

## Mini Scenario 7

### Against the Twelve

#### **Cunning's Message**

- Cunning will materialise in the Cellars (Slight has a chance of spotting him this time.)
- "It's time. The Twelve will be meeting at 3 bells after sunset today."
- Cunning can tell the heroes about the secret passage from the Scratch privy, give the heroes a map of the Chamber of the Twelve, and tell the heroes about the likely opposition. Their mission is to get the large artefact that is sitting on a pedestal in the south east corner of the room by any means necessary.
- He prefers not to know what their plans are, however - Ulrich has a truth-detecting amulet and he doesn't want to give the game away. Ulrich can also sense if Cunning or anyone else starts casting spells.
- The door is only open when at least three of the Twelve are present. It might be possible for Slight and possibly one or two others to hide in the robing room, but the door will be locked when the Twelve leave. It may be possible to sabotage the lock, but at least some of the Twelve are likely to notice. If the heroes come up with this, Cunning will offer to stay behind and help lock up. The heroes will have to deal with other two, and he doesn't know who they will be.
- Cunning advises the heroes to disguise themselves. They are likely to be earning the ire of some senior Everwayans.

#### **Finding the Chamber**

- "You are in a maze of tunnels, all exactly alike." There are no distinguishing marks in the corridors. The corridors are stone with rough walls. The doors do not have designations.
- It is lit by magical glowing globes, some of which have not been attended to for some time. There are many shadows.
- Librarians Militant do patrol at night, but only once an hour.
- During the day, good chance of encountering a scholar. Sages use the labyrinth as a way of getting from one Vault to another, and books requested by Chamber Platinum users are often brought in from the Vaults via the labyrinth.
- Some doors (to rooms containing dangerous or subversive books) are locked

#### ***The Map Room***

- This has a very similar lock to the Chamber of the Twelve and works in the same way.

#### ***The Secret Passage***

- The heroes could discover the secret door in the north west corner of the labyrinth used by the Twelve to attend meetings. This leads to a passage with several entry points, including a secret door in a lavatory outhouse behind the Scratch residence, another in the Host family house next to the Palace, and a storage cellar beneath the Crookstaff Tower (the passageway is clearly magically constructed).
- The secret exit. Blemish knows about it, as do senior Scratches (Mark), but no-one else. Level W4 door. Can be forced open (F5).

## **The Chamber Doors**

- W5 hidden door - easily spotted by Slight (since it is his type of magic), much harder for others. Wishbone can sense it on a lucky FC. The opening mechanism is a simple press-button latch.
- Inner door has lock requiring three different keys (see above). Keys are held by members of the Twelve. The easiest to obtain are from Cunning and Codex, after which it gets hard...

## **Timing Is All**

### **Day**

- The heroes can locate the door (though on an unlucky FC, they find the (equally locked) Map Room instead), but getting in when the Twelve is not meeting will be extremely difficult. Only a master lock-picker such as Redfox or (possibly) Why could get them in by lock-picking.
- Extreme destruction could be used, but the magical anti-fire shield round Chamber Platinum will prevent Flame from burning it down.
- A sneaky approach would be to render the locks unusable. This will force them to be replaced, but will alert Codex who will place additional guards.
- Slight could put a spell on the door to make whoever touches it want to open it or replace the locks or some such. Unfortunately this is unlikely to work, unless he is really clever. He will need to ensourcel 3 different people to unlock the door.
- A more subtle approach would be to make people forget to lock the door. Again, difficult to see how this will work if they leave together ("hey, weren't you going to lock the door?"). Also one of Ulrich Crookstaff's zombies has glamour detection powers, albeit at a low level (W5).

### **Later**

- Assuming the heroes (well Slight at least) manage to find their way in, they can either hide and observe, or attack. Fortunately, the door has been left open.

## **The Twelve**

- The Twelve are seated at a round table at the centre of a sixty foot diameter room. The lighting is gloomy - two glow spheres mark entrances at the northern and southern ends of room and one further sphere hangs above the table. As long as the heroes stay in the shadows by the door, they should be unobserved.
- Most of the Twelve have come alone, except for Ulrich who has six zombies. The assistants are seated in chairs around the edge of the room. The zombies are huddled motionless behind Ulrich's chair, which is to the left.
- **Slight** will immediately spot the Pearl, which is on a stand just to the right of the southern entrance. FC to see how resistible his attraction to it is. Smeagol seeing the One Ring for the first time is likely...
- **Wishbone** will sense a profound wrongness emanating from the southern entrance. There are spirits there, but something has been done to them. It's like chalk squeaking on the blackboard of her soul.

