

Chapter 5 Show Notes

SUMMARY

Valerian and his crew continue their quest for the source of the Infernal Powder, penetrating into the very heart of the Machine Cultists' lair. Meanwhile, aboard the Mustang Casino, the Spider's mission to capture the Vale sisters runs into a dangerous complication.

Links

Transcript:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Ter5vwfqdGfx-fpXQDOdSpfDdwtpZRNQCroDrPBM0Z0/edit?usp=sharing>

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Alone in the Dark:

<https://www.drivethrurpg.com/product/282013/Alone-in-the-Dark-Solo-Rules-for-Blades-in-the-Dark>

Solo Oracles:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1J_GVM_dVe3YMYAQaP-KIqOC91vFk56y9HOPKMybY_sk/edit?usp=sharing

Faction clocks:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KWuAPc4iv7hEIXLepV0XTqVP9IRAdNsdqwD1wSDyAys/edit?usp=sharing>

The First Law trilogy:

https://www.amazon.co.uk/First-Law-Trilogy-Boxed-Set/dp/1473213703/ref=asc_df_1473213703/?tag=googshopuk-21&linkCode=df0&hvadid=311040647414&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrاند=6845380249869622516&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvgmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlrophy=9041106&hvtargid=pla-434044947806&pssc=1

Mechanics

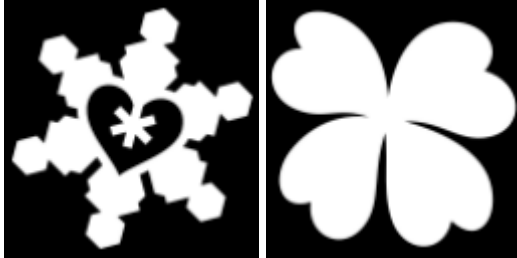
Alpha Team

CLOCK: Get out with the Sisters 4/12

CLOCK: Get past security (0/4)

SETUP ACTION: Sallow Tinker (Risky): crack locks into security station: 2d: 1,3:
Consequence (-1d for follow up)

ACTION: Crater Wreck (Risky): smash alarm systems 2d-1d: 3 Fail: Consequence: A new obstacle or threat appears: 211, 142 (snowflake heart, 4 leaf clover)



Heart-of-Snow, an Urian Doomsinger (predicted they would be here)

FLASHBACK: Spider set this up with Heart-of-Snow (2 Stress).

ACTION: Spider Sway (Desperate), 1 XP, Push (2 Stress), Sallow Assists (1 Stress), 3d: 1,2,2: serious consequence: many more guards, and 2 stress each for Spider and Sallow

Simple Q: Does Heart-of-Snow fight? (Unlikely): Yes

CLOCK: Escape the guards 0/4

CLOCK: Escape Heart of Snow: 0/4

ACTION: Crater Skirmish (Desperate 1 XP), Push (2 stress) for Not to be Trifled With: take on a small group on equal footing + Devils Bargain: 2 ticks for Tortemus (rule Silver Nails) + Sallow Assist (trip) (1 Stress): (Risky) 2d+1d+1d: 5,2,2,4: Success with Consequence: -1 effect

CLOCK: Escape the guards 1/4

ACTION: Sallow Wreck (Saboteur) (Risky) Cut the lights: 2d: 1,1 Consequence: Zapped

SETUP: Spider Study (Risky): understand magical security measures: 4,3: Success with consequence: things take longer

ACTION: Crater Skirmish (Desperate, 1 XP, reduced effect), 2d: 6,6: Critical: +1 Effect

CLOCK: Escape the guards 3/4

ACTION: Sallow: Tinker (Desperate, 1 XP): create arcane feedback, 2d+1 (setup): 6,3,3 Success

~~CLOCK: Escape the guards 4/4~~

ACTION: Spider Sway (Risky) this is not your fight: 1d: 1, Consequence: End up in a worse position: -1 position (can try again if failure)

