

If anyone preach to you— besides that which you have received, let him be Anathema.
— Galatians 1:9 (Douay–Rheims translation)

In Hunting A Monster

An adventure for Exalted
using the Storytelling Adventure System

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STORYTELLING ADVENTURE SYSTEM			
SCENES 12	MENTAL PHYSICAL SOCIAL	●●●●○	XP LEVEL 35
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WHITE WOLF PUBLISHING, INC.
2075 WEST PARK PLACE BLVD
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Introduction

They are the brave princes of the earth who guard against the wicked and dreadful Anathema-kings of old. They are the thin scarlet line between the most civilized Realm and the barbarians at the gate. Without their ever-watchful-eye and powerful dragon-touched hands, Creation would be defenseless against the evil foe. They know their enemy. They stay one step ahead of the wretched. To serve is an honor, and to retire is a glory.

They are the shikari—the warriors who form the Wyld Hunt.

This is a story of a circle of shikari, a group sworn to defend the Realm and destroy the foul Anathema, wherever they may hide. This is a story of what happens when duty goes wrong. What happens when the indomitable hunt is hunting the wrong target? When they are ready for one demon-breed but end up against another?

And, most important, what happens when the hunters must hunt their own?

What's Inside

In Hunting a Monster provides the Storyteller with a complete **Exalted** story, from beginning to end. While this story is designed to work early on in a series, it is not designed to be the beginning of a series, nor is it intended for completely new players. The enemies are designed to be very competent—befitting a group of errant shikari. This degree of competency could be fatal in the hands of a tactically-oriented Storyteller if your players are not well-versed in **Exalted** combat. If your players are not tactically-oriented, don't worry; we've included notes to help you out.

This Storyteller Adventure System (SAS) product allows players to take part in a hunt gone bad. Characters must summon up their cunning and martial prowess to face a foe which they were not expecting, and may not be equipped to face. At the same time, **In Hunting a Monster** asks what the characters will do when faced with having to slay one of their own: will they blindly follow the dogma of the Immaculate Faith, or will they begin to question the foundation of their beloved Realm?



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 story kit 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 **In Hunting a Monster**:

- **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 Hunting a Monster tasks Dynasts and Lost Eggs to hunt down and slay a newly chosen Forsaken (or Dawn caste Solar) in the Threshold. According to the Wyld Hunt's intelligence, this Anathema resides in or around a community with little influence from the Realm, one that only pays a nominal tribute. Unfortunately, the shikari are about to discover that even their renowned intelligence can be mistaken. What waits for them in the sleepy community of Dathesk is not a Forsaken warrior, but a silver-born Trickster.

Act One begins with the shikari en route to Dathesk, a town in the northeastern Threshold. They are on a mission to annihilate a Solar Anathema. Their mortal logistician, Useless Sparrow, responsible for handling all the character's day-to-day needs throughout the hunt, communicates what he knows of Dathesk. The story then flashes back to Cathak Setod, the circle's superior in the Wyld Hunt, giving them one last lesson. Setod explains the mission—to slay a Golden Child—and has a brief conversation about the current state of the Realm.

Then the shikari enter Dathesk. Mayor Carriker Thurfas greets them and tries to assure them there is no Anathema in Dathesk. A second flashback gives the characters a chance to interact with the Realm bureaucracy and receive their formal briefing from the Office of Harmony. Additionally, clever shikari can secure resources to help the hunt (though with the pending economic and political collapse, the Office is reluctant to hand over any of its dwindling budget).

As the first act progresses, the characters uncover signs that their prey is a Lunar, not a Solar. His actions leave few traces of his passing. The investigative trail points to a group of wyld barbarians near the city, leading the shikari to conduct a surgical strike or an all-out assault on the Hratrak barbarians, as befits their talents and choices.

The second act is all about the rising action of the hunt. The shikari locate a temple where their Forsaken target's prior incarnation once walked. The hunters discover the history and truth of Dathesk: It is a social experiment being conducted by an aged Lunar. Worse still, Mayor Thurfas, an agent of Wolf's Horn the Trickster, has been helping the Anathema stay hidden. The entire town may be against the shikari.

Riding back to Dathesk, the hunters confront Mayor Thurfas. Eventually, Wolf's Horn steps in to protect his loyal servant. With his own grim determination and insane courage, Wolf's Horn battles the Dragon Blooded in the quickly-deserted streets of Dathesk (most of the townsfolk are smart enough to get out of the way—property damage tends to follow in the wake of Exalt-on-Exalt combat).

In the midst of this battle, something unexpected happens: it turns out the All-Seeing Eye's intelligence was correct after all! There is a Forsaken Anathema in Dathesk, but until this moment had not yet been chosen. Useless Sparrow takes action, either to defend the Terrestrials (if Horn is overtaking them) or to intervene against a surprise attack from a beastman (if the Terrestrials are defeating Horn). In a single moment of glory, he is chosen as a Dawn. Taking advantage of the sudden change, Wolf's Horn absconds with Sparrow and retreats to his Manse.

Now the hunt is on! Do they crush the last of Horn's army in a glorious strike and take the Anathema in a direct confrontation, or do they sneak in through a hidden coastal exit from his manse? Once through the silvery heart of darkness, they confront the wicked Lunar Trickster. After a final battle with their Lunar target, the shikari must decide what to do with Sparrow. He is now Anathema, but he was their faithful servant, and wants to serve them still. Perhaps even more disturbing, how did the All-Seeing Eye botch sending them on a mission to hunt an Anathema, only for the original demon-spawn they were going after to appear because of their actions in the mission? Even the Realm's astrologers should not be capable of such divination.

What stories will the Realm tell of the shikari now? Will they be hailed as glorious conquerors, preserving the honor of the realm from ancient demons? Or will their names be stricken from the Immaculate Faith as they are cast down as demons?

Theme: The Hunt

In Hunting a Monster is all about the hunt itself. The central focus is on the hunt of Anathema, but the hunting is more than just physical. The story here is about a hunt for meaning and purpose. There is also a hunt within the characters for purpose in their ritual killings when asked to hunt one of their own. Depending on your shikari's backstories, this could be a hunt for recognition within the Realm, a chance for Lost Eggs to make something of themselves and be held as peers by the Dynasts, or one last mission before they can go home and forget all about the Hunt.

The hunt defines many shikari. It is how they exercise their power and dominion over the whole of Creation. It is a chance to do honor to the Realm, earn glory for themselves, and hunt political power that comes with that popular power, for the hunt makes men into heroes, and for heroes unto legends.

Mood: That We Do Not Become A Monster

There's an old cliché about being careful when hunting a monster, lest you become one yourself. In the first act, Cathak Setod asks the characters to reflect upon the Realm, upon the nature of the Hunt and upon the texts of the Immaculate Order. The characters have a chance to build a rapport with a kind, young and very handy mortal. Then they're duty-bound to kill him. Why? Because he was Chosen? Because their texts call him Anathema? Who truly is the monster? Or is faith in the Immaculate texts so strong that we need never question it? Shall that dogmatic mind keep one from devolving into a monster, or have they already?

An Episode in Your Series

This story is intended to be run early in your series, but not at the very beginning. While it can be run as your first story, **In Hunting a Monster** is designed to take a group of Terrestrials who have already forged a bond with one another and thrust them into a difficult situation, both physically and spiritually. Cathak Setod can help you forge a link from your earlier series to this story. He can serve as a father figure and patron for your circle, coaching them before one or two earlier hunts. As an Elder Shikari, his reputation for success (particularly against Lunar Anathema) is legendary.

Useless Sparrow is another way to forge a link from your earlier sessions to this story. Having him serve as their logistician during missions prior to **In Hunting a Monster** will help strengthen the circle's emotional ties with him. Alternatively, if you already have a mortal character in a position of trust within the circle, and it makes sense to bring him or her along, you could replace Sparrow with that character.

Depending on what actions your characters take in the conclusion, you have a number of directions to take when the story finishes. If the shikari forsake the Realm, then Setod may gather a group of elder shikari to crush his wayward pupils, but is Setod up to the task? If your characters do the proper thing—the right thing, according to the Immaculate texts—and slay Sparrow, then other members of Horn's circle may come after them. The shikari may have questions about how the All-Seeing Eye messed up their intelligence so badly. (If you have a sorcerer who is aware of the Sidereals, this could get ugly and interesting very quickly.) In addition, the increased fame from surviving such a harrowing mission buys considerable political power.

REFERENCE MATERIAL

The Compass of Terrestrial Directions Vol. I – The Blessed Isle can help you add depth to the Wyld Hunt. The book details the Immaculate Order and the Wyld Hunt's command structure and their pseudo-military breakdown. This may help you understand the sort of planning and logistics required to create an elite strike force designed for asymmetrical warfare and engaging in full spectrum operations by what amounts to the Realm's standing emergency executive authority.

The Thousand Correct Actions of the Upright Soldier is a collection of Terrestrial battle tactics and holy texts that can help you think of quips for Setod and the Office of Harmony. More importantly, it includes several new Charms and collected errata for existing Dragon Blood Charms. If you do not have access to this book, we strongly encourage you to check out the free **Scroll of Errata** from DriveThruRPG.com, which contains the corrected Dragon Blood Charms. This story is written with the assumption that players and Storytellers are using the corrected Dragon Blood Charms.

The **Army Field Manual 3-0, Full Spectrum Operations** is a great (and free) resource if you want to do a little research into how the real world conducts similar operations. Sections 6-41 and following are most relevant to the Wyld Hunt, especially the concepts of defeat mechanisms. You can introduce such concepts through sacred texts of the Wyld Hunt, or doctrinal texts such as the **Thousand Correct Actions**.

A Story By Itself

If you want to run this story on its own, characters you make for the story should have at least 35 experience points. Their backstories should include a successful career in the Wyld Hunt for at least a few characters in the group, though not necessarily all. One person might have Useless Sparrow as a Follower or Henchman. Others may be shikari who have begun to doubt the glory of the Realm. Another might be a fervent and loyal follower of Hunt's tradition, who believes in the might and glory of the Realm above all else.

If you are planning on running this story alone, take some extra time in the first act to make sure you drive home the early introspection on what it means to be a hunter. Show Useless Sparrow as someone useful to the party, but be careful not to upstage the players. Make him a commodity for them to use, not the main show.