### *"Ulrich" Faction*

Support Ulrich's leadership and his plan to get Wrath to kill an avatar (Death).

- **Ulrich Crookstaff** (M) - He is thin, with a shock of white hair, a face that is a mass of wrinkles and liver spots and a long and tangled beard.
- **Render Crow** (M) - 40s, tall, dark beard, beetling brow. Dresses in military leathers.
- **Quill Scratch** (F) - 50s, stout, long grey hair, smooth red cheeks, kindly smile, silver-framed spectacles.

- **Mother Gentle** (F, supply of victims for Gate opening ceremony) - F, tall, long fingers, dark eyes with arched eyebrows.

#### "Codex" Faction

Think that Ulrich is going off the rails and that the Twelve's efforts should be concentrated on getting hold of the Book of Words.

- **Codex Platinum Scratch** (F, Master of Library of All Worlds) - Looks remarkably younger than her 34 years.
- **Buryer Tender** (M, controls Smilers) – 50s, stout, disapproving look, robes.
- **Blizzard Crookstaff** (M, head of Stormwind Coven) – 60, bushy eyebrows
- **Cunning Gold** (M) – A young dark-skinned man habitually dressed in black and silver.
- **Loudvoice Mask** (M, controls body doubles) - M, 40s, small and dumpy. Receding straight dark hair

#### "Royal" Faction

Somewhere between the two, generally support Ulrich.

- **Absinthe Emerald** (F, wife of Bitter Emerald, the king's advisor) - Long dark hair, penetrating eyes. Dresses in black.
- **Slowstep Watcher** (F, head of Court of Fools sept) - 40s, hatchet-faced, vertical lines on face.
- **Wile Snakering** (F, spy network) - 60s, grey hair swept up in tresses. Innocent, smiling expression.

## The Conversation

S: Codex, Quill Scratch

A: Absinthe, Slowstep Watcher

A: Ulrich, Mother Gentle

D: Wile Snakering, Render Crow

S: Blizzard Crookstaff, Buryer Tender

H: Cunning Gold, Loudvoice Mask

## Attacking

The end of the discussion would be a very good time to attack...

- **Round 1:** Cunning vanishes. Render slashes at the seat where he was, but misses. Ulrich's zombies disperse to various parts of the room.
- **Round 2:** Ulrich makes a gesture and a zombie's head explodes, filling a part of the room with midianite dust that cancels all magic in the area for three rounds.
- **Round 3:** Cunning, who was heading for the Pearl, becomes visible, and comes apart in a mess of organs as the needle demon's magic dissipates.
  - Note: Ulrich will need to be out of range or his necromantic support magicks will also stop. As it is, he will likely lose a couple of zombies.
- There are 12 people present and half a dozen of Ulrich's zombies.
- The whole area is magically dead and even more so if Ulrich's midianite bomb goes off. Slight's, Rathgard's and Walker's magicks are at **-2 / -3**. Flame's magic is particularly badly affected - her coins will get warm but not explode and her fire knives are at **-3 / -4**. Fish Trader's true form will be obvious to everyone. Fortunately, Ulrich's and Blizzard's powers are similarly reduced. Blizzard's powers are ice-based.
- Ulrich will lead a fighting retreat, using his zombies and fellow conspirators as shields.
- He will send several fast-moving undead bats that will alert the Librarians Militant. If they escape, the heroes will only have a few rounds before reinforcements arrive.
- Codex, Absinthe and Wile will also attempt to escape into the labyrinth. Absinthe and Wile have personal bodyguards waiting for them in Chamber Platinum.
- Loudvoice, Mother Gentle, Quill and Buryer will flee to the secret door.
- Blizzard, Slowstep and Render will try to stop the heroes hunting the others down by blocking

the door.