ACTION: Spider Sway (Desperate) try again, Devil's Bargain (Blood Debt): 2,5: success with consequence: lose something important: 162, 461(hooded assassin, labelled potion)



The identity of the Whisperer's poisoner

SIMPLE Q: Is it Doctor Kropp? Likely: Yes, But: an unwilling participant

Doctor Eli Kropp, of Doctor Kropp's Alchemical Emporium, in the Mercer's Quarter

CLOCK: Escape Heart of Snow: 2/4: he retains a hold

CLOCK: Get out with the Sisters 6/12

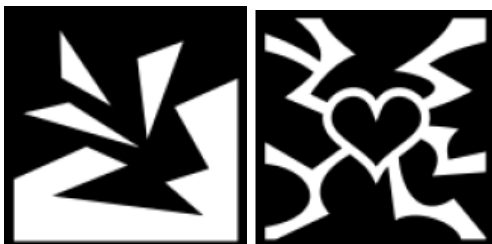
Bravo Team

CLOCK: Uncover the source of the Powder 6/12

GATHER INFO: Flint leads Group Action: Survey (Risky): Valerian 2, Trace 2, Flint 2: Trace Flint takes only 1 Stress (Expertise ability). Consequence: suffer harm: Drained

ACTION: Valerian Sway (Risky, reduced effect): Sweet-talk priest: 2d: 5,4: Success with Consequence (consequence cancelled by Subterfuge ability)

COMPLEX Q: what clue does Valerian discover? 533, 341 (shattered pane of glass, electrical heart)



CLOCK: Uncover the source of the Powder 7/12

FLASHBACK: Flint has disguised himself as the priest (0 Stress)

ACTION: Flint Command (Risky, reduced effect): Intimidate guards: 2d: 2,3: Fail with consequence: take 1 Stress

ACTION: Valerian Sway (Desperate 1XP, reduced effect, Push (2 Stress), Trace Assist (1 Stress)): sweet-talk guards: 4d: 5,1,4,4 success with Consequence (things take longer)

CLOCK: Uncover the source of the Powder 8/12

CHAPTER 5 The Doomsinger

TEASER

"It's no use Flint," Trace hisses, "we've been at this for hours. We're getting no-where, and if we keep this up it's only a matter of time before we blow our cover."

Flint shrugs, but it's plain from his posture that even the ex-military scout is running low on patience. The team have, at Flint's suggestion, been reconnoitring the Hall of the Great Machine, eavesdropping on Machine Cultist conversations wherever they can find them and attempting to glean clues as to their target, the source of the infernal powder. So far they've come up dry.

"I did try to tell you," Valerian offers, trying and failing to keep the smug smirk from his voice. "There's a time for subtlety, and a time for the direct approach. We've given Flint's plan a fair shake, now I say we do it my way. Come now, what's the worst that could happen?"

"Valerian, you damned idiot, wait..." Trace snarls, but it's too late. Valerian has marched swiftly over to a passing priest of the Cult, a high-ranking one from the look of his elaborate bronze face mask and robes, and started doing what he does best. Fast-talking the gullible.

"Hail unto thee, illustrious one! Forgive the intrusion on your valuable time, I beg you. I am but a humble cog, lost in awe at the majesty of the great machine," at this Valerian gestures

up the mechanical vastness that looms above them. “But even a lowly part such I cannot help but feel the spark of divinity at such a sight. And verily, that spark grows, and burns within me! I feel the spirit of the Great Machine, and yet I realise, I comprehend but the tiniest fraction of it’s true magnificence! A mere crumb, next to your great wisdom and understanding. I beg of you, you who are so much closer to divinity than I; what measures might I take to begin my ascent towards your lofty heights? What services might a humble cog such as I offer a luminary such as yourself, in return for a fragment of your sacred knowledge?”