Backstory and Set-up

Few citizens and patricians know how exact and detailed the Wyld Hunt's intelligence truly is. That's because very few realize the Office of Harmony is being fed close to real-time information from a Creation-spanning network of vigilant viziers—the same bronze Sidereals whose brazen actions orchestrated the collapse of the Solar supremacy. Even the few Terrestrials who are aware of the Bronze Faction's assistance usually do not comprehend the precision of the Sidereal's predictive powers. They've simply learned not to question the stranger reports of Anathema activity they receive. It's often easier and more cost-effective to send a group of shikari to a faraway land than it is to question the All-Seeing Eye's intelligence and risk creating a tyrant like the Bull of the North.

The viziers are capable of predicting where and when a Solar will be Chosen, and they can have shock teams already en route when the momentous event passes.

Only rarely is their intelligence wrong...

Backstory

In the aftermath of this story, Heaven will file away a report detailing one of the most severe Bronze Faction screw-ups since Fallen Lapis. (At least this time there won't be any war criminal charges levied against the poor bastard assigned to this prediction.)

You see, the Wyld Hunt's intelligence is not perfect.

Most Sidereals would never freely admit that their predictions may not be infallible. After all, what could possibly escape their notice? That was the sort of thinking which led to this incredible debacle by a young Bronze faction Sidereal. He didn't check the causalities he was altering within the non-linear, iterative layers of the Loom. He overlooked that the future in his forecast relied on the group of shikari his intelligence would send to the area.

This young vizier spotted a disruption in the Loom. This particular disrupted caused a wrinkle in the tapestry, causing it to roll in a manner distinctly similar to how fabric does not fold. This could only be an Exaltation, for no other fold has that look, and it's a trivial matter for a Sidereal to discern the Exalt as a Solar. Being the dutiful Bronze Sidereal that he was, the vizier swiftly informed the Wyld Hunt with the general time and location where they could find the Anathema.

Unfortunately for the shikari, the Sidereal missed two things. First, he made did not realize he was creating the conditions for the Exaltation, for such tautological threads are extremely rare within the Loom (and thus younger Sidereals sometimes overlook this possibility). Second, he miscalculated the probability of hidden Lunar interference. This means Wolf's Horn went unnoticed, and the shikari's briefing included no warnings of Lunar interference.

So, ready to face the Solar Anathema, the shikari are dispatched with training and tactics appropriate for a Golden Child. As elder Hunters can tell you, prepping and hunting the wrong type of Anathema is tantamount to disaster. One doesn't spar with the serpent as one wrestles with the Yeddim.

Unless you want to get bit or trampled.

Set-up

In Hunting a Monster assumes the circle is a band of Terrestrial Exalted involved in the Wyld Hunt, and that they are not starting characters. Their involvement in the Hunt may be something new, or it may be an integral part of a character's backstory. The level doesn't matter, as long as they are all shikari, if only for this task.

Members of the Immaculate Order are easy enough to push into the Wyld Hunt, if they're not already involved. Dynasts can be much trickier, depending on the Dynast. Members of House Tepet might be trying to establish a name for themselves, seeking to gather an army from the Threshold which sees them as a savior from the wicked Anathema. An army can help replace the shattered Tepet Legions, and



set a Dynast up to challenge the Bull of the North. Perhaps a young Dynast wants to get his family off his back for a little while—or just see the world! Lost Eggs who are not part of the Immaculate Order might be offered a chance to join one of the Great Houses after a successful hunt.

The story begins with the shikari on a ship, heading for their hunting grounds. The details of why they agreed could be important to their motivations for saving or slaying Sparrow (which is why the first act offers a few flashbacks – you’re encouraged to talk to players before the game if they wish to expand those flashbacks to include personal persuasion).

CHOSEN OF A CELESTIAL NATURE

This story is designed for Dragon Blooded, but that doesn’t mean you cannot use other Exalts. However, the use of Celestials requires alterations. Here are some ideas to help integrate other Chosen into the story:

Solars: Here are two possible ways to use Solar Exalted. First, you could completely invert the story. Perhaps a group of Solars heard from a Gold Faction contact about a new Chosen and are trying to get there before the Wyld Hunt does. For another, stranger style of play, perhaps one Solar, convinced of her own Anathema status, is working with the Dragon Blood to purge others of her kind.

Abyssals or Infernals: These Exalts might also make use of the Anathema Hunter Robin style. Perhaps a Deathlord commands his Abyssals to collect the newborn Solar and bring him back for torture and turning. Maybe the Infernals are seeking an ally or trying to bring a new, pliable mind to their Yozis.

Sidereals: A single Sidereal could be assigned to the shikari to ensure this particularly dangerous Solar is slain. If so, another Sidereal may be setting up the player character to take the fall for the inept reading that leads to this debacle. Alternatively, a group of Sidereals may have some characters who want to save the Solar and some who are trying to ensure he dies, creating inter-circle conflict.

Alchemicals: Perhaps the hardest to fit this story, really creative Storytellers could refit this story to have a group of Alchemicals stumble across the Wyld Hunt while the Hunt is going after the yet-to-be-Chosen.



The Cast

Useless Sparrow

Quotes: “What can I gech’ya, shikari?”

“Somethin’ smells rotten in town, Terrestrials.”

(After Exaltation.) “The hunt is all I’ve ever been good at. What do I do now?”

Motivation: Serve and Protect All He Loves. Notable Intimacies include: the unit he’s assigned to (Happy Obedience), Dathesk (Fond Memories).

Background: Born in Dathesk two and a quarter decades ago, the mortal called Useless Sparrow was a troublemaker in a land of staunch and dour townspeople who watch outsiders with suspicion—outsiders like him and his mother. He eventually grew out of this phase, but not before he ended up in some serious trouble with a few teenagers playing Gateway. So his mother sent him away to live with his cousins on the Blessed Isle. There, Sparrow earned the moniker Useless Sparrow by flunking out of what little education his family could afford for him (and it was *very* little – why bother spending it on the worthless cousin when your own sons will make good use of it?). This lead to partying and binge drinking, until Sparrow realized, while face down in his

own bile, that he was wasting his life. Soon after, he took the razor and entered the Immaculate Order.

Since then, Sparrow has worn the moniker of monk. He wasn't very good at that either, but he was brave, compassionate, and willing to try his damndest. This perfect combination of factors caused his superiors to assign him to the Wyld Hunt (as bait). The Mouth of Peace herself signed his first orders, certain that this screw-up would find peace in the embrace of the Immaculate Dragons. He'd die a hero and make up for all his past mistakes.

That's when Useless Sparrow discovered his knack: logistics. Like the parcel carriers of the old First Age, he was very good at ensuring everything was in place for his cadre. He could procure things from the (utterly inefficient) Deliberative. He could predict foul conditions for travel and be ready for them. He understood his role and played it well.

In short order, Sparrow gained a reputation as a hard-working logistician among the mortal support staff assigned to the Wyld Hunt. Now he's assigned to a group of shikari that could be his end, one way or the other.

Description: If he were a bird, Sparrow would be a heavy bird, too wide to fly. His movements are inelegant, yet they are precise and coordinated. He's not clumsy, just lazy. Sparrow's head is shaved, like most monks, but marked with only three little dots, two in a row and one below the top right dot. There were supposed to be six, but his thick skull broke the needle.

Sparrow's oxen-eyes are dull, causing people who don't know him to assume he's stupid or slow. Those who do know him don't underestimate his speed and fortitude. He may look average, but he's surprisingly competent.

Storyteller Hints: While it's not critical that the party warm to Sparrow, liking this character can help make determining his fate a more difficult decision. What's important is that the circle trusts or pities Useless Sparrow in some way, even if only as some flunky taking care of the menial details beneath them. This will help drive home an emotional impact for the players when they must confront their trusted servant – or, for players roleplaying a Conviction-based monster, allow them to demonstrate how heartless their character truly is.

The character sheet in this story presents Useless Sparrow as he would appear post-Exaltation, during Act 3's climax. Since Sparrow is only recently Exalted, his Charm capabilities are below that of normal starting Solars (he has not had time to master his initial Charm suite).

Notes: Sparrow wears Exceptional Lamellar Armor (+1 soak, +1 Mobility). The armor was a gift from one of his prior squads for a job well done handling a particularly bitchy Terrestrial. Since the gift came from her, many monks have wondered what exactly he did to handle her.

Combos:

Sparrow Strike Flight (cost: 1wp; 2m per Dipping Swallow Defense, +1m per die for First Excellency): Dipping Swallow Defense, First Melee Excellency: Burnished golden wings spread from the hilt of Sparrow's weapon as a brilliant flock of birds rises around him. The birds guide his weapon through the best possible motions. Their buffeting wings draw the master's steel to precise parries, regardless of his tendency toward overextended movements.

Wolf's Horn

Quotes: (Upon realizing the Hunt isn't after him) *"You didn't expect to find me, did you?"*

"You fools! Dathesk is mine! Her people are mine! Her gods are me and my children!"

(With seething hatred) *"I have survived wilderness and war. I have built implacable societies. You will not undo me, Terrestrial."*

Motivation: Build a Strong, Independent Society. Notable Intimacies include: Wyld Hunt (Irrational Hatred), Solar Bond (Regret), Dathesk (Fierce Protection).

Background: He has survived for nearly three centuries. Hunt after Hunt has failed to fell him. All those who have tried to stop his society have died. All those who try to stop his great experiment will meet the same fate. He is a master of deceit and lies, and a rebel against the Realm's central oppression. "Never trust a Dragon Blood, and never tell them the truth," he tells his students and experiments.

Wolf's Horn was born into squalor and poverty at the fringes of civilization.



He Exalted in his late twenties, after the Realm crushed his homeland and scattered the survivors to the winds. He fought in the last great battle of that campaign and escaped when he saw they could not win. In his escape, he caught an arrow with his ribs and bled for several hours, until he collapsed on the banks of a pristine lake. His blood diluted the water and painted Luna's reflection red.

The Lady saw that crimson hue on her reflected gown, and she smiled on the fallen rebel, for his kind belong to her. He refused to die and she granted him mercy as only the Silver Lady could. She promised him war and strife in exchange for his life, and his refusal to surrender was all the approval she needed. Who else deserved one of the Exaltations that would, inevitably, find him?

Wolf's Horn fixed his tattoos with the help of a No Moon whom the Wyld Hunt slew shortly thereafter. Horn learned to fight the Hunt and grew to hate them and everything for which they stood. This hate was not merely because they were out to slay him. No, Horn's rage grew much deeper.

For nearly a century, he was a failure to the Silver Pact. Every attempt he made to engineer a society in accordance with the Thousand Streams met with utter collapse at the hands of the Wyld Hunt. Every time he escaped, but every time he had to start over. He raged until the Pact thought he'd gone insane.