- **Blizzard** and **Ulrich** are powerful magicians (7 and 8 power respectively).
- **Slowstep** and Render are good melee fighters (F5/E7, F7/E5).
- **Wile** has a (poisoned) dagger (F6, E3).
- **Loudvoice** is also good at dagger combat (F6, E3).
- **Absinthe** has a dagger, as does Quill, but they are not trained combatants.
- **Mother Gentle** will use her touch to inflict pain (F5 E3).
- **Buryer Tender** has a flensing knife (F4 E3).
- **Codex** is unarmed.

## The Southern Chamber

- This circular room is dominated by a large roughly rectangular block of stone about 10 foot high and 8 foot wide (same material as the chamber walls). An arch resembling a Gate has been carved on the surface facing the entrance.
- Magically sensitive types will have a profound sense of *wrongness* emanating from it. Non-magical types may observe the manacles attached on either side at ankle and arm height and the reddish-brown stains on the floor near the block and come to the same conclusion.
- The centre of the block has a number of 6-7' high vertical incisions which are particularly distressing. Anyone with a Water score of 5 or more (or 4 plus FC) can sense that the gashes are not just in the rock - they are gashes in reality that open on - somewhere else. Slight and Wishbone could, with sufficient time, eventually figure out that they are in Wrath's astral plane - they will see ghostly images of Viking types fleeing from a dragon-borne zhi-bow attack.
- More distressing to Wishbone are the dozen or so spirits that are clustered on either side of the rents. Or rather, the two dozen half-spirits. Each has half the complexity of a normal spirit - half the memories, half the personality. It's clear from talking to them that they come in pairs, one on each side of the gash.
  - One of the pairs is clearly Terracotta - both halves of her spirit remember the owl bangles.
  - The spirits are embedded in a magical working that stops them from dissipating. Given time, Wishbone can free them, but they will not join together again and will not share spirit bottles.
  - Wishbone doesn't have enough spirit bottles for all of them.
- Sadly, there is probably little that can be done to put the portal beyond use, particularly in the limited time that the heroes will likely have. The gashes cannot be mended and the heroes' magic isn't up to burying the whole place. Erasing all traces of the Twelve and putting the door beyond use is probably the best they can hope for.

## Aftermath

- This could get messy. Several prominent Everwayans are likely to die, which would cause a furor similar to that after the Transcendence if there weren't so much else going on.
  - Cunning will almost certainly be killed if the heroes don't specifically try to save him - his invisibility isn't perfect due to the magic-deadened room. If Ulrich's midianite bomb doesn't get him, Render will cut his head off with a lucky swing, or Wile will throw a poisoned dagger at him, or Buryer will get him in an armlock and use his flensing knife to gouge his brains out. Walker may be able to save him.
  - Most likely to die: Codex, Absinthe and Quill (all women, unfortunately). Possibly also Loudvoice and Buryer.
  - If the heroes are smart, they can use the Black Daggers to capture or kill any escapees that use the external passage. Loudvoice, Mother Gentle, Quill, Buryer will use this route.
  - Black Daggers could also be sent into the labyrinth, though there is little time to place them and no map unless the heroes recce it themselves. Cunning explored it many years

ago but has largely forgotten the layout.