Valerian has clearly picked his target well. The portly cult priest puffs up with pride, and touches a benign hand to Valerian’s bowed, masked head. “It is good that you seek to be closer to the Great Machine, brother cog. I am Lever 42. Walk with me, my brother, that I might impart unto you the sacred teachings of the Machine”

Behind his back Valerian flicks a thumbs up to Trace and Flint. Trace, following at a distance, shakes her head in disgust.

“Stupid, stupid Machine Cultists.”

INTRO MUSIC/ VOICEOVER

Hello and welcome to The Lone Adventurer, an actual play solo RPG podcast with me, Carl White. I will be your narrator, your Game Master and your guide as we follow our heroes on their journey into the unknown. For this game I will be using the Blades in the Dark ruleset, as well as a variety of other systems, tools and tables, as they take my fancy.

A word of warning; the following scenes may contain mature themes and disturbing imagery. Listener discretion is advised.

The adventure continues.

RECAP

Last time, on the Lone Adventurer, the Spider and her team arrived at the Mustang, a flying casino that doubles as the fortress HQ of the Silver Nails. It quickly became apparent that a tough mission had just gotten tougher; in addition to the usual elite scum and villainy, Lord Tortemus was present, and rumours were flying that his presence signalled some sort of takeover bid. Meanwhile, Valerian’s crew had bluffed their way into the confidences of a Machine Cultist patrol, and then lucked their way past a particularly deadly security checkpoint. So far, everything was going suspiciously smoothly...

SCENE

“Get a move on, Sallow, we haven’t got all day.” Alphonse glances up and down the corridor. “I think someone’s coming.”

Hunched in his oversized greatcoat, the bony Sallow pokes out his tongue at Alphonse, then turns back to his work. In addition to his other, somewhat specialised skillset, Sallow is a dab hand with a set of lockpicks. At least, he is normally. This particular door is proving a tough nut to crack.

At last there's a sharp click and he lets out a little cackle of triumph. The door swings open, revealing a large, windowless room, shrouded in darkness. The trio hurry inside, pulling the door to behind them.

"Excellent," the Spider smiles. "From this security station we should be able to disable our choice of magical alarms and defences, providing us easy access into the VIP area. I admit I'm a little surprised to find the place unmanned, but best not to look a gift horse in the mouth. Can anyone see a light?"

"Allow me," a deep voice rumbles, and a glow globe on the far wall throbs into life. A huge figure stands revealed from the shadows, lank grey hair half-covering his scarred face, his heavily muscled frame clad in stitched-together animal pelts. A leather pouch hangs from his neck, and he is heavily tattooed in tribal, arcane symbols. The unmistakable markings of an Urian Doomsinger. A sardonic smile tugs at his lips. "Little Spider. I knew that this is where you would come."

The Spider damn near chokes on her own tongue, but she recovers well. "Heart-of-Snow! Dammit, was that entirely necessary?"

Doomsingers are a rare and mysterious breed, their powers of prescience equally invaluable and infuriating. And they do tend to have a flair for the dramatic. Given their ability to stay one step ahead of the opposition, it is no surprise that the Nails have one in their employ, and is also precisely the reason that this was the key person in the Nails' entourage that the Spider reached out to when planning this mission. It is well known that Doomsingers are a mercenary lot, and Heart-of-Snow more than most. And the big advantage with mercenaries is that they tend to go with the highest bidder.

"Well, you're here now, and that's good timing I suppose. Crater, Sallow, we need those alarms taken out. Heart-of-Snow, what can you tell us about the defences inside? Do you know where we can find the sisters?"

The Doomsinger's smile broadens, his dark eyes glittering dangerously. "Rarely does the river of fate flow where expected, Little Spider. Your path is not the one you thought it was." He cocks his head to one side. "Do you hear it? Do you hear your new fate calling?"

The Spider's heart sinks. "Heart-of-Snow, what have you done?" The Doomsinger shrugs, unmoved. "What do any of us do, Little Spider, but follow where fate leads?"