Then one day, his madness left him. Horn realized he'd been going about this the wrong way. He shouldn't be creating a society to stand up to his hated foes. He should create one that knew the foe's lies and could lie right back to them. Create a society that would see the benefits of a quiet revolution, biding its time until the Realm was weak enough to cast off her yoke. They started paying nominal tributes with inferior goods and counterfeit talents that wouldn't be noticed until it was too late to follow which tributary generated them.

The mad dog learned to play nice, all the while building an army of beastmen and waiting for the perfect weapon to use against the shikari and the Realm.

Description: A tall and imposing individual, Horn's stance always seems to lead one's eyes from him to the moon, then back to him. He's generically attractive, symmetrically so, appealing to animal instincts that this one could produce good progeny. Mortals want to run with his pack. They want to help him. By the time they figure out he's crazy, they're already sitting with him around a fire pit, roasting their

pet and wearing a grass skirt on their head while sipping things they hope are only alcoholic.

Horn dresses in finely-tailored clothes that are light, breath well, and allow him to shed them quickly. He hates to ruin them when shifting form, but if he's threatened or in a hurry he will. If he knows an enemy is coming, he'll be garbed in moonsilver armor that clings to his form so closely that one might believe he's naked. People often mistake his eyes for a strange hazel color, while those who are very observant notice they are the yellow eyes of a lupine.

Storyteller Hints: Wolf's Horn has many more Charms than his character sheet lists. We've limited them to the Charms most relevant to this story, which is most likely combat. Should the need arise, you can assume Horn is comparably proficient in social combat and knows many Mental Charms as well. He knows neither sorcery, nor necromancy.

Notes: Horn's Beastman form has the following mutations: Enhanced Sense (Smell), Fangs, Gazelle's Pace, Talons, Tail, Thick Skin. His suite of powers from Gift Charms gives him his claws, and causes him to regenerate 1 lethal every action. This costs him a total of 11m to activate, including the shapeshifting cost. His combat traits (claws and soak) assume he is using this suite.

When using Relentless Lunar Fury, Horn tends to activate a suite of Fury Charms giving him the following effects: his claws become piercing, reduce the Defense Value penalty of all *attack* actions by one for the duration, and eliminate another 2 points of penalties to Dodge or Parry Defense Values. Lastly, Horn recovers 1m for every extra success on the attack roll when he strikes a target, up to 3m (Stamina). This costs him a total of (9m, 1wp) to activate and lasts eight actions.

Horn has several Combos. Two of his favorites are listed below.

Combos:

Beyond the Wyld Roar (cost: 10m, 1wp, +1m per die of accuracy or parry DV, +2m per automatic level of damage, +4m per perfect, +1wp to bypass armor): First Dexterity Excellency, Flowing Body Evasion, Ferocious Biting Tooth, Impressions of Strength, Burrowing Devil Strike, Unstoppable Lunar Wound. *Arching his back and issuing a terrific roar, blue-white essence bursts from every strand of fur on Horn's lupine body. He lunges at an opponent with impossible force, trailing afterimages of argentous forms that rain every possible attack upon an enemy in a single shimmering blow. Every moonlit move is carried with grace beyond perfection, just as every twist of his body carries him past his foe's futile blows.*

The Wolf Brooks No Foe (cost: 5m, 1wp, +2m per success, +3m for Butterfly Eyes Defense): Butterfly Eyes Defense, Butterfly Eyes Fist, Second Manipulation Excellency. *With a flash of silvery light and a roar of utter certainty, a transparent sphere of white-blue light surrounds Wolf's Horn, warding him from all his foe's attacks. Then, with the authority due a Steward of Creation in his voice, he speaks a dreadful word that bewilders his foe, causing her to stumble as he wishes.*

NO SILVER, NO PROBLEM!

For Storytellers who lack the **MOEP: Lunars** book, don't worry! The notes on Horn's character sheet explain the basic powers of his beastman form, as well as his fury-related abilities. This should be enough to carry you pretty far in his combat with the shikari. Other relevant powers include a Charm similar to Infinite (Ability) Mastery but for Dexterity, and several social Charms to exert unnatural mental influence.

Beyond the Wyld Roar allows him to make a perfect dodge or parry as well as apply automatic damage to all his damage rolls, similar to Fire and Stone Strike, as well as use his Dexterity Excellency.

The Wolf Brooks No Foe allows him to create an illusion that he has used a relevant perfect defense, and (if necessary) an ability to take him out of harm's way. While this has no true effect on his defense, it can make an enemy abort attacks from an extra action Charm or refuse to activate late-step Charms. It also allows him, as a Simple Charm, to make an attack against his opponent's Mental DVs to dictate her next action.

Mayor Carriker Thurfas

Quotes: (After a request he does not intend to fulfill) "...is that what you want, Lord Terrestrials?"

"I still say your intelligence is wrong, shikari. No Anathema has set foot here in centuries."

"My friends, we must work as hard as we can to appease these great warriors!"

Motivation: Grow and Administer Dathesk. Relevant Intimacies include: Wolf's Horn (Fear and Loyalty), the Realm (Distrust), the Wyld Hunt (Fear of Being Exposed).

Background: Mayor Thurfas was born and bred to his position. Wolf's Horn oversaw everything from his conception to his birth, education, and installation as mayor of Dathesk. Installed at the tender age of fifteen, Mayor Thurfas has led the people of Dathesk out of a terrible drought and into an unparalleled time of economic prosperity that's lasted for almost twenty five years. Though not a great warrior himself, he commands the respect of the entire town and projects an aura of competency and assurance.

That aura is not wholly undeserved, for the mayor is competent, though slow to act. He governs through a flexible policy of non-interference with the day-to-day lives of his citizens. In this case, "flexible" means that he still takes an appropriate tax, levies the town

militia, and sometimes has to implement temporary farming or hunting regulation to solve potential supply issues. Such regulations have strict time limits, and only Wolf's Horn can supersede Mayor Thurfas or force a new, permanent law. Eventually, when the people are strong enough, even Horn won't have to take such measures.

Carriker Thurfas is also responsible for all negotiations and relations with the Realm.

Description: Mayor Thurfas is a heavy-set man. People often say he resembles a bear in hibernation, probably because of his full head of brown hair and well-trimmed beard. Though nondescript and lacking true presence, within Dathesk he commands the attention of every room.

Carriker wears a large pendant which resembles a wolf's face. He claims it's a symbol of the god of Dathesk's people, but not the City God.

Storyteller Hints: Mayor Thurfas is not intended to be a combatant (a heroic mortal could probably slay him without much trouble). Instead, he's intended to be a social and mental foil, one who opposes the characters by pretending to help them and never quite accomplishing it. Pay attention to exact requests the shikari make and be sure to fulfill them as literally and as slowly as possible.

Mayor Thurfas has almost no combat abilities. He is cunning and sly and knows when to look incompetent. His downfall, however, may be his reputation as an effective leader. He can't get around that.



Cathak Setod

Quotes: *“Remember the Actions, shikari! You must not simply attack an Anathema. You must seek to destroy their capability, dislocate their dispositions, disintegrate their command structures, and isolate them. Only then will you have absolute victory.”*

“The Deliberative? Weak, pathetic old men playing at running a pretend empire. More interesting in filling their own pockets than serving the people and the glory of the Realm.”

“Even so, she is our Realm and she must be protected. Even if she does deserve to fall...”

Motivation: Defend the Realm, No Matter What. Notable Intimacies include: the Deliberative (Contempt), the Scarlet Throne (Disgust), Dynastic Houses (Distrust), Anathema (Twisted Camaraderie), Mnemon Kehav (Honor Her).

Background: Setod has been a crusader of the Realm for over two hundred years. He's fought, struggled, and nearly died for his beloved Isle many times. For over four decades he's fought the Lunar Anathema threat in the East, laying low beastman horde and Thousand Streams Experiment alike. He is a thorn in the Silver Pact's side and an inspiration to young shikari.

At least, that's the image. The truth is far more complicated. Setod is a man who surrendered his idealism a long time ago. He's seen too much evil done in the name of an empire he once believed in. He's taken part in too many murders and too much culling to ever consider himself clean. His life, all too quickly approaching its end, is one which forces him to swallow regret, eat his duty, and march through the Pole of Fire to finish his meal.

Only recently did Setod take on the assignment of teacher and mentor to young shikari. He is a hosted ostiary of the Hunt, a great general who could command the entirety of the Hunt's resources. But, as with everything else he has ever done, Setod will teach all he knows and ensure his students do not grow up blind, like he did.



In the darkest portions of his soul, Setod sometimes wishes the Anathema really would bring down the Realm. Yet, despite this, he is loyal and would never betray his Isle. He will stand beside the Realm forever. He is duty incarnate.

Description: As befits an Earth Aspect of his breeding, Setod is a powerfully-built man. If one saw him next to a pile of peaty earth, one might wonder where the histosol begins, where the Dynast ends, and if his soul were somewhere between the two. He's simply-dressed, unassuming, and people who midjudge his intellect from his appearance may pay dearly for their oversight.

