

Patron: Criminal.

Target: Cult.

Mission: Killing.

Location: Don't know.

The Cult of Jorgmuth, God of Pain and Bloody Conquest, is pernicious amongst the aristocracy of Dis. Beggars and vagrants are kidnapped from the streets to be slowly tortured to death or madness for some noble's amusement, and the gladiatorial arenas under construction promise to bring the spectacle of blood to the masses. All business as usual in the Ravenous City.

However, Jorgmuth's Commandment of Purity - that his followers abstain from narcotics and intoxicants, for pain is the one true drug, and the minds of the faithful must remain quick and clear that they better serve their dark lord in battle - is rapidly becoming a thorn in the side of the Downwind Smuggler's Guild. Sales of bliss potions to the upper class have tailed off alarmingly, and the privately-owned police forces are starting to crack down on drug use by the general population, driven by Jorgmuth-influenced agendas.

The Smuggler's Guild have responded by taking out a contract on the High Priest of Jorgmuth. One problem: the cult still practices its rites in utmost secrecy, a relic of the days when it was suppressed by more politically powerful religions, and nobody actually knows who the High Priest is.

Patron: Library.

Target: Militarist.

Mission: Raiding.

Location: Don't know.

The Domnitor of the Iron Crown has gathered an army vast and terrible, and set out on a journey of endless conquest. City after city, nation after nation, continent after continent fell, and now the Magi of the Howling Tower have learned the secrets of the Razor of Isidoro that can slice open portals between worlds. The Domnitor's legions march forth, and now they shall conquer worlds, and reshape them into the image that most pleases their dread master.

This would be a tragedy of untold proportions, except that the Domnitor of the Iron Crown is fictional, and both he and his armies exist solely within the pages of a book, resting peacefully on a shelf in the Grand Labyrinthine Library of Dis. Unfortunately, all is not entirely well - the Razor of Isidoro is all too real, and it has indeed allowed the Domnitor to carve a hole in the wall of his ink-and-paper prison and send his armies forth to invade... another book, somewhere else in the library.

This has not escaped the notice of the Head Librarian. If left unattended, the Domnitor's armies will slowly convert volume after bounteous volume into cliched war fiction or dry military history. They must be stopped. The affected books cannot simply be destroyed or edited - that would be blasphemy beyond blasphemy - and the Librarians are forbidden by ancient law from entering

the fictional worlds of the books themselves. However, a group of motivated freelancers could be hired and, with the Head Librarian's grasp of the Razor's subtle magic, could be sent into one of the books. Their mission: to prevent the spread of the Domnitor's armies. The Magi of the Howling Tower are perhaps an easier target than the Domnitor himself, and their death would prevent the all-conquering legions from using the Razor to spread further. The infection would be contained. While a difficult mission, the adventurers would have a rare advantage - one of the Librarians, staying outside and reading whatever book they had been sent into, could use a telepathic communication channel to keep them updated as to what happens on the next page. If only it were one of those books with the handy map on the flyleaf.

Patron: Merchant.

Target: Immortal.

Mission: Delivery.

Location: Nearby plane.

In the Parish of Nelumnar, the entire economy is built around the dream industry. Every morning, in the early hours while people across Dis wake, confused, from the arms of sleep, thousands of lilac-sailed fishing boats set out across Nelumnar's vast, blood-warm lake. With nets and lines spun from faerie gossamer, they fish for fragments of dream and memory, dredging them still-wriggling from the oily waters, to sell in the parish's vast dream markets. Prophetic dreams typically fetch the highest prices, although the erotic dream industry is also highly profitable, and a few wealthy individuals will send representatives across the entire city to purchase the ending of a dream they were woken half-way through.

Last night, Barasharak Fell-Handed, Slayer of Legions, Empress Robed in Blood, She From Whom The Sun Turns In Fear, Warchief of the Black Horizon Horde of the Orcs and immortal champion of Balor of the Baleful Gaze, had a dream. She dreamed of redemption. Her dream was pulled on a mile-long gossamer line from the lightless depths of Nelumnar's nameless lake onto a creaking boat, where it lay thrashing on the bleached wood, golden light seeping from between its amber scales.

The dream-merchant who came into possession of this singular specimen has just received an offer he cannot possibly refuse. A king's ransom, simply to deliver the dream to Barasharak Fell-Handed, so she might experience it in its entirety. But he has a business to run, and it's a long way to the plane across which the Black Horizon Horde march, and he's not *entirely* certain that the purchase order was actually made by She From Whom The Sun Turns In Fear, so he's looking for some adventurers to make the delivery on his behalf.

Patron: Temple.

Target: Cult.

Mission: Acquisition.

Location: Nearby parish.

Nelumniar's principle god is Nyctelios, the Thousand-Faced Nightmare, the dread being responsible for the black undercurrents of fear that stain the nameless lake of dreams and bring countless mortals to screaming, sweat-soaked wakefulness. Such horrific dreams sell for vast sums, as they are so often limned in prophecy. The Temple of Nyctelios is all but devoid of light, hung with heavy swathes of dark cloth and carpeted with animal hides to cushion sound and maintain absolute silence, that Nyctelios not be woken from his millennial slumber.

But the priests of Nyctelios have recently learned that their god's desolate plane was swallowed by Dis not long after their own. And, this being Dis, any large expanse of empty land is going to be quickly colonized to bursting point even if it does contain the sarcophagus of an ancient, sleeping god of terror. And, this being Dis, it wasn't long before somebody found the sepulchre and decided that they could profit from it.