Behind them the door swings open, to reveal a full squad of heavily armed and armoured Silver Nails mercenaries. They do not look friendly. Their leader, a heavily bearded man with a shaved head, holds up three sets of iron manacles in his left hand, a sword at the ready in his right. "You can come easy or you can come dead. Makes no odds to me." he says, and tosses the manacles at the crew's feet.

The big disadvantage with mercenaries, Spider reflects as her carefully constructed plan goes careening off a cliff and plummeting towards the jagged rocks below, is that there is always someone out there with deeper pockets than you.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

Well, last chapter I could do nothing but roll sixes. Success after success, my crews breezed through their respective tasks, scoffing in the face of danger and leaving me with a growing sense of dread that sooner or later, my luck was going to take a sharp 180. And sure enough, with my opening rolls of this chapter, it did.

I started Alpha Team's session with a Setup action, intended to grant the person who takes the following action a bonus to position or effect. Sallow used the Tinker action to crack the locks and break into the security station, intending to allow Crater to then access the alarm systems and disable them.

Of course Sallow's setup failed, imposing a penalty on Crater's Wreck roll, which also failed. The consequence of that failure, randomly rolled on my Consequence oracle, was "A new obstacle or threat appears".

I suppose I could have gone with a simple bunch of security guards as my obstacle, but it didn't seem very interesting, so I made a roll on the picture oracle, and got a heart inside a snowflake, and a 4 leaf clover.

It was not immediately apparent how to interpret those prompts, but they felt like they were suggesting a person. The name Heart-of-Snow came to me as soon as I considered the pictures in light of a person. In hindsight the name was probably a subconscious echo of the name Pale-as-Snow, a very minor background character from Joe Abbercrombie's First Law trilogy, which I reread recently. And if you haven't read it, you absolutely should, along with the follow-up standalone books set in the same world, Best Served Cold, The Heroes and Red Country. Amazing, gritty, and deeply funny books, if you like your humour dark as the grave. I've decided to reread them all to get myself in the right place to read his most recent trilogy set in that world, the Age of Madness.

That name, Heart-of-Snow, put me in mind of some sort of big mountain tribe warrior, but I needed to make the clover fit. Free association took me from luck, to chance, to fate, to doom, and that word gave me my answer. There is a pre-existing concept in my world of the Doomsinger, a sort of prophet-slash-diviner-slash-fortune teller, and this seemed like the perfect mix. A Doominger from one of the Urian Mountain tribes. Ur is one of the Chained World's several continents, linked by its own great chain to the others, and a bleak and wintry place it is too. A perfect home to the bleak and wintry Heart-of-Snow.

So things looked grim: the party were in for a bit of a scrap. But I had a chance to pull a complete reversal. There was nothing in the narrative up until this point that expressly said that this wasn't all just part of Spider's plan. And so I pulled a Flashback move. An expensive one for sure: this was going to cost her 2 stress. But if it came off it would give Alpha team a huge advantage.

Spider was basically trying to subvert an enemy lieutenant to her cause, so in addition to that Stress she was going to need to make a Sway check here, from a Desperate position, to pull this off. She couldn't afford to mess this up, and so she pushed the roll at the cost of another 2 Stress. And Sallow assisted, under the pretext that Heart-of-Snow was his contact. That gave me 3 dice. I rolled... and the dice came up 1, 2 and 2. A hard failure. And a failure against a Desperate position results in Serious consequences. That meant a ton more guards, and 2 stress each for Spider, as well as Sallow, who'd assisted her.

Now Spider could have attempted to make a Resistance roll at this point. Things were looking pretty dire after all. But she didn't, for the same reason I chose not to have Crater make a Resistance roll earlier: the Resistance Roll can be a risky strategy, and if it goes poorly it can result in a goodly amount of additional Stress being lost. And both Spider and Crater have already burned a load of stress. There was a risk that a bad roll could result in maxing the Stress track, getting knocked out of the Score, and taking a Trauma. So I erred on the side of caution. Was that a mistake? Have I placed my team in even greater peril? Only time will tell.