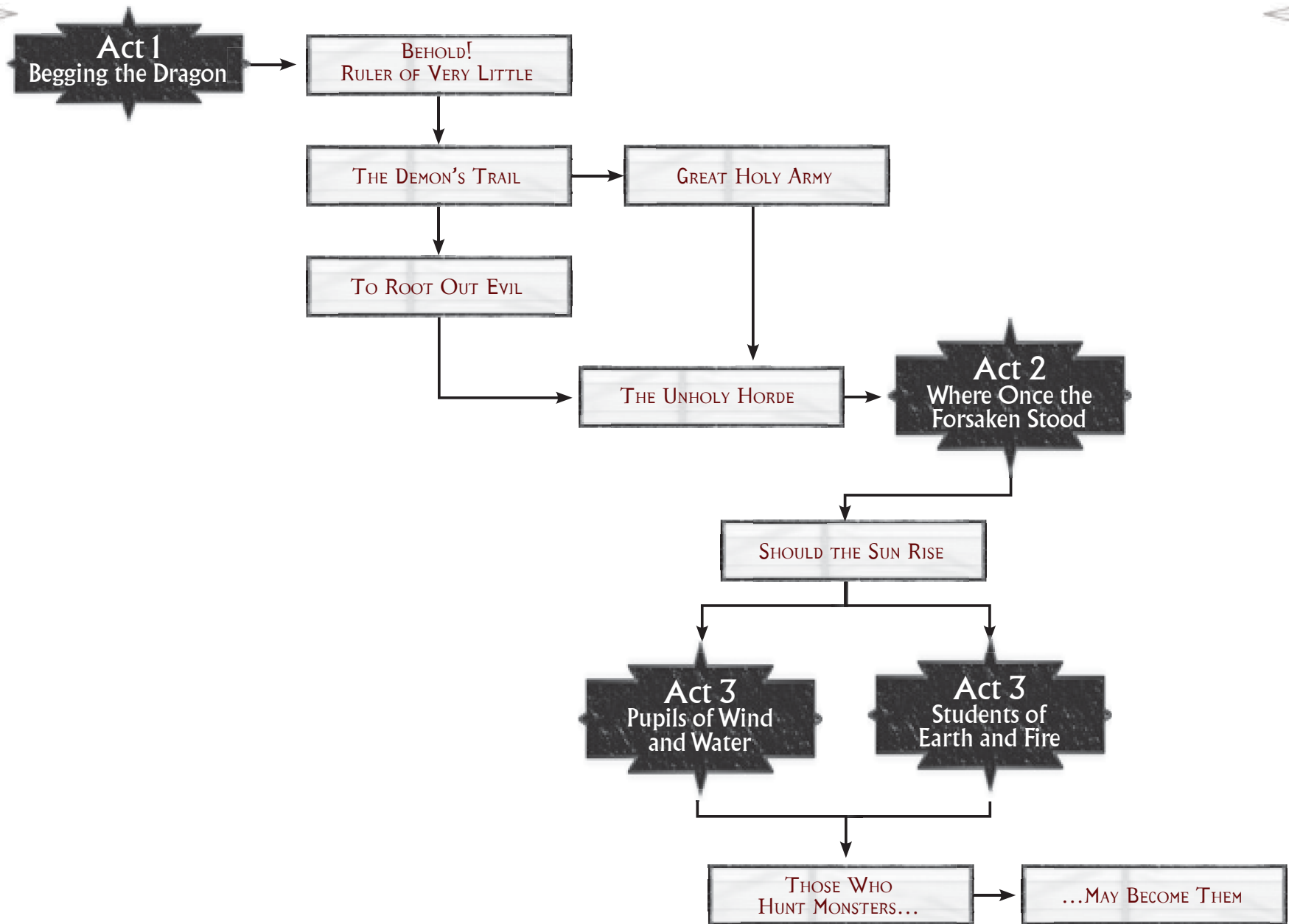
He towers like a mountain, rising from the dirt beneath his soles to the highest heavens. His earthen skin shows little sign of his age, but that will soon change. A few lines around his eyes and lips indicate he will soon begin the rapid aging that occurs close to the end of an Exalt's life.

Storyteller Hints: Setod's role is that of the wizened mentor. He appears only briefly in this story, but his influence and scenes are crucial. His purpose is to get the shikari to question why they're defending the Realm. Even though he would never consider betraying it or helping an Anathema, his commentary on the Realm may be potent enough to convince young idealists that the Realm is wrong. (Should that happen, he will add an Intimacy of regret towards his “fallen” student.)

Cathak Setod has many other Charms than those listed, and his artifacts (his goremaul and superheavy plate) have several minor abilities. However, as Setod plays a supporting role for only a few scenes in this story, we will not include those abilities here. Only his relevant Martial Arts style (Jade Mountain Style) has been included. This is an earth-aspected Terrestrial style, found in **Scroll of the Monk**, p. 53. (If you do not have **Scroll of the Monk**, replace Setod's Charms with Earth Dragon Style, up to the Form Charm, and Five Dragon Style up to the Form Charm, but allow him to use it with the Grand Goremaul. This will provide a rough approximation that will get you through scenes he's featured in.)



Scenes Flowchart



Begging the Dragon

MENTAL -

PHYSICAL ...

SOCIAL ...

Overview

The story begins aboard a ship that's approaching the Threshold coast. Useless Sparrow speaks with the shikari about their mission, making sure he has the details right. If the characters are jumping into this *in media res*, then this scene brings them up to speed on the mission and gets them into the mood. If you set up the basics of the mission in a prior session, then this is a way to refresh everyone with what's going on and expand on building series themes.

This scene also contains a flashback to a training session with Cathak Setod. Use this flashback to elaborate on the state of the Realm through Setod's opinions and experiences. At the same time, Setod's brutal training will help get everyone's blood pumping, giving them a combat high to get exhilarated for the coming story. Since most of the first act revolves around investigation, this training allows combat-oriented characters to flex their muscles early and rest assured that they have a place in the story. You may also use this scene to have the shikari practice Exalt-on-Exalt combat. Remind them that fighting other Exalts is a different experience than fighting spirits, demons, or ghosts. For seasoned players, this is a chance to show what a band of young Exalts can do to one of their respected elders. Dealing with Setod properly should not just be an exercise in physical combat, but a match of wits as well.

Description

The shores of the Threshold spread from horizon to horizon, the ship sailing closer with every passing moment. The ship rides on smooth waves towards her destination, as if the spirits of the ocean know they are transporting the holy princes of Creation to their task.

Useless Sparrow rests at the bow, a ledger in one hand and pen in the other. "Let's see..." He pauses for an inordinate amount of time, before continuing in his usual drawl. "Once we arrive in Dathesk, we'll set up shop, err, I'll set up shop in the mayor's estate. Then we start hunting ourselves a Forsaken. Since it's been a few weeks, if he hasn't established himself a strong base and following, we can take the direct approach and apply your power directly against him. If he has a base of operations, then we'll need to take the indirect route, avoiding his strength until his support structure crumbles."

(Flashback)

Great marble pillars, numbering sixteen in all, surround the atrium's earthen floor, forming a great circle. Straw mats ring the pillars, providing a spot to rest, away from the dirt. Soft strings of essence roll over the mats, seeping throughout the soft woven rushes to light the chamber with an almost ethereal glow. Here waits Cathak Setod.

"Come, shikari!" the Great Mountain growls, his voice sounding like two boulders being ground together. "Show me what you've learned." His grip on his goremaul tightens almost imperceptibly. His feet slide through the dirt, widening his stance and readying him against any foe. "I am Forsaken, now show me the power of the Realm."

(For use during flashback, as appropriate.)

"Keep the enemy off balance – both physically and emotionally!" (If the shikari lose.) "If you cannot defeat me, how will you ever take a Forsaken?"

(If the shikari win.) "With skill like that, you may survive a true hunt." Setod sighs a heavy sigh, like when the mountain finally gives enough to let a cave collapse. "Once, there was a time when the Realm was great and the Scarlet Empress ruled for the people. Once, the Deliberative created laws for the Realm, and not for themselves. Then the Thousand Scales started appointing replacements to the Deliberative. The Upper Chamber sat in continual turmoil over allegations of Lost Eggs making it into the halls of power.

"And that's what it became about: the halls of power. The Realm began to rot on that day."

Storyteller Goals

Use this scene to set the stage for the hunt. Sparrow communicates the character's main goals to them, which are: go to Dathesk, find a Forsaken Anathema either there or in the vicinity, slay it, and return to the Realm.

Use the flashback for two things. First, get everyone's blood pumping through combat. Second, set the tone of the hunt by building a memorable combat. When the shikari confront Wolf's Horn in his Manse (during the scene "Those Who Hunt Monsters"), they will be



reminded of their battle with Cathak Setod. This flashback, combined with the battle in “Those Who Hunt Monsters,” provides a nice bookend for the story, emphasizing the Terrestrial motifs of teamwork against a powerful foe.

Character Goals

Shikari will want to learn what mission they’re about to undertake. During the flashback, their goal is to defeat Setod, showing him what they have learned from his time teaching them how to fight Anathema.

Actions

Hunting Practice

Cathak Setod is a skilled warrior and very competent in Exalted combat. He knows what it means to battle an Anathema and, while he cannot replicate their power, he will not hold back until his students are on death’s door. If he takes a character to Incapacitated, he will back off. If the character is in real danger of death once damage has been resolved, Setod will call for a break to tend to the wounded warrior.

If Setod goes first, he’ll start off by activating his Form Charm. If someone beats him in the Join Battle roll and does likewise, Setod will go on the offensive immediately (trying to remind them they must defend, even while powering up).

While he is armed with a Goremaul, he knows his students very well. If one of them has low Stamina, he targets that student with Falling Rockslide Onslaught (unless another student presents a more tempting target to smack with his hammer).

Consequences

If the players best Setod in physical combat, then he is willing to help them in some minor way. Take into consideration the circle’s backgrounds before Setod lends them Resources 2, Followers 2, or a minor artifact such as Hearthstone Bracers. If he defeats them, players do not suffer any penalty.

Move to “Behold! Ruler of Very Little.”



Behold! Ruler of Very Little

MENTAL •

PHYSICAL -

SOCIAL ••

Overview

In this scene, the hunters arrive in Dathesk and meet with the mayor, Carriker Thurfas. Mayor Thurfas then gives them the grand tour of their rather meager city, shows them the boring nightlife, and tries to be the best ambassador of goodwill he can be (which isn't saying much). Meanwhile, the shikari can start deploying a forward base for the Hunt and ask questions about the Anathema – a creature which no one seems to know anything about.

Then, in another flashback, the characters can speak with Setod and Sparrow about the state of the Realm, and gain a deeper understanding of how far the Realm has stumbled via a briefing from the Office of Harmony. Characters may even be shocked to learn Setod feels pity for the Anathema. Lastly, you may be able to endear Sparrow to the players by having him help secure resources for the Hunt (Sparrow knows several tricks for cutting through the Realm's inefficiencies).

You could also skip the formal briefing with the Office of Harmony, and instead focus on Setod's actions before and after the briefing (moving the briefing off-camera). This may allow you to focus more on Setod's disdain for the Realm's bureaucracy. You could also have a low level functionary provide a briefing full of mistakes and wrong intelligence to help cement how inept the Office has become.

This scene allows our heroes to establish a relationship with Mayor Thurfas, understand the current state of the Realm, and continue to grow a relationship with Useless Sparrow.

Description

Your righteous Hunt arrives in Dathesk. The sleepy town's thatched huts, rustic roads, and well-tended fields are a testament to the people's work ethic and quiet contributions to the Realm's coffers. The city appears to be a peaceful place, one whose inhabitants look upon the visiting princes of Creation with a mix of trepidation and awe.

Useless Sparrow snorts once, spits, and says, "It's been so long since I was here last. Hard to believe there's some demon-spawned Forsaken making this place a living hell, ain't it?"

"That's because there isn't, Sparrow," answers a portly fellow garbed in what meager accoutrements pass as ceremonial garb in the Threshold, a large pendant displaying a wolf's head resting on his chest. He approaches you quickly, but keeps his eyes at a respectful level. "Shikari of the Wyld Hunt, welcome to Dathesk. I am Carriker Thurfas, Mayor of Dathesk. If you require anything, please let me know."

