

REVENGE, MYSTERY, GALA

Lord Shoffner's gala guests wear masks from the Noluvu Isles. Performing a chant for amusement releases a murder spirit bound to a mask.

GETTING THE PCs INVOLVED

- One of the PCs or their allies is invited to the party and includes others as their entourage.
- An ally is part of Lord Shoffner's security and hires on the characters as event staff.

ENCOUNTER KEY

- Before the gala, a maimed veteran of the expedition to the Noluvu Isle grumbles this isn't wise.
- Important guests arrive, enjoying colorful masks.
- Musicians entertain with a chant that was among the lore that was looted on the expedition. Candles flicker, wind rises, a spirit arrives.
- The host's son is killed during the dancing.
- During the investigation, the host's sister is killed.
- The maimed veteran demands help looking through looted lore, leading to discovery of the summoning ritual and learning that the killing spirit won't let its host remove the mask. If the mask is still on at dawn, possession is permanent.
- The guest possessed with the murder spirit wields spell-like abilities, elusive and dangerous.

FOLLOW UP IDEAS

- The host plans a punitive expedition to Noluvu.



EVIDENCE, THEFT, PROTECTION

A local scholar died, and a translator is helping sort his collection for auction. Criminals try to steal their coded communications hidden in the books.

GETTING THE PCs INVOLVED

- Characters or their allies are keen to bid on some of the deceased scholar's materials at auction.
- Characters are hired as added security after a break-in trashed the translator's quarters.

ENCOUNTER KEY

- Maybe characters used the scholar's services; he was sketchy and discreet, serving unsavory clients.
- The scholar dies of natural causes. Castle leadership takes over his estate to prepare it for auction.
- Criminals used the scholar to move coded messages, putting them in books he loaned or sold. This kept parties in transactions anonymous. Several pending deliveries have critical information.
- The scholar sorting his books found a couple letters and started decoding them. Thieves broke in and took some of them. The scholar finds more.
- One message arranges a crime for tonight. Catching the criminal could expose an organization.

FOLLOW UP IDEAS

- The scholar also had treasure maps, prophecies, and any other clues needed for the campaign.
- Criminals find a new way to send messages.



COVER UP, MURDER, INVESTIGATION

The monarchy sent a divinatory investigator to follow up on a murder. The investigator is killed, and if the killer isn't caught, it's politically hazardous.

GETTING THE PCs INVOLVED

- Some are happy to help the investigator seek justice, others are creeped out by her magic.
- After the investigator dies, the castle leadership will pay for information leading to solving her murder.

ENCOUNTER KEY

- The investigator arrives. Rumors fly about her ruthless effectiveness solving murders, locals speculate about what murder she is here to solve.
- The investigator asks questions, uses seeker rituals, and wanders the countryside dowsing for clues.
- The investigator is knifed in a nearby stable. Everyone nearby is detained at the inn.
- The obvious suspect with ties to a criminal organization has an alibi involving one of the PCs.
- A scullery maid saw the dwarf porter Soffel kill the investigator. Her silence is crumbling under the pressure, so the dwarf kills her. The maid's killing is easier to solve, so the dwarf runs away.
- Capture the dwarf, and solve both murders.

FOLLOW UP IDEAS

- Local criminals that used Soffel's body disposal services try to kill him to protect their secrets.



Barracks

Barracks

Archery Range

Prison

Tower

Shrine

Smith

Barracks

Command Center

Barracks

Trading Post

Training Area

Mess Hall

Kennel

Rescue, Fort, Infiltrate

A small scouting party hasn't returned—hobgoblins spotted them and took them prisoner.