Hopefully Bravo team are faring slightly better...

SCENE

"You cannot be serious, Valerian!" Trace snarls. "Either you or that fat fool are delusional! Actually, more likely the pair of you!"

Valerian shrugs as the group are carried up on the steel elevator. "I merely convey the news as I receive it, my dear. If our good friend Lever 42 is to be believed, the answer to our question, the source of the powder, lies within some sort of fracture at the very heart of the machine itself. Your guess is as good as mine as to why a machine built to power a city should be producing a substance capable of destroying it, but there you have it. Ours is not to reason why, and all that. And having learned of the direction we must travel, well, now we must follow where fate leads."

Not that he'd ever admit it to her face, but Trace is not entirely wrong in her reservations, Valerian reflects. This mission had started out as a fool's errand, and now the thought of trying to penetrate to the very centre of this monstrous mechanical construction, whilst surrounded by rabid fanatics, fills him with near-debilitating dread. But he'll be damned if he'll give Trace the satisfaction of backing down before she does. It occurs, dimly, that perhaps this is precisely the reason the Spider put them both together on this team. But he has more important things to worry about right now; the small circular platform shudders to a halt, and the trio step out onto a huge grated deck secured to the machine's upper surface. Some

distance away they spy the dome-like protuberance of brass and black metal, the Lever had spoken of; the master control chamber.

“State your purpose and present your papers, brother cogs!” A pair of guards, holding halberds whose blades crackle with blue light, interpose themselves aggressively. “This is a restricted area!”

Valerian and Trace step aside to reveal the portly priest, resplendent in his elaborately decorated robes. Or at least, Flint, dressed as the priest. The actual priest is in his undergarments, gagged and tied up in a cupboard. “My purpose is between me and the Great Machine!” Flint barks, doing a passable impression of Lever 42’s pompous delivery. “Stand aside at once!”

The guards glance at one another, then lean in threateningly, weapons at the ready. “Maybe we didn’t make ourselves clear. Papers. Now. Or you’re going to go down a lot quicker than you came up.”

Valerian steps in smoothly, as Trace escorts are harrumphing Flint back onto the lift platform. “I’m so sorry about that,” he murmurs, bending forward conspiratorially. “Lever 42 is a tremendously holy man of course, but he can be a little... brusque, you understand?. Abrasive, even. The pressures of power, I’m sure you understand. I do fully appreciate there are protocols to be followed, rules to be enforced and so on. And if I may, can I just commend you on a job exceptionally well done? Really, exceptional work, brother cogs. Truly. However I beg of you, spare a thought for a fellow cog. You must understand, Lever 42 is deeply spiritual, as befits a man of his seniority and standing, but he can be a tad... vindictive. Particularly when thwarted. I have no doubt there will be hell to pay for this, and of course it will be myself and my colleague over there,” he gestures at Trace, who is doing her best to placate a furious-looking, gesticulating Flint, “who bear the brunt. Now, I’m sure you fine cogs will not get into any sort of trouble for simply doing your jobs, despite the Lever’s significant influence and connections, but if you could only spare a thought for a lowly fellow cog, my colleague and I would be eternally in your debt. I’m sure there must be something we can do to smooth this all out.”

The guard rests back on his halberd, thumb tucked into his belt. “So let me get this straight, brother; your boss is an arse, ‘scuse my Tanthian, you’re going to cop it because he couldn’t be bothered to follow procedure, and that’s somehow my problem? This eternal debt of yours is going to take some paying, I reckon.”

Valerian sighs, and sets to haggling.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN

So yes, Bravo team are faring slightly better than their compatriots over in Alpha, but at a cost. They are burning through Stress at a fair pace, and that may well come back to bite them if they’re not careful. That said, they’re not taking anything like the pummeling Alpha team are.