(If the characters question Mayor Thurfas about the Anathema.)

"Great Ones, the Immaculate Order sent word you would be coming to liberate us from an Anathema, that we were not to lose hope. But there is no Anathema enslaving us."

(If the characters question Sparrow about the mayor's pendant.)

"That? Huh... I think it was a symbol of the old god of Dathesk. A wolf spirit. Wolf's Horn, that was his name. Purty sure he's been dead for a long time though. They still worship him, but only cuz they ain't fully gone Immaculate. Lots have, but some can't let things go."

(When you trigger the flashback to Setod.)

The Office of Harmony is a rather odd-looking place. Her statues, depicting the pre-enlightened forms of the Immaculate Dragons, stand in sharp contrast to the world around her. The serene beauty of the Blessed Isle is abruptly disrupted by this shrine to enlightenment. The shrine's paint has begun to peel, but the monks pace the courtyard with the same vigilance they have since the Realm's founding.

"See that?" Setod begins with a grumble as he walks through the Office halls with you all. "The paint's not the only thing suffering. The weeds are growing. The plaster on the walls is cracking. And it's all in time with the Realm's coffers emptying. The great irony is that, as nature overgrows the shrine, as the Realm forgets all about us, the shrine looks more harmonized with the Isle's Essence than ever."

Then Sparrow clears his throat. "H'okay, shikari. You're here for your official briefing – but it's already stuff you know, so let's just hurry on through it and see if we can't get them to give us a bit more budget for this."

Storyteller Goals

Establish Mayor Thurfas and the town of Dathesk. Set the shikari at ease with the town, while provoking a slight sense that something's amiss with the mission. Use the flashback to remind the shikari of the Realm's corruption and troubles: empty treasuries, corrupt bureaucrats in the Thousand Scales, self-serving senators, Dynasts who take their pleasures out on the mortals who sustain their extravagance—has the Realm become like the Anathemic Tyranny of old? Does it deserve to fall? Juxtapose the seemingly incompetent (but beloved) Mayor Dathesk with the incompetent (and annoying) Realm bureaucrats.

Make Sparrow a useful commodity without stealing the action from the players (see the Bureaucracy actions, below).

Character Goals

Establish a base in Dathesk. Some players may also wish to start their investigation by questioning the Mayor or some of the locals (a well placed flashback may interrupt such questions before they get too far, then set up the investigation in "The Demon's Trail").

During the flashback, the characters will want to acquire as many other resources and artifacts as they can for the Hunt.

Actions

Deploying Forward Base

Dice Pool: (Intelligence + War), Difficulty 3 or (Intelligence + Bureaucracy), Difficulty 4.

Action: Dramatic.

The shikari seek to quarter in a municipal building, setting up their maps of the area and a center to collect and analyze intelligence. Setod would relate this to the defeat mechanism of *isolate*. By securing their own position, they remove Dathesk as a potential source of the Anathema's strength.

Hindrances: Mayor Thurfas, while pretending to help, seems to be fairly incompetent and constantly contradicts orders. (-1 External penalty.) While this would normally make the action contested, the mayor cannot directly oppose the shikari without giving himself away.

Help: If the characters secured help in the "Begging the Dragon" (unless they gained the artifact), they gain 1 bonus success from the extra Resources, Followers, or similar.

Bureaucracy Charms: Confluence of Savant's Thought (use Bureaucracy instead of War at Difficulty 3 instead of 4), Geese-Flying-South Administration.

Roll Results

Botch: Not only do the shikari fail to set up an effective base of operations, some other accident befalls the shikari (such as a fire, or a henchmen getting into a brawl with the locals). You should choose from one of these effects or something similar: the shikari's unit suffers a -1 to its Drill during its first Mass Combat engagement, they lose access to their Resources (to pay for damages), or they gain a -1 external penalty to all Investigation and Lore checks until the end of the Act since they lack their central communications hub.

Failure: The shikari fail to set up an orderly, clean, and proper headquarters. This lack of coordination has no detrimental effect – it only means the hunters have failed to garner the bonuses listed below. They may even have a base set up, just not a useful one.

Success: The shikari now have a working headquarters, allowing them to set up a solid line of communication through their functionary or henchmen (if they do not have Followers or Henchmen, then Sparrow has recruited some of his friends from the city). Because of this network, the shikari receive one bonus success to all Investigation and Lore rolls until the end of the Act.

Most Righteous Requisitioning Method

Dice Pool: (Charisma or Manipulation) + Bureaucracy, Difficulty 3.

Action: Dramatic. Almost everyone hates dealing with a government agency, and the agencies of the Realm are only slightly worse than those elsewhere (since the Empress designed many of them to keep her in power). Chronic ineptitude and grumpy old monks man the requisitioning process for the Hunt. This action lets the characters work through the organization, acquiring fiscal and human resources for the Hunt.

Hindrances: Characters with Appearance 1 suffer a -2 internal penalty for being too ugly.

Help: Geese Flying South Administration. Asking Sparrow to help adds 2 bonus successes (he knows who to talk to and how to work the system, getting the right forms and loopholes, and taking from the right pots of money not to get noticed).



Roll Results

Botch: Someone in the Office takes a dislike to the shikari, cutting their funding or sending them inferior troops as backup. Apply one of the following effects, or something similar: troops sent with the shikari suffer -1 Drill; the shikari lose access to all Resources background (misappropriation in the lower house) for the duration of this story; the Office of Harmony rescinds use of one or two artifacts procured through Arsenal.

Failure: The civil servants at the Office of Harmony fail to act in a timely manner. Nothing happens to any Resources or Arsenal dots the characters currently possess, but the characters cannot access the benefits of Backgrounds whose benefits are specific to connections within the Realm from so far away. This means such

Backgrounds cannot be brought to bear quickly enough to affect the outcome of the story.

Success: The shikari secure fiscal and human resources for this hunt. The hunters can access the full benefits of all their Backgrounds pertaining specifically to their Realm contacts.

Consequences

Upon completion of this scene, the characters will have had an opportunity to set up a forward base in Dathesk, secure extra resources for the Hunt, and will be ready to begin their initial investigation in “The Demon’s Trail.”



The Demon's Trail

MENTAL •••

PHYSICAL -

SOCIAL •

Overview

Having secured their position in Dathesk, the shikari are ready to start seeking this hidden Anathema and destroy it. The first thing they need to do is ensure that the city is free of Anathema influence. The doctrinal texts of the Hunt teach shikari to be certain of their own home, lest the enemy *dislocate* them, setting them off balance.

Successful investigators will determine that the Mayor was wrong – there are signs of demon infestation. Mayor Thurfas will claim ignorance, and this claim is backed by powerful Lunar compulsions that cause him to believe he's telling the truth (any Charm used to perfectly pierce this deception should use the Charm roll off guidelines on **Exalted**, p. 179). Perhaps more disturbing than the mayor being incorrect, however, are the signs themselves: many young women's dwellings have been forcibly entered, though the women seem to bear no memory of the incident.

What's really going on? Prior to the shikari's arrival, Wolf's Horn had been dallying around with the women he felt were the best possible candidates for his breeding programs. He does this from time to time, taking their children away and letting the administrators blame it on capricious forest spirits. A faux hunt is called against one of his failed beastmen, and the village is satisfied.

Description

(Upon a successful investigation roll.)

After several hours of searching Dathesk high and low for signs of Anathema influence, you unearth something rather curious: a house on the outskirts where one of the cattle in the field has been brutally slain. The blood trails back to the house, a crude abode of clay and mud brick. The door latch is broken, and the woman inside is confused. She doesn't seem to remember how it happened. She has lived there alone since her husband died in a barbarian raid several years ago, but she has this foggy memory that she was with someone recently.

(If the shikari are unsuccessful.)

After hours of searching Dathesk, the city appears perfectly clean of Anathema influence. The people here are a strong and steady sort. They know portions of the Immaculate texts and offer various rumors and hearsay about strange goings-on in the quiet city, but nothing substantial. Just common peasant rumors, beneath the notice of a prince of the earth.

Sparrow gives a loud yawn in the late afternoon and says, "Same ol' sleepy town I remember. Kinda funny though, I don't really remember the people being this faithful. Guess they grew on our ways after I left." His last words have a hollow ring to them, as if Sparrow doesn't believe his birthplace has suddenly become more devout.

"I wonder how the cannibals of Hratrak took this sudden devotion..."

(After either.)

"I've heard of some Anathema being able to rewrite memories, bosses," Sparrow offers as he chews on a blade of grass. "Maybe we should raise an army and go after him? Course, if he can rewrite memory, then maybe a surgical strike would be better?"

Storyteller Goals

Get the characters on the Anathema's trail. Give the first hints that this mission may not be as straightforward as they were lead to believe. Build a sense that this Forsaken is quite unusual for one of his kind – he has guile and tact.

Character Goals

Uncover any signs of Anathema infiltration in Dathesk and deal with it appropriately, as well as use it to pick up their target's trail.

Actions

Signs of the Demon

Dice Pool: Perception + Investigation, Difficulty 5.

Action: Dramatic (2 hours).

Hindrances: -2 external penalty if the shikari do not have a forward base (see "Behold! Ruler of Very Little").

Help: If the characters have Henchmen or Followers, they gain 1 bonus die per source of help (Backgrounds acquired during this story and Backgrounds otherwise purchased stack).

Roll Results

Botch: Not only do the characters fail to uncover any trace of an Anathema, they unearth “evidence” that suggests they must be in the wrong city. Sparrow insists they are not, and suggests sending a messenger back to the Realm while they wait to hear word from the Office.

Failure: The characters fail to uncover the house that Wolf's Horn left in haste. (This is a good point for Sparrow to speak, as per “Description” above.)

Success: The shikari uncover the Anathema's most recent victim. At two threshold successes, characters notice claw marks – perhaps Tiger Claws – on the bashed lock. At three, they also notice a patch of mangy hair in the house. At four, they realize this is not hair but fur; the target may be a wyld mutant. At five and above, they find other women who have had similar experiences to the victim.

Interviewing the Victim

The woman that Horn recently impregnated is willing to help with minimal convincing (her Mental DV is 2). If a character uses a Charm to discern the woman is pregnant and informs her, she is automatically willing to help. If convinced, she will give the characters a token she found in her house one morning. Sparrow can identify it as a talisman of the Hratrak barbarians, northeast of Dathesk. The Anathema may have control over the barbarians.

If the shikari press Mayor Thurfas, he claims not to know what's going on. He will try to make amends for his mistake and, at first convenient opportunity, slip away to inform Wolf's Horn. He's not an idiot, however, and will wait until the shikari are sleeping or out of the city.