GETTING THE PCs INVOLVED

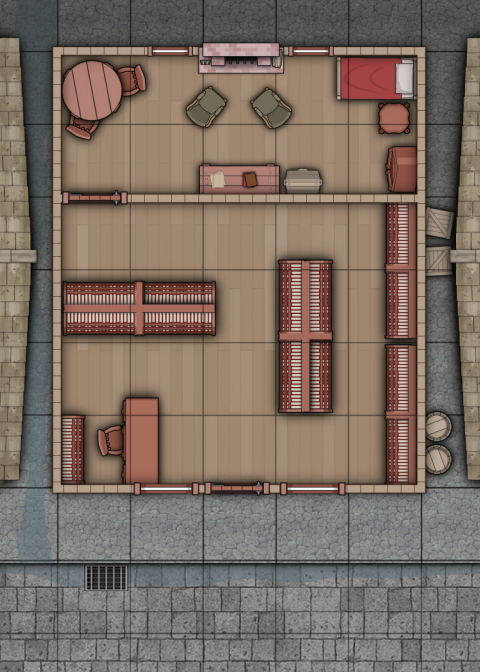
- The captain of the guard asks the party to find the missing group and points them to the area.
- They are already traveling near the hobgoblin fort when they spot hobgoblins capture people.

ENCOUNTER IDEAS

- The party will have to avoid the hobgoblin scout teams roving the area.
- The fort's walls and towers are up. How best to approach it? There are only a few tree clusters.
- Once inside, there are even more foes to avoid.
- Or maybe the party has another idea? Negotiate? Make a distraction? Threaten? (Maybe the prisoners aren't worth a fireball hurled at the fort.)
- How does the party find where the prisoners are being held? And how to get them out without alerting the whole camp?
- Now the party and prisoners need to get out!

FOLLOW UP IDEAS

- If the hobgoblins notice the prisoners missing, they'll give chase—with tracking dogs.
- The castle's army will be sent out to deal with the fort. Can the party lead the attack?



CULT, SECRETS, CURSE

A cult asked a book expert to restore a book. She realized the binding and pages were human skin, and she wants someone to look into her customer.

GETTING THE PCs INVOLVED

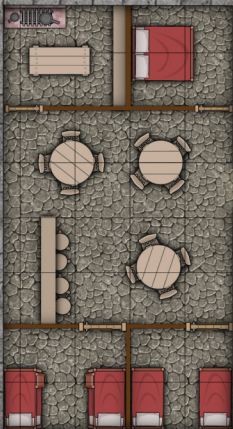
- Characters have a good reputation, so the book-binder Zeffa contacts them discreetly.
- Characters are asking around looking for an evil book as part of their quest, and she's seen it.

ENCOUNTER KEY

- The Codex of Sunken Teeth is full of prophecies and rituals in a dead language inked in ichor and blood, bound in human skin. It was damaged by fire and sword in a clash, so a priest of the evil cult brings it to a specialist bookbinder for repairs.
- The paranoid cultist left an imp to watch over the book. When Zeffa contacts others about it, the imp stings her into a coma and retreats to get reinforcements to come retrieve the book.
- Nearby cultists and hirelings move fast, using violence if need be, to get the book. They have a medallion they can use to track the book.
- If they don't have it back by nightfall, they can summon a demon to go after it for them.

FOLLOW UP IDEAS

- Can Zeffa be revived? What clues did she glean?
- Where is the cult based? What are they doing?



DIPLOMACY, TRADE, JUSTICE

A noble heard Perla's custom dwarf-built hammered dulcimer and commanded her to sell it to him. She said no. He will not accept her answer.

GETTING THE PCs INVOLVED

- Characters are allies with (or enemies of) Perla or the arrogant nobleman, so they pick a side.
- Castle leadership involves them to prevent an incident. Use diplomacy and cunning to resolve this.

ENCOUNTER KEY

- Locals warn them not to tangle with a visiting noble. He is influential and dangerous.
- The noble is rude to a character or their ally. The noble's bodyguard roughly backs them off.
- They often hear the tones of a hammered dulcimer; locals know the dwarf Perla built it herself and is getting better at playing.
- The noble has an escalating argument with Perla, demanding to buy the dulcimer. She refuses.
- The noble has Perla jailed for assaulting him; castle leadership will let her go when he leaves. He takes the dulcimer as a gift for a prospective wife.
- Perla is going to pursue him to retrieve her dulcimer. She doesn't care about consequences.

FOLLOW UP IDEAS

- The noble's allies and/or enemies are motivated to action by the way the characters handled him.