Bravo team's scene, the first part of which was used as this chapter's trailer, started with a Group Action to gather information. This too resulted in a failure; between Valerian, Trace and Flint, not one of them could roll a success using their Survey skill. Fortunately Flint has a very handy special ability; when he leads a Group Action using Survey, he takes a maximum of 1 Stress, instead of the 3 he would normally have taken. Given that the overall action failed I figured there should be some additional consequence, and a roll indicated Harm: Flint took one level of Harm, which I described as Drained.

So with that approach a bust, it was over to Valerian to do what he does best. Bullshit. He was going to sweet-talk a priest into revealing the innermost secrets of the cult. Because of course he was. He rolled a success with a consequence, and I decided to use his special ability here too. Valerian has an ability called Subterfuge that allows him to mark off his special armour to ignore one consequence related to suspicion.

So what had Valerian discovered? Well, I rolled on the picture oracle and got a shattered pane of glass, and a heart surrounded in electricity. I know what this means, but Valerian has only part of the puzzle, so for now we'll leave it at that. It'd be a shame to spoil the surprise, after all. All we need to know for now is that the answer lies at the heart of the machine, and so that is where the crew need to go.

To get there I decided to follow the route Mina took, up to the top of the ziggurat, lickety split. It seemed reasonable that a zero stress flashback was appropriate here, to provide Flint with the priest's outfit. And no doubt a pillow tied around his middle. I figured if I was GMing a group of players and they suggested this trick I'd go with this suggestion at no cost, so why be harder on myself?

Flint's attempt to intimidate the guards obviously failed, resulting in more stress for him, and once again Valerian stepped in to save the day. It's becoming something of a habit. There was a consequence, in this case "Things take longer", but I can live with that.

As my crew have gotten closer to the heart of the Machine Cultist enclave I've been reducing the effect of each success they roll. Normally a success would result in two ticks on the mission clock, but in order to reflect the increasing difficulty they face, I've reduced that to just 1 for the last two actions. So the Bravo team mission clock now stands at 8 out of 12. Still some way to go.

But at least Bravo are making progress. Alpha team, by contrast, are in deep, deep trouble. It's going to take a miracle to dig them out of the stinking mess they've fallen into.

Let's see if there are any to hand.

SCENE

The odds stacked against them are impossible. They are outgunned, outmanned, outnumbered and outplanned. Only a certified lunatic would try to fight in the face of such

overwhelming opposition. A feral grin spreads across Crater's tattooed face, and Spider's heart sinks. So much for easy.

With a furious bellow and arms spread wide, the big man bull-rushes the startled group of guards, crashing into them with the force of a wrecking ball. The Silver Nails mercenaries are tough and battle-hardened veterans, but in the face of Crater's fury half of them are bowled over like ninepins.

That said, even Crater's immense strength cannot keep the well-trained Nails off-balance for long. He's going to need help, and quickly. "Sallow, the lights!" The Spider cries, as soldiers push their way into the room and fan out. There is a worrying amount of sharp metal on display.

Sallow doesn't need telling twice. If there's one thing he knows how to do, it's break things. His fingers trace cables running along the walls, humming with magical power. From one of his many pockets he fishes out a small pair of wire cutters, and points them back and forth at a pair of cables. "Eeny meeny miny mo... This one I think... aaaawwk!" Not only do the lights stay resolutely on, but the room is momentarily bathed in blinding blue arcanicity, that arcs and crackles around him. He slumps against the wall, charred and smoking, his hair frizzed out wildly about his head. "No, not that one.." he mutters through clenched teeth.

Spider is forced to duck desperately below a clumsy sword swing, and retreat hurriedly from a guard who has broken free of the main pack. But her back is against the wall, the element of surprise is lost, and they're running out of time. There has to be a way out of this. There has to be...

She slows her breathing, compartmentalising the imminent danger into a small and distant box. Focus only on what matters most... a solution. Wasn't it Pelicus who wrote "the battlefield is the greatest warrior of all"? Time seems to slow as she takes in her surroundings. The sparking, severed cable hanging from the wall. The dull steel mesh of the floor. The painted pipes lining the ceiling. Her eyes go wide. "Sallow! Crater! On my mark! The Embassy Manoeuvre!"