The New Cult of Nyctelios intend to wake the sleeping god, that he might bestow his benedictions upon them, and help them conquer their enemies (the plutocrats who booted them out of more comfortable parishes into this bleak place). Weekly parades, with music and singers, wind around the ugly octagonal sepulchre of the Thousand-Faced Nightmare during the day, and firework displays light up the sky at night, each louder than the last. Magic items, designed to ward off sleep or break enchantments, are begged, borrowed, or stolen, and hung upon the sconces around the stone building. Sooner or later they will find a way to wake the being whose body is that of a fragile, androgynous youth and whose mind sprawls and spreads like a swarm of locusts through the dreams of the Ravenous City's untold millions of inhabitants.

And so, the Temple of Nyctelios are attempting to hire a crew willing to carry out the city's first documented incidence of Grand Theft Deity. They've provided the key to the sepulchre. Retrieve the sleeping Prince of Fear and bring him back to Nelumniar, ideally without the New Cult noticing, and - this bit is very important - *without waking him*.

Patron: Wizard

Target: Wizard

Mission: Exploration

Location: No-one knows

BEHOLD THE FUTURE OF PORTAL TECHNOLOGY!

MAGISTERS HOOKHAM AND NYX, Masters of the Arcane Arts, will THIS RISEDAY demonstrate their GREATEST MARVEL YET: The PATENTED QUICKSILVER-METHOD PORTAL APPARATUS, a device to open WITH CONSUMMATE EASE a portal to THE MOST DISTANT AND STORIED REALMS!!!

DISASTER STRIKES MAGICAL EXHIBIT

Panic spread throughout Blerislope Parish yesterday, as an ill-advised and illegal test of a dangerous arcane device went hideously awry. The calamitous contraption - ineptly operated by noted charlatans and former dream smugglers Luccefosse "Lucky" Hookham and Edward Nicks - was intended, it seems, to provide quick and cheap access routes to other planar realms, possibly to facilitate smuggling. However, as it was powered up before a crowd of curious men, women, children and others, the device drastically malfunctioned, a howling hurricane-force wind blowing into the pitch-black hole in reality that was torn open between the machine's ivory spires. Although Luccefosse immediately fled the scene in a panic, his collaborator was snatched up at once, the wind catching on his voluminous cloak, and dragged through the portal with a despairing scream! The crowd panicked at the terrifying sight, and though most managed to escape, several were injured in the stampede, and at least three people - including one young child - were standing too close, and were also sucked into the malevolent portal.

The portal remains open, while licensed mages, artificers and technomancers of the proper Guilds work out how to shut it down safely, without any of the fatal recklessness shown by the two would-be entrepreneurs. The dreadful wind has subsided, but the portal itself remains dark and cold. Citizens are advised to stay clear.

The Serene Regulators of the Sultana's Infallible Justice are currently making inquiries as to the whereabouts of Luccefosse Hookham.

MESSAGE BEGINS

I am alive. Not sure where. Send help, light, water, food. Three here with me. Nyx.

MESSAGE REPEATS

Wanted: Group of intrepid and daring planar explorers to ascertain the whereabouts of - and ensure the safe return of - an assortment of four unfortunate lost souls (not literal lost souls). Extensive planar travel experience an absolute must-have. Exceedingly generous reward offered. Apply LH, Grumpy Dragon Inn, Freppling Parish.

Patron: Guild

Target: Diabolist

Mission: Delivery

Location: Don't know

Six months ago, Lady Helena Delacroix contacted the head of the Worshipful Company of Tailors and Corsetieres in person, with a commission for a wedding-dress fit for a goddess.

Five months ago, the preliminary designs were approved, the contract signed and the first portion of the payment transferred. The garment was to be strange and magnificent beyond compare, woven from the iridescent silk of the great Loom Spiders that silently spin impossible webs in the spaces between the planes, ornamented with rare jewels from countless far-flung worlds, constructed by the finest tailors that Dis had to offer, from a pattern seemingly designed in collaboration between a genius, a madman, and a pervert (the shocking details of which were to be kept under conditions of utmost secrecy). The contract itself was a document of occult potency, and stipulated a baroque array of punishments ranging from the humiliating to the excruciating, to be meted out on any who should breach its terms. The completion date was set, and the parchment signed in blood.

Three weeks ago, the wedding-dress was completed, almost a full month ahead of schedule. Lady Helena was informed that the dress could be collected any time she wished.

Sixteen days ago, Lady Helena visited the offices of the Worshipful Company of Tailors and Corsetieres to try on the dress, and found it very much to her satisfaction (The junior tailor who thought to sneak a glance into the Lady's changing-room is currently recovering in the Dis lunatic asylum). Payment was handed over, and the Lady requested that the garment be delivered in a double-locked strongbox, under armed guard, in the dead of night.

Two weeks ago, Lady Helena's position as the head of the much-reviled cult of the Demon Lord Marchosias came to light, and she fled into hiding as a hundreds-strong angry mob put her ancestral home to the torch.

Three days ago, a fire-damaged letter arrived in the office of the head of the Kronenschild Thieves' Guild, the shaky handwriting informing her that the nameless informant had learned that the wedding between Lady Helena Delacroix and the Demon Lord Marchosias was to go ahead within the week, as planned.

Two days ago, she chanced to mention this in passing during a meeting with her tailor, and was surprised when the man fell at once into a dead faint.

Yesterday, a notice was posted in every mercenary's hangout, adventurers' bar, and nest of ne'er-do-wells within a day's ride of the Tailor's Guild, offering a generous sum of money to anyone able to undertake express delivery of a certain item to a certain lady.