- Least likely to die: Ulrich may survive, unless specifically targetted – he has a personal army at his command, and can cast illusion and other spells. Zombie lightning and poison clouds. Blizzard can freeze heroes in place. Slowstep is good at crowd management and will not attack the heroes unless they attack her. Render will attack the heroes and will probably pay the price.
- The heroes should get hold of the Pearl. Slight will definitely want to do this.
- They can also rescue **Galleon**, who is locked in a side alcove. He has been put into a state of suspended animation from which Walker or Wishbone can revive him. His vocal chords have been removed so he cannot scream.
- Among the papers and books in the various alcoves is the history of the Twelve's researches, from its earliest investigations into the causes of the Blood Plague to the increasing obsession with Avatars and their powers. On a lucky FC, a hero can find the original legend of Spheremaker recorded by Coiner Gold. Of course, the heroes could just burn the whole lot.
- The papers that can be found are:
  - ***The Founding of Chamber Pasheen*** by Madder Scratch, early 1900s. A critical biography of Guile Snakering (1841-1883), describing the origins of the Secret Project at the height of the Blood Plague in 1875. Guile persuaded the king to set up "Chamber Pasheen" as an elite council of the most respected scholars in Chamber Platinum (in practise, hand-picked by Guile). Its overt purpose was to identify the ultimate cause of the Blood Plague and to ensure that nothing like it could affect Everway again. However, Guile had a secret agenda. He had come to the conclusion that the Blood Plague was an attack on Everway by the gods. In order to protect itself, the city had need of gods of its own - ones that were actually present, unlike the Walker. He proposed a Secret Project, hidden from the King and even from the members' families - that the members of the Chamber become those gods. To do this, the nature of the gods must be understood and a means of deification must be established. It is not clear if Guile intended the Twelve to be his means of obtaining power and influence within Everway - if so, he was to be disappointed as he died in the last major outbreak of the Blood Plague in 1883, without any breakthroughs in the secret research.
  - ***A New Scheme of Study for The New Chamber*** by Coffin Tender, 2114. A proposal for a new approach that expresses frustration with the lack of progress in identifying the nature of the gods through exploration and research over the last 200 years. It suggests using the new narcotic Dreamflower to achieve a higher state of awareness where understanding will surely come. Associated papers suggest that a lot of people got high over the next 20 years, but "none of the insights they received proved worthy of further study".
  - ***A Comparative Study of the Tales of the Rainbow-Haired Girl*** by Ink Scratch. A thesis describing her experience of meeting "the being who called herself Silly Me" and her suggestion that there are 36 gods associated with the cards of the Fortune Deck. Submitted for inclusion in Chamber Platinum in 2237. A "rejected" stamp accompanied by the comment "Much too fanciful" and the signature of Sand Scratch appears in the frontispiece. Comments written in the margins, however, indicate that Sand was much more interested than he seemed. One reads "Hooded Councillor = Cockatrice = Blood Plague!!!" Another: "Death = ??". Another: "Usurper = Walker?"
  - ***On the Origins of the Avatars*** by Whiteice Crookstaff, 2307. This treatise examines several theories relating to the origins of the avatars. Whiteice comes to the conclusion that the avatars were ordinary humans who had transcended to a higher state, whence came their special powers. He investigated means of achieving this transcendent state, and eventually came to the conclusion that it was necessary for people to be "born" into a sphere of pure spirit in which they could strengthen themselves and then return to the real world. The problem was finding a sphere of pure spirit.
  - ***A Tale of the Basahn - Spheremaker and the Enchanted Chair*** by Coiner Gold. The story tells of a great Basahn magician called Spheremaker who sought to create a new

world. Much of the tale describes a series of quests he performed to obtain the Instruments of Odin - the Pearl of Making, the Edge of Light and Darkness and the Book of Words - which involved fighting a great red dragon, entering the realm of the dead and a journey to an undersea kingdom, all the while harried by his dark twin, Shadow, who is determined to stop him. The final quest is to capture a godling to sacrifice, which he does by tricking him into sitting in an enchanted throne. At the tale's climax, Spheremaker takes the instruments to the Sacred Place for the creation ritual, carrying the bound god on his back. Setting the Pearl into the Edge's handle, Spheremaker speaks words from the Book and then slices the godling in two, cutting away his spirit and shaping it into a new world. Alas, it is all in vain - Shadow arrives and corrupts the ritual, and the newly created world explodes. Spheremaker retreats to his castle, sadder and wiser, and never tries to create a world again.

- ***A Proposal for Transcendance*** by Firebolt Crookstaff, 2376. In which it is proposed that a modified form of the Spheremaker ritual should achieve the Twelve's goal of transcendance into godly beings. It celebrates the fact that the Edge and the Pearl have been acquired through the offices of the thief Redfox, and that many years of study have concluded that they are the genuine artifacts despite his refusal to say where they came from. "The lack of the Book is a drawback, but careful study of the legend suggests that it is but a minor component in the construction of the dweomeric resonances and substitution from other Cleacuun sources should suffice". As for the sacrifice, Firebolt is convinced that the energy severed from the godling was magical rather than spiritual, meaning that the sacrifice of any great-souled human would provide all the raw material required.
- ***The Transcendance Experiment: A Failure of Language?*** by Ulrich Crookstaff, 2401. In it he critiques the main theory that the cause of the failure was a missing component - the "Book of Words" which could stabilise the "Transcended Realm" - and instead suggests that the number of avatars is limited to the number of cards in the Fortune Deck. This means that in order to be successful, an existing Avatar will need to die.

07/05/2012