She can tell from the gap-toothed grin that lights up Sallow's face that her companion understands, but there's just one problem. Sheer weight of numbers has eventually turned the tide. Though the tight press of the melee has rendered the soldiers' swords ineffective, Crater has finally gone down under a huge scrum of hairy, hard-bitten thugs.

"Crater!" Spider snaps, as two sword-wielding guards close in on her. "Stop messing about and get yourself ready!"

With a roar of demented defiance Crater bursts free, sending the mound of punching and kicking soldiery flying in all directions. He rises to his feet, legs planted and arms raised, sucking in huge lungfuls of air.

"Mark!" Spider yells, and everything seems to happen at once. Sallow kicks hard at the loose cable, knocking it free of the wall, and all three of the crew leap into the air, grabbing at the pipes that line the ceiling and hanging on for dear life. The cable falls free, sending searing blue sheets of arcanicity through the metal flooring. The heavily armoured soldiers of the Silver Nails stand no chance. Their prone bodies flail and twitch like drowning fish as magical energy burns through their bodies. The overhead lights flicker, spark, and then die.

When at last the power shorts out, all is still and quiet. Spider, Crater and Sallow drop to the ground.

"I think we're good," Spider whispers into the darkness. "We got them all right?:"

"Well, most of them." A purple glow appears on the far side of the room, revealing Heart-of-Snow's dead-eyed grin. "Of course, I knew you would. Just as I knew those men would serve my purpose. You are spent now, yes? At the very end of your strength? Vulnerable?" the purple glow grows brighter in the Doomsinger's upturned hand, the grin broader.

Damn it, Spider thinks. The big Urian bastard is right. Crater's fists are up but he looks about ready to drop, and neither she nor Sallow have got the mettle to take on the Doomsinger, even assuming he doesn't call down another squad of guards on them. The only way they're getting out of this is by talking their way out.

"Listen, Heart of Snow, this isn't your fight. You get paid either way, right? There's no need for this to get any nastier." Even she doesn't buy what she's selling.

Heart-of-Snow laughs, though there's more murder in the sound than mirth. "Come now, Little Spider, I know you can do better than that. I have you in my hand, to crush or to spare, as the whim takes me. What have you to offer me, that I might be well inclined?"

"A debt" Spider responds, without thinking. "A blood debt. I swear to pay the price you charge, if and when you charge it. Is that sufficient?"

"Oh, more than sufficient," Heart-of-Snow purrs, his voice dripping with smug malice. Just like this is all playing out exactly the way he'd planned it. "I'll take my payment now I think." He draws closer, and the Spider takes an involuntary step back at the palpable aura of malevolence the Doomsinger exudes.

"I see the shape of the future, ever-shifting, ever in motion. Sometimes it is clear as the breaking dawn, sometimes little more than a shadow. And sometimes it offers me a thread, emerging from the gloom, upon which to pull, and see what unravels. I see that you have a secret you've been carrying, little Spider, a secret I would unburden you of. A name, nothing more. Tell me that, and I'll leave you free to spin your threads. Tell me; who was it that supplied the weapon that slew the Whisperer of House Montisario?"

The Spider grows cold. What possible need could the Doomsinger have for that piece of information? What set of dominoes will she be setting in motion by revealing it? The outcome can't be anything good, of that she is certain. But her back is against the wall, and she sees no other choice. If they are to have a prayer of completing this mission, she has to comply.

"An alchemist, working out of the Mercer's Quarter," she replies, her voice steady, but her heart hammering. Even as she says the words, she knows this is a bad, bad idea. "Name of Doctor Eliza Kropp."

OUTRO MUSIC

You have been listening to the Lone Adventurer, a solo RPG podcast, played, written and performed by me, Carl White.

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Thank you for listening.