seducing Demon Dance,
Hypnotic Tongue Technique,
Authority-Radiating Stance,
Worshipful Lackey Acquisition,
Gathering the Congregation (Fight)

STs Force the circle to use valuable resources (such as Essence) while potentially setting the stage for Veil of Ebon Blades to kidnap Arvia.

PCs Defend Arvia from cultists.

SCENE: What About Arvia?



MENTAL — PHYSICAL — SOCIAL ●

HINDRANCES

HELP

OTHER

None

None

None

STs Create sense of empathy and understanding between Arvia and circle.

PCs Listen to Arvia's point of view.

SCENE: Lilac's Crusade



MENTAL — PHYSICAL ●●●● SOCIAL ●●

HINDRANCES

Hobgoblin wing
Lilac's honor guard

HELP

Scattered mercenaries in
need of leadership

OTHER

None

STs Run a fast and exciting mass combat.

PCs Defeat Lilac and push her army back into the Wyld.

SCENE: Free Spirited Kidnapping



MENTAL ●● PHYSICAL — SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

Chaotic aftermath of battle
(-3 external penalty
to either roll)

HELP

Characters take a long time
to study the scene (+1 bonus
die to Investigation roll)

OTHER

Useful Charms:
Eye of the Unconquered Sun,
Crafty Observation Method

STs Convince the circle to chase Veil and save Arvia.

PCs Figure out what happened to Arvia.

SCENE: The Chase is On!



MENTAL — PHYSICAL — SOCIAL ●●●

HINDRANCES

The mercenaries believe
they won't be compensated
(+3 MDV)

HELP

The circle makes an offer
that matches the unit's Policy
(-3 MDV)

The circle has an amicable
relationship with Dvora
(-1 MDV)

OTHER

Useful Charms:
Know the Soul's Price,
Gather the Congregation

STs Set the stage for the final battle (tomb or wilderness).

PCs Pursue Veil before the trail goes cold.

SCENE: Into the Tomb



MENTAL ●● PHYSICAL ●● SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

Stuck Door
Gaping Maw
Optical Illusion
The Harrowing
Poison Gas

HELP

None

OTHER

Useful Charms:
Door Evading Technique
(Stuck Door), Monkey Leap
Technique (Gaping Maw),
Eye of the Unconquered Sun
(Optical Illusion), Immunity
to Everything Technique
(Poison Gas)

STs Build drama and sense of danger as circle approaches the final battle.

PCs Reach Veil of Ebon Blades before the sun sets.

SCENE: Flight to the Shadowlands



MENTAL ●● PHYSICAL ●● SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

Fording the River
Dying of Dysentery
Brush Fire
Foraging
A New Steed

HELP

None

OTHER

Useful Charms:
Unshakeable Bloodhound Technique (Tracking the Dead), Sometimes Horses Fly Approach (Fording the River), Immunity to Everything Technique (Dying of Dysentery), Master Horseman's Technique, Spirit-Steadying Assurances (Brush Fire), Food-Gathering Exercise (Foraging).

STs Build a sense of drama and danger as the final battle approaches.

PCs Reach Veil before she escapes into the shadowlands.

Hobgoblin Wing



Magnitude: 3

Drill: 3

Close Combat Attack: 3 Close Combat Damage: 3

Ranged Attack: 3 Ranged Damage: 1

Endurance: 7 Might: 1 Armor: 1 Valor: 4

Lilac Honor Guard



Magnitude: 2

Drill: 4

Close Combat Attack: 5 Close Combat Damage: 3

Ranged Attack: N/A Ranged Damage: N/A

Endurance: 9 Might: 1 Armor: 2

Valor: Never fails valor checks.

SCENE: To Die and Dream No More



MENTAL — PHYSICAL ●●●● SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

Zombies!

HELP

Veil isn't fully prepared for the circle

OTHER

None

STs Convince the Put the fear of death in the circle while creating a thoroughly enjoyable sense of victory. circle to chase Veil and save Arvia.

PCs Defeat Veil and rescue Arvia

SCENE:



MENTAL — PHYSICAL — SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

HELP

OTHER

STs

PCs



VEIL OF EBON BLADES



CHARMS

NAME	COST	NAME	COST
Artful Maiming Onslaught	3m	Shadow Cloak Technique	
Atrocity Without Witness	5m, 1wp	Spider Pounce Technique	3m
Blade-Summoning Gesture	1m	Splinter in the Mind's Eye	10m, 1wp
Broken Toys Riposte	varies	Vengeful Riposte	3m
Command the Dead	5m+1m per target	Void Sheath Technique	1m
Dodge Essence Flow			
Elegant Flowing Deflection	2m		
Eye of the Tempest	5m, 1wp		
Face-Drinking Bite	10m, 1wp		
Falling Scythe Attack	3m, 1wp		
First Melee Excellency	1m per die		
First Stealth Excellency	same		
Five Shadow Feint	2m per DV		
Flitting Shadow Form	1m		
Foe-Shaming Defense	3m		
Hundred Razor Circle	5m		
Melee Essence Flow			
Ox-Body Technique	x2		
Ravens Mouth of Melee	3m		
Savage Shade Style	1m		
Second Integrity Excellency	2m per success		
Second Larceny Excellency	same		
Second Medicine Excellency	same		
Second Presence Excellency	same		
Second Stealth Excellency	same		