I FOLLOW HIM!

It is possible a particularly savvy or lucky character may notice Mayor Thurfas is being dodgy and follow him when he tries to slip away. In this case, Wolf's Horn will not approach the mayor unless the characters are hidden (see Sneaking/Hiding in **Exalted**, p. 131) and Horn does not notice them.

If the players successfully sneak up on Carriker and Horn, then you may want to skip ahead to “Should the Sun Rise.”

Consequences

By this scene's conclusion, the shikari will have a trail they can follow to the Hratrak barbarian tribe. They should also have a sense that this Forsaken is more cunning than they might have suspected. Guile is not something the Forsaken are known for, so he may be uniquely powerful.

Sparrow suggests they could attempt to raise a local militia. If the shikari decide to take this course of action, move to “Great Holy Army.” If they decide to pursue the trail they have, then move to “To Root Out Evil.”

Great Holy Army

MENTAL -

PHYSICAL -

SOCIAL ••

Overview

Knowing now that their target may have a small barbarian horde under his command (even if he does not control them, the Hratrak are still a horde), the shikari have decided to raise a militia and strike out at the Hratrak. So, in the streets of Dathesk, they call upon the men of Dathesk to raise their arms and join this band of Wyld Hunters. If they succeed, they will have a small, but devout, fang of warriors.

If they fail, they can always intimidate the hell out of the townsfolk and press them into service.

Description

A light wind picks up the fine dust and debris on the roads running through Dathesk as Useless Sparrow grabs a horn, takes a breath, and sounds a loud blast. As the sound passes through the streets, the people gather and look upon their shikari warriors with a sense of awe. What could the princes of the earth need of them?

"All yers, shikaris," Sparrow mumbles.

Storyteller Goals

This is a time for our Terrestrials to shine as lords among men. This is a time for them to stand up, deliver a proclamation, and draw a righteous army unto themselves for the glory of the realm! Have the extras interact with the shikari, prompting the Dragon-Bloods to inspire the citizens through their Exalted oratory.

Character Goals

Gather a militia to assist in waging war against the Anathema.

Actions

Mass Social Combat

This scene is a Social Combat against a Unit (see **Exalted**, p. 175). The People of Dathesk are the unit, with Mayor Thurfas as their

leader (giving them a 4 Mental Dodge DV and a 3 Mental Parry DV). Remember that the characters may also form a unit to give themselves a Magnitude rating (probably around 2).

Magnitude: 3

Policy: Protect the Interests of Dathesk; **Loyalty:** 6

Success provides them the army in the sidebar.

GREAT HOLY MILITIA			
Magnitude: 2			
Drill: 1			
Close Combat Attack: 1		Close Combat Damage: 2	
Ranged Attack: 1		Ranged Damage: 1	
Endurance: 3	Might: 0	Armor: 1	Valor: 2
If the shikari press the Datheskans into service, reduce their Drill and Valor by 1.			

If any characters are curious how they'll provision these soldiers, Useless Sparrow volunteers to take care of it (hand waving the problem by letting an NPC handle it).

Consequences

With their new army backing them, our Terrestrials heroes set out for the barbarian horde of the Hratrak. This trip will take several days, but those days pass without incident. Move on to the "Unholy Horde."



To Root Out Evil

MENTAL ••

PHYSICAL -

SOCIAL -

Overview

The mighty shikari have decided to execute a surgical strike, locating the Hratrak on their own and seeking their Anathema prey among them. A brave decision for which the villagers will sing their praises, as it does not risk the villagers' necks. The villagers bid the shikari a fond farewell and promise to sing the Immaculate chants for their safekeeping.

The trip takes three days. During the last day, the hunters are able to gather clues about their opponent's nature as an inhuman entity, perhaps a beastman. Then the weather takes a sour turn and our shikari must deal with a particularly nasty storm.

Description

The air is pregnant with anticipation and the promise of rain. The demon's trail winds through the wilderness, following game trails, gyrating wildly at times, but rather simple to follow. The only thing that remains steady about this Forsaken's path is that it trends away from Dathesk.

(When it begins to rain.)

The threatening skies finally decide to exact their vengeance. Water falls from the heavens in such torrents it cannot rightly be called rain. This is more like an angry weather god hurling it from the heavens with all his might. Raging winds buffet the flora, picking up debris from the trail and pelting you with it.

Storyteller Goals

This scene is about investigation and mounting evidence of a Lunar Exalt. Use this scene to drop hints and cultivate suspicion among the shikari that this is not a Forsaken. Be careful not to give the whole thing away, but if the players guess at what they're facing, let them savor their cunning.

Character Goals

Find the Hratrak Barbarians while seeking clues of their Anathema foe.

Actions

Hints on the Trail

Dice Pool: Perception + Awareness, Difficulty 3, or Perception + Survival, Difficulty 4.

Action: Extended (every roll represents 1 hour).

Hindrances: The storm breaks out on the third roll (-2 external penalty).

Help: *Survival Charms:* Hostile Environment Preparation Method, Extension of the Water Dragon's Blessing.

Roll Results

Botch: If the botch occurs after the storm breaks out, the storm starts to get to the shikari. Without Charms to protect them, they start taking environmental damage (5B/hour, Trauma 2) from the high winds, torrential rain and blowing debris. Otherwise, the storm starts immediately.

Failure: The shikari fail to uncover any useful information during that hour of their trek.

Success: The characters have seven hours to make checks. Successes above the threshold count towards the running total. For every five net successes, up to a maximum of 20 successes, they uncover a piece of information from the following: a wood fetish portraying a man with whorls on his skin; a set of tracks whose profile indicates stamped metal footwear (beyond the ability of most wyld barbarians) and animal talons; a broken golden necklace; and a barbarian wolf-tooth talisman. (A Perception + Craft [Fire] roll can identify the golden necklace as orichalcum that was mixed with another trace magical material, perhaps a wedding necklace—garnering five or more successes identifies the other material as moonsilver)

Consequences

The characters have now had a chance to uncover vital clues about their opponent. If all went well, then they should have a good idea that their opponent is somehow inhuman. He may be a wyld barbarian himself. Savvy hunters may suspect a Lunar.

Move to the "Unholy Horde."

The Unholy Horde

MENTAL ••

PHYSICAL •••

SOCIAL -

Overview

In this scene, the holy warriors arrive at the Hratrak Barbarian's camp. If the shikari come with an army or make themselves known, then the barbarians are quick to respond, mobilizing immediately for war. If they sneak in, they can avoid bloodshed. Either way, this scene presents an opportunity for the hunters to destroy the Anathema's ally and weaken his power base, even if the Forsaken himself is not present.

At the end of the scene, the characters will find a leather map detailing the way to an old shrine from long ago – a site sacred to this Anathema.

Description

(If the shikari came with an army.)

The sound of a ram's horn bursts through the air, ending the monotonous sound of your soldiers' marching. Brave souls that they are, the Datheskian warriors grip their spears in terror, looking every direction save the one from which the sound came. Only after Sparrow snaps a few with reeds to get their attention do they fall in line, awaiting your orders.

A roar follows the horn as a ravening horde of beastmen emerges from the tree line. They are twisted amalgamations of man and wolf. The loping horde carries axes of various quality – some stone, others steel, and everything in between. Each has the blue-white warpaint of his master upon his brow.

The Forsaken does not appear to be with the horde. Instead, a very large wolfman stands at their head, bellowing a challenge in his damned tongue to you and your band.

(If they came alone.)

Abruptly, the woods come to an end. Beyond, the land has been clear cut and abodes crudely built from the lumber. They look like they would collapse under the slightest pressure. Twisted creatures that can hardly be called men make their homes here. Products of the Wyld, they are hybrids of men and wolves, abominations against the Immaculate Dragons.

Smaller beastmen play around fire pits with stone axes, pretending to be butchers of men. Their mothers encourage them from the sides with lupine growls and chirps. Over one fire spit, a monkey is slowly roasting, black blood dripping and sizzling into the fire below.

There, behind all the crudely-hewn buildings, lays a heap of logs arranged into some kind of disjointed structure. It's larger than all the others and bears a distinctive blue and white paint. That is where the Forsaken will be, if he is here.

Storyteller Goals

By the end of the scene, provide the characters with a map, either from the fallen wolfman hero who leads the barbarians or from the heap-building, to a shrine the Forsaken inhabited in a past life.

Try to draw blood from one of the characters too, to help reinforce their desire for battle.

Character Goals

The shikari have an opportunity to destroy the wyld barbarians and disintegrate one of the Anathema's bases of power. After they discover that the Anathema is not here, their goal will shift to finding where to go next.

Actions

First Blood

If the shikari come with an army (or if they fail in their attempt to sneak into the master's den, below), then the beastmen engage them in a mass combat. The beastmen are led by a wolfman hero (**Exalted**, pp. 282-283). Their complementary unit is detailed in the sidebar.

In the opening maneuvers of the battle, the barbarians try to assassinate special characters, especially Relays (see **Exalted**, p. 162). They are smart enough to know the enemy requires some way of maintaining communications and if they want to have a chance against Terrestrials, they need every advantage they can get.

If the shikari carry ranged weapons, the barbarians try to close the gap, assuming that the enemy's preferred weapons are ranged. Otherwise, they'll try to keep the Terrestrials at range for as long as possible, knowing that the Terrestrial anima flux can do them great damage.

MAGNITUDE: 3

Drill: 2	
Close Combat Attack: 3	Close Combat Damage: 3
Ranged Attack: 2	Ranged Damage: 2
Endurance: 6	Might: 0
	Armor: 2
	Valor: 3

At the end of the battle, the shikari can make their triumphant way to the master's den and take what they like from his maps and minor trinkets. If they do not go to the den, then the wolfman (or another barbarian, if the hero is dead) taunts them, clutching his sacred map in his hands.



Into the Master's Den

Hunters who come alone may attempt to sneak into the Master's den, trying to avoid any combat.

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Stealth.

Action: Contested (wolfmen, dice pool 6).

Hindrances: Recent storms have left debris everywhere (-1 external penalty).

Help: Soundless Action Prana (removes hindrance), Zone of Silence Stance, Distracting Breeze Meditation.

Roll Results

Botch: The character slips on something and ends up flat on his back. In addition to the failure, the character suffers a -2 Internal penalty to their Join War or Join Battle roll.

Failure: A beastman notices one of the shikari and shouts a warning, rousing the horde. This provokes the mass combat above.

Success: The characters sneak into the master's den. There they have access to his notes and maps. Now they only have to sneak back out (repeating this action).