NOTES

NAME: Veil of Ebon Blades
 CONCEPT: Serial Killer

CASTE: Day
 ANIMA: Undulating Necrotic Leper

STRENGTH ●●●●○ CHARISMA ●○○○○ PERCEPTION ●●●●○
 DEXTERITY ●●●●● MANIPULATION ●●●●● INTELLIGENCE ●●○○○
 STAMINA ●●●●○ APPEARANCE ●○○○○ WITS ●●●●●

ABILITIES

<input type="checkbox"/> Archery ●●○○○	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Melee ●●●●●	<input type="checkbox"/> ○○○○○
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Athletics ●●●●○	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Presence ●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> ○○○○○
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Awareness ●●●○○	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Resistance ●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> ○○○○○
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dodge ●●●●●	<input type="checkbox"/> Ride ●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Integrity ●●○○○	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Stealth ●●●●○	<input type="checkbox"/> ○○○○○
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Larceny (Breaking and Entering +1) ●●●○○	<input type="checkbox"/> Survival ●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> ○○○○○
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Martial Arts ●●●○○	<input type="checkbox"/> ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> ○○○○○
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medicine ●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> (Torture +2) ●●●○○	<input type="checkbox"/> ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> ○○○○○



BACKGROUNDS

Artifacts _____
 (Grand Grimscythe) ●●●○○
 Manse ●●○○○
 Whispers ●●○○○
 _____ ○○○○○
 _____ ○○○○○
 _____ ○○○○○
 _____ ○○○○○
 _____ ○○○○○

WEAPONS

	Speed	Accuracy	Damage	Defense	Rate
Punch:	5	9	3B	11	3
Kick:	5	8	6B	6	2
Clinch:	6	8	3B	-	1
Chaffe-Maker: <small>(Soulsteel Grand Grimscythe)</small>	6	14	17L4	8	2

WILLPOWER

●●●●●○○○○
 □□□□□□□□□□

DODGE DV

7

ANIMA

Spend 1 extra mote to conceal
 Peripheral mote use. Double cost for
 Obvious charms. 10m to shroud self
 in ghostly concealment for scene.

SOAK

B 6 L 6 A 5

HEALTH

-0	□□□□□
-1	□□□□■
-2	□□□□□
	□■□□■
-4	□
INCAPACITATED	□

LIMIT BREAK

□□□□□□□□□□

VIRTUE FLAW

VIRTUES

COMPASSION ●○○○	TEMPERANCE ●●○○○
CONVICTION ●●●○○	VALOR ●●○○○
□□□□	□□□□
□□□□	□□□□

ESSENCE

●●●●○○
 PERSONAL 19 |
 PERIPHERAL 44 |
 COMMITTED 10
 ESSENCE POOL _____

EXPERIENCE

□□□□□□□□□□



NAME: Dvora Odom
 CONCEPT: Financial CFO
 CASTE:
 ANIMA:

STRENGTH ●○○○○ CHARISMA ●●●●○ PERCEPTION ●●●●●
 DEXTERITY ●●○○○ MANIPULATION ●●●●○ INTELLIGENCE ●●●●●
 STAMINA ●●○○○ APPEARANCE ●●○○○ WITS ●●●○○

ABILITIES

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Bureaucracy	<input type="checkbox"/> Socialize ●○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> (Making Money +3) ●●●●●	<input type="checkbox"/> War (Force _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Integrity _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Projection +1) ●○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> (Persuasion +1) ●●●●○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Investigation (Library _____)	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Research +3) ●●●○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Larceny ●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Linguistics ●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Lore ●●●○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Presence ●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○



BACKGROUNDS

Allies (Guild) ●●○○○
 Backing (Guild) ●●●●●
 Contacts _____
 (Ancestor Ghosts) ●●○○○
 Contacts (Guild) ●●●●●
 Influence (Guild) ●●●●○
 Resources ●●●●●

WEAPONS

	Speed	Accuracy	Damage	Defense	Rate
Punch:	5	5	2B	7	3
Kick:	5	4	5B	2	2
Clinch:	6	4	2B	-	1

WILLPOWER

●●●●●○ ○○○○

DODGE DV

ANIMA

Soak: B 3 L 1 A _____

HEALTH

-0
 -1
 -2
 -4
 INCAPACITATED

VIRTUES

COMPASSION ●○○○ ○○○○
 TEMPERANCE ●●○○ ○○○○
 CONVICTION ●●○○ ○○○○
 VALOR ●○○○ ○○○○

ESSENCE

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
 PERSONAL _____
 PERIPHERAL _____
 COMMITTED _____
 ESSENCE POOL _____

EXPERIENCE

LIMIT BREAK

VIRTUE FLAW



NAME: Free Spirited Arvia
 CONCEPT: Daughter of Nexus
 CASTE:
 ANIMA:

STRENGTH ●○○○○ CHARISMA ●●●○○ PERCEPTION ●●○○○
 DEXTERITY ●●○○○ MANIPULATION ●●○○○ INTELLIGENCE ●●○○○
 STAMINA ●●○○○ APPEARANCE ●●●●● WITS ●●○○○

ABILITIES

<input type="checkbox"/> Athletics ●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Awareness ●○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge ●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Integrity ●○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Lore ●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Martial Arts ●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine ●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Presence _____	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> (Favored Ability) ●●●○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> _____ ○○○○○



BACKGROUNDS

Contacts _____
 (Little Gods of Nexus) ●○○○○
 Resources ●●●○○
 Inheritance ●●●○○

WEAPONS

	Speed	Accuracy	Damage	Defense	Rate
Punch:	5	8	1B	9	3
Kick:	5	7	4B	5	2
Clinch:	6	7	1B	-	1

WILLPOWER

●●●●●○ ○○○○

DODGE DV

4

ANIMA

Soak: B 2 L 1 A _____

HEALTH

-0
 -1
 -2
 -4
 INCAPACITATED

VIRTUES

COMPASSION ●●○○ ○○○○
 TEMPERANCE ●○○○ ○○○○
 CONVICTION ●●○○ ○○○○
 VALOR ●○○○ ○○○○

ESSENCE

● ● ○ ○ ○ ○
 PERSONAL _____
 PERIPHERAL _____
 COMMITTED _____
 ESSENCE POOL 35

EXPERIENCE

LIMIT BREAK

VIRTUE FLAW



NAME: Artemisia Sapphire CASTE:
 CONCEPT: Corrupt Guild Hierarch ANIMA:

STRENGTH ●●○○○ CHARISMA ●●●○○ PERCEPTION ●●●○○
 DEXTERITY ●●●○○ MANIPULATION ●●●●● INTELLIGENCE ●●○○○
 STAMINA ●●●○○ APPEARANCE ●●○○○ WITS ●●●●○

ABILITIES

- Athletics ●○○○○
- Awareness ●●●○○
- Bureaucracy ●●●○○
- Dodge ●○○○○
- Integrity ●○○○○
- Investigation (Conducting)
- Interviews +1) ●●○○○
- Larceny ●○○○○
- Linguistics ●●○○○
- Lore ●●●●○
- Martial Arts ●○○○○
- Presence
- (Persuasion +2) ●●●●●
- Socialize (Discern)
- Motivation +1) ●●●○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○



BACKGROUNDS

- Allies (Fair Folk) ●●○○○
- Backing (Guild) ●●●●●
- Contacts (Guild) ●●●●●
- Influence (Guild) ●●●●○
- Resources ●●●●○

WEAPONS

	Speed	Accuracy	Damage	Defense	Rate
Punch:	5	5	2B	7	3
Kick:	5	4	5B	2	2
Clinch:	6	4	2B	-	1

WILLPOWER

●●●●●○○○○
 □□□□□□□□□□

DODGE DV

ANIMA

B 3 L 1 A _____

HEALTH

-0	□□□□□
-1	□□□□■
-2	□□□■□
	■□□□□
-4	□
INCAPACITATED	□

LIMIT BREAK

□□□□□□□□□□

VIRTUE FLAW

VIRTUES

COMPASSION ●○○○○ TEMPERANCE ●●○○○
 □□□□□ □□□□□
 CONVICTION ●●●○○ VALOR ●●○○○
 □□□□□ □□□□□

ESSENCE

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
 PERSONAL _____
 PERIPHERAL _____
 COMMITTED _____
 ESSENCE POOL _____

EXPERIENCE



NAME: CASTE:
 CONCEPT: ANIMA:

STRENGTH ○○○○○ CHARISMA ○○○○○ PERCEPTION ○○○○○
 DEXTERITY ○○○○○ MANIPULATION ○○○○○ INTELLIGENCE ○○○○○
 STAMINA ○○○○○ APPEARANCE ○○○○○ WITS ○○○○○

ABILITIES

- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○



BACKGROUNDS

- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○
- _____ ○○○○○

WEAPONS

	Speed	Accuracy	Damage	Defense	Rate

WILLPOWER

○○○○○○○○○○○○
 □□□□□□□□□□

DODGE DV

ANIMA

B _____ L _____ A _____

SOAK

B _____ L _____ A _____

HEALTH

-0	□□□□
-1	□□□□
-2	□□□□
	□□□□
-4	□
INCAPACITATED	□

LIMIT BREAK

□□□□□□□□□□

VIRTUE FLAW

VIRTUES

COMPASSION ○○○○○ TEMPERANCE ○○○○○
 □□□□□ □□□□□
 CONVICTION ○○○○○ VALOR ○○○○○
 □□□□□ □□□□□

ESSENCE

○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○
 PERSONAL _____
 PERIPHERAL _____
 COMMITTED _____
 ESSENCE POOL _____

EXPERIENCE