Consequences

The maps from the master's den reveal a temple a day's journey away. The Anathema would have once called this ruin home. Sparrow plots a way to the ruins from the encampment. If the battle was particularly brutal, Sparrow makes mention of feeling sorry for the beastmen. If there was no fight, he thanks the shikari for protecting the lives of the barbarians.

Move to "Where Once the Forsaken Stood."



Where Once the Forsaken Stood

MENTAL ...

PHYSICAL •

SOCIAL -

Overview

Using the map from “The Unholy Horde,” the shikari make their way to a ruined temple: a ruined Manse. There they will uncover the truth about Dathesk and Wolf’s Horn. They will discover evidence of the breeding program in the form of notes, old ramblings, and symbols painted by the barbarians about their god (a Lunar) descending upon the city and blessing their blood with his essence.

They have walked into the domain of a Trickster, not a Forsaken. Their intelligence was wrong.

This is another investigation scene and the first of the two revelatory scenes in the story. This scene gives the characters the last proof that they have entered the domain of a powerful Lunar and need to move quickly if they are to trap him in Dathesk.

Description

A day passes before you arrive at the decaying building. Only a few columns remain upright, holding scant bits of what must have once been a mighty entablature. In several spots, the moss has been burned away, marring a number of pillars. Tiny vents lay around the base of each scorched pillar.

“I’ve seen something like this before,” Sparrow offers. “It’s a damaged manse. Looks like it’s venting essence every now and again. Probably don’t want to get hit by that. Might burn.”

Storyteller Goals

After presenting a minor challenge to keep the shikari on their toes, your goal is to give the characters enough information to make the final connections of Horn’s involvement in Dathesk. It is important the characters realize that Dathesk is under a Lunar’s control.

Character Goals

Uncover their prey and avoid getting burned by the essence vents.

Actions

Why Didn’t You Dodge?

The essence vents around the damaged manse go off about every ten minutes. The powerful blasts are colorless and odorless, being seen only by the effects they have on the moss and stones. Getting caught in one of these blasts can be rather painful.

If a character is on or near a vent when it goes off, make an attack with 10 dice against the character’s Dodge DV. These vents have 10L base damage. Only natural soak applies. Shikari can destroy or plug up these vents by dealing them 10 levels of damage. They have a soak of 10B/10L and Hardness 8.

The Sun Was Never Here

Wolf’s Horn abandoned this Manse long ago. Too many foul memories fog his mind of this forgotten Solar abode. Horn’s followers, however, remember that he once walked here. To them, this is a sacred place, pregnant with his power—for how else would one explain the bursts of essence?

Horn’s followers often sneak in and set up crude murals and carvings, depicting the story of the Hratrak barbarians and their god—the god of Dathesk, the Lunar Wolf’s Horn. The rudimentary carvings depict Horn the shifter, the Trickster, Horn the builder, and the god of Dathesk. They depict Horn as lord of the Hratrak and the people of Dathesk as his willing servants, with the mayors as his priests.

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Lore, Difficulty 5.

Action: Extended (every roll represents 5 minutes).

Hindrances: Characters who lack Linguistics (-2 internal penalty) have difficulty translating the languages in the Manse. If characters destroyed the pillars, they have destroyed parts of the story by accident (-3 external penalty).

Help: If the characters were able to set up a headquarters, then Sparrow was able to gather information that gives him 1 bonus success per roll.



Roll Results

Botch: The characters misread the signs and come to an outlandish conclusion, such as that the Forsaken has been in Datheesk the entire time—and is Mayor Thurfas himself!

Failure: The characters fail to understand what the murals are telling them.

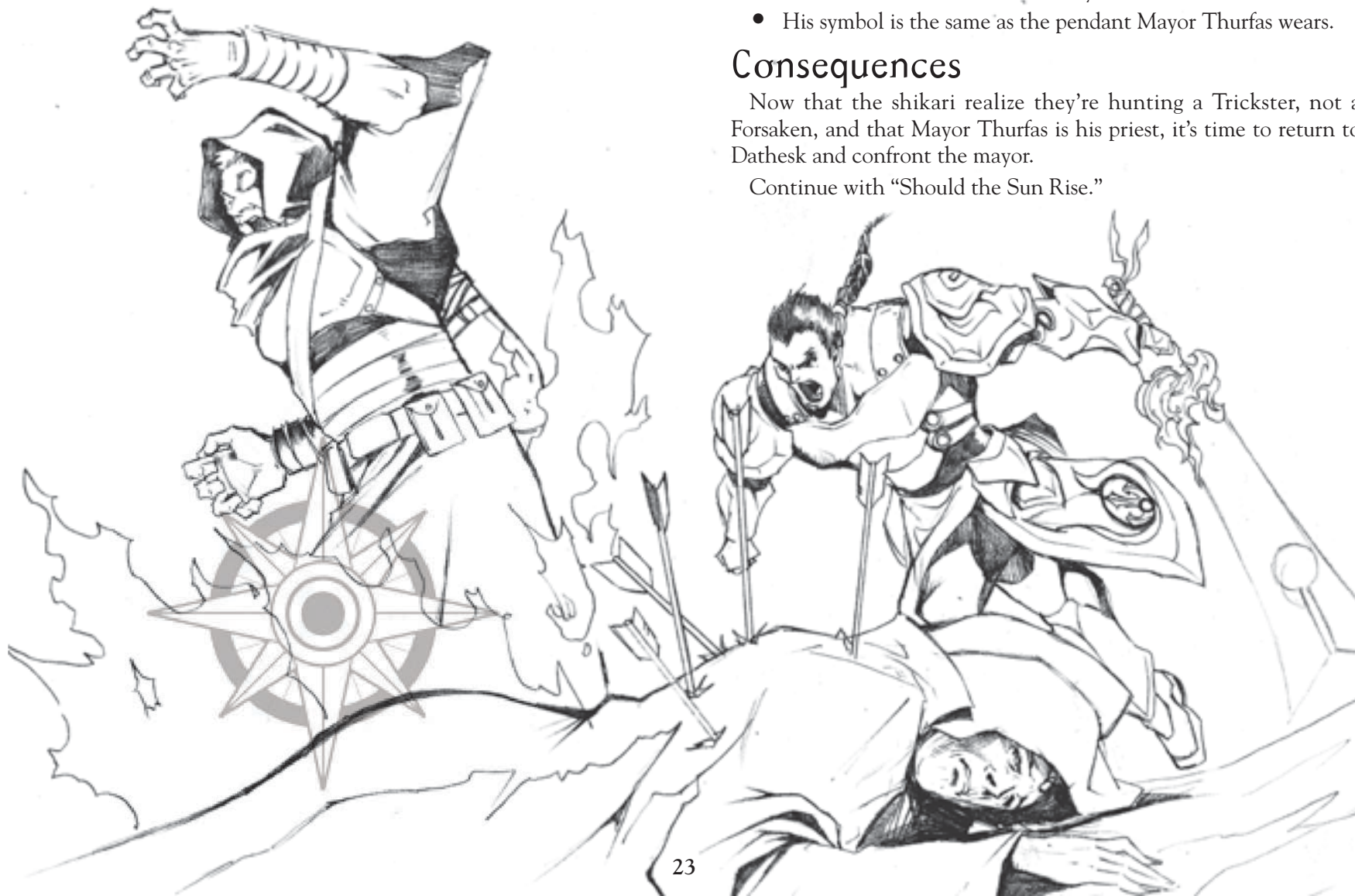
Success: For every 2 threshold successes, the shikari learn one of the following pieces of information:

- The murals show a shapeshifter posing as a god.
- The murals were done by the Hratrak, not the shapeshifter.
- The shapeshifter is named Wolf's Horn, and his body is covered in silver whorls.
- He has defeated several Wyld Hunts (the Hunt does not go after gods).
- He breeds with the women of the city to create new beastmen leaders.
- His symbol is the same as the pendant Mayor Thurfas wears.

Consequences

Now that the shikari realize they're hunting a Trickster, not a Forsaken, and that Mayor Thurfas is his priest, it's time to return to Datheesk and confront the mayor.

Continue with "Should the Sun Rise."





Should the Sun Rise

MENTAL -

PHYSICAL

SOCIAL •

Overview

Upon returning to Dathesk, the shikari confront Mayor Thurfas. He denies everything about Wolf's Horn. When it becomes apparent how much the characters know, Horn reveals himself, either taking a swipe at one of the characters or, if he fails to establish surprise, by simply presenting himself. He will not allow his pet mayor to be challenged, for Thurfas represents a bloodline he's not ready to lose. His Conviction and Valor do not allow him to back down from a fight he believes he can win, and these shikari have been a thorn in his side. Horn will not be alone, either, as he makes sure to bring several of his best bodyguards, one of whom goes out of his way to clobber Sparrow before the fight begins (leaving him alive but wounded).

When the fight starts to show a clear victor, Useless Sparrow steps in. If the shikari are losing, he steps in and attacks Horn. If the characters are winning, a beastman tries to get the drop on one of the shikari and Sparrow intervenes. Either way, that act of courage, that single choice to be a hero, is what dooms him. He Exalts as a Forsaken, the original target!

In the ensuing chaos, Wolf's Horn nabs the stunned young man and retreats. He's attempting to save Sparrow's life and his own.

Description

The heavysset mayor is standing in the city square, feeding several pigeons and looking at a fountain which proclaims the Datheskian tenacity. Mayor Thurfas dusts his hands and looks towards you. "My lords, you've returned," he hesitantly says.

(When Horn reveals himself.)

A dreadful roar splits the air. Moving like a silver streak through the streets, a powerfully built Lunar lunges to the fountain's lip. In his full Lunar glory, the beast is an imposing figure to behold, with claws sharp enough to cut steel in a single swipe. His head resembles a man's, but with a slightly elongated, lupine jawline. He towers over the fountain, nearly ten feet in height.

"Shikari" is all he snarls before motioning for his six wolfmen to attack.

Moving with the speed of the wind and the ferocity of the thunder, one wolfman leaps and swipes at Sparrow. His claws slice the young man's chest and arm, the force of impact lifting him off his feet and throwing him into a nearby cabbage cart.

(If the characters are losing.)

Horn laughs as he strides forward, confidently. "Your reign of terror ends here, Terrestrial. It's time you learned who your betters are."

"They rule this world, not you!" Sparrow bellows as he swings with part of the damaged cabbage cart. He grimaces in pain at using his broken arm, but the determination to save his honored masters is evident in his eyes.

The Lunar handily disarms Useless Sparrow and grips him by the throat, lifting him into the air. Horn snarls as Sparrow gives a roar—and a brilliant flash of light erupts from him, stunning everyone for an instant. Sparrow is standing, trembling with rage and exhaustion, his anima burning around him. His eyes glow as his new Forsaken mark shines on his head. He has been chosen.

(If the characters are winning.)

Wolf's Horn steps back hesitantly, blood trailing down his cheek. His eyes dart from one of you to the next, recognizing his doom. Then Sparrow lets out a loud battle cry as he clubs a beastman sneaking up behind you.

The beastman turns, barely harmed, and snarls at Sparrow, gripping him by the throat and lifting him into the air. A brilliant flash of light erupts from him, stunning everyone for an instant! Sparrow is standing, trembling with rage and exhaustion, his anima burning around him. His eyes glow as his new Forsaken caste mark shines on his head. He has been chosen.

(Either way...)

Seizing on the respite, Horn grabs Sparrow. The young man is too shocked and awed to resist as he collapses from exhaustion against Horn. The Lunar then bounds away from him, as fast as possible.

Storyteller Goals

Use this scene and the combat to build emotional tension. Put the shikari in danger. Make them feel the might of a Celestial Exalt (or, if they're doing really well, build on that emotional high with encouragement). Then, when the time is right, hit the emotional crescendo with Useless Sparrow's Exaltation.

Character Goals

Destroy the Anathema!

Actions

When Horn appears, he'll attempt to establish surprise (prior to rolling Join Battle). If he succeeds, his first action is to attack whichever character he thinks he can harm the fastest. Either way, at the start of this battle, Horn commits his six wolfmen (**Exalted**, p. 283). These creatures are not extras, and Horn does not wait for them to die before getting involved in the fight. He uses them as resources to buy him the time to power up (activating Charms like Instinctive Dexterity Unity and Relentless Lunar Fury) before getting into the battle.

If the characters have any troops provided from Backgrounds, then a beastman horde keeps them busy, making this combat a simple Exalt-on-Exalt fight. If the army they have is the militia from Great Holy Army, the militia flees from Wolf's Horn.

When Sparrow Exalts, the shock is enough to warrant redoing the Join Battle roll. The sudden pause in the fighting brings everything to a halt. Horn pours everything he can (channeling his Conviction as well) in going on Tick 0 and absconding with Sparrow. Given his movement enhancing Charms, he should be able to escape the shikari.

THE WOLF FALLS

In the unlikely event the characters slay Horn in this scene, then Sparrow will flee the scene as quickly as he can. On his first action after the Join Battle roll, the new Exalt breaks and runs. The other barbarians will cover his retreat and one of Horn's sons takes Sparrow to the Manse where the characters would normally face Horn in Act 3. Continue with Act 3 as normal, except skip, "Those Who Hunt Monsters."

If Sparrow cannot get away, he pleads for his life, but will fight back, as described in the scene "May Become Them." If they kill Sparrow here, then skip Act 3 and move to the aftermath.

Consequences

The characters have a problem. Their logistician has been turned into a demon. Horn has escaped. The Hunt is afoot and they must destroy Horn before he can regroup.

If the shikari wish to try the direct approach, go to "Students of Earth and Fire." For the stealth entrance, see "Pupils of Wind and Water." Note that three hours pass in trailing Wolf's Horn (so characters recover motes as appropriate for their hearthstones).

THE SCOURING OF DATHESK

Dathesk is a city that the characters know was under Horn's control. More fanatical characters may decide that Dathesk must burn for this sin. This would fit well with mood of That We Do Not Become Monsters. Be sure to give the shikari plenty to think about, morally and ethically – empathetic villagers who do not want to be killed help build sympathy, while using passages from the Immaculate text can help build a sense of righteousness in a scourer.

If the characters or a character decides to punish Dathesk, Mayor Thurfas pleads for them to punish him instead. He'll make a futile attempt to defend the city with his life if he must.





Students of Earth and Fire

MENTAL - PHYSICAL •• SOCIAL -

Overview

Horn knows the shikari are coming. He knows he has little time to prepare and does not attempt to cover his tracks. Instead, he gathers the remnants of his barbarian horde at his manse and prepares to make a last stand. He'll have his most trusted lieutenant, a mortal, take command of the horde and lead them against the shikari.

Horn knows it's a suicide mission he's sending his men on. He's stalling for time and attempting to convince Sparrow that it's better to turn on the Realm and live. While he could simply use his Charms to sway Sparrow, he refuses to do so. Independence is so core to his being he simply will not use unnatural mental influence to force another to ally with him.

Description

As you chase Wolf's Horn, you crest a hill close to a series of cliffs leading down to the shores. There, on those high stone walls, rests an aedicule. This is Horn's manse, his tabernacle, and soon to be his tomb. Around the entrance gather a hundred or more wolfmen, armed to the teeth and bristling with rage at the hateful hunters who've come for their master.

A lone man stands amongst a horde of barbarian beastmen, most likely the Anathema's child. The man draws his blade and raises it in salute to the shikari. "I die for Wolf's Horn!" he calls out and his wolfmen roar.

Storyteller Goals

Characters might be lacking motes after the last combat (unless they used something like Elemental Concentration Stance to heal their wounds in the fires of Dathesk). This scene can provide them a chance to recover vital essence via stunting before the climactic battle.

Character Goals

Crush Horn's army before dealing with him. It's time to destroy his base of power!

Actions

This is a Mass Combat with the remnants of Horn's army, whose traits are listed below. The lieutenant commanding them is a Mortal Hero (**Exalted**, p. 280). While he is willing to fight to the death, his men may find their valor breaking. As they realize they cannot win this fight, increase the difficulty of their Valor rolls by 1.

The Mortal Hero knows the Terrestrials are much more powerful than he is. He will attempt to Envelop their unit (**Exalted**, p. 166) and keep them with as many penalties as possible. In the end, however, this unit is not a strong match for a group of Exalts (especially if they have a unit backing them) who are competent in Mass Combat.

This fight exists to give the characters a chance to stunt and regain more motes or Willpower. Let the characters chew on the rockery terrain, blast away parts of the cliff, and don't forget to use their Anima flux for secondary effects (setting the grass on fire, disturbing the aedicule, buffeting the wolfmen off the cliff, or setting the grass surging to grab the wolfmen).

MAGNITUDE: 3 (120 WOLFMEN)			
Drill: 2			
Close Combat Attack: 3		Close Combat Damage: 3	
Ranged Attack: 2		Ranged Damage: 2	
Endurance: 6		Might: 0	
Armor: 2		Valor: 3	

Consequences

Having crushed the Anathema's army, the shikari are now ready to face Horn himself. Move to "Those Who Hunt Monsters."





Pupils of Wind and Water

MENTAL ...

PHYSICAL ..

SOCIAL -

Overview

Horn makes no attempt to hide his trail. He has his army readied for a bloody conflict. He knows the shikari are coming and is readying for them. He's speaking with Sparrow and waiting with dread for the coming conflict.

The shikari, on the other hand, have elected to take a different option. Instead of wading through bodies and making a terrible mess of things, they have decided to move like the wind and water, sneaking into their opponent's stronghold and crushing him. They've decided to go along the shoreline and come up from the cliffs, making their way in a back entrance and arriving at the battle with Horn.

This scene is a series of vignettes, at the end of which the characters will be in place to battle Wolf's Horn.

Description

An aedicule sits atop a high cliff along the shores. There a horde of barbarians gathers, roaring, beating the drums of war, and whipping themselves into a frenzy. They prepare for a battle to the death against their most dreaded and hated foes. Each swears he will lay down his life for his master. Each tells tales of his own valor and his greatest victories.

And not a one notices you scaling the cliff face behind the aedicule-manse...

Storyteller Goals

Characters may be rather more tapped at this point. This scene provides characters a chance to stunt their infiltration, stunt their hunt, and recover motes. It can set them up and build up their confidence before the glorious battle.

Character Goals

Infiltration and seal Wolf's Horn inside his manse with them, setting themselves up for the kill. Lock horn in the Manse with them.

Actions

Scaling the Cliff

Before the characters can enter the manse and cut their prey off from his followers, they must first scale the cliff face and enter a secret passage near the back of the manse. The cliff is rather steep but has a partially hidden path already cut into it.

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Athletics, Difficulty 5.

Action: Dramatic.

Hindrances: The pounding, stomping horde above causes some of the stones to come loose (-1 external penalty).

Help: The rough-hewn path makes it easier to climb, but only if a character spots it (Perception + Awareness at Difficulty 1, grants 2 bonus dice on the Athletics roll).

Athletics Charms: Incense Smoke Ladder and Dancing Ember Stride (both of which remove the need for this check).

Roll Results

Botch: The character falls, suffering 17B piercing damage. (See Falling, **Exalted**, pp. 126-127).

Failure: The character fails to find purchase, or gets stuck on the way up, and must start over (or simply make a new roll).

Success: The character arrives up at the tunnel and can sneak into Horn's manse through this back entrance.

Into the Wolf's Den

Now that they're in the manse, the shikari can stack the deck in their favor, and they must navigate the sometimes dangerous manse underbelly. The actions below are examples of the types of things they can do or may have to face in the manse.

Barring the Front Door: The front door has a massive bar made of petrified wood. Five men are normally required to move the heavy thing, sealing the manse. This is a feat of strength rated at 12. Sealing the door and not getting caught before it's too late requires a Dexterity + Stealth roll, difficulty 1. Failure may provoke a Mass Combat, as described in "Students of Earth and Fire."

Burning Hall: One hallway has an overflow of the manse's essence, causing it to continually burn. A character attuned to the manse is not harmed by this, but everyone else treats this as a bonfire.





Recovering Sparrow: This is not an easy undertaking, nor should it be attempted lightly. Sparrow is resting in a room accessible only through the hearthstone chamber. Horn waits in the hearthstone chamber, so rescuing Sparrow is a Dexterity + Stealth opposed by Horn's Wits + Awareness. If the shikari rescue Sparrow and do not try to slay him immediately, he may even help against Horn.

Sealing the Back Door: A trap door leads to the tunnel and back down to the cliffs. Clever characters can seal this exit using Wits + Larceny (Difficulty 2) to prevent Horn from being able to escape this way.

Shutting Out the Light: The manse has several skylights designed to let light and fresh air in. To keep out bad weather, these skylights can be closed. There is no visible means of closing the skylights, though it is obvious they can be closed. Characters who can perceive the immaterial, or those who pass an Intelligence + Occult (Difficulty 4), notice the little gods whose duty is to close the skylights. They respond to the commands of any Exalt, or any spirit of higher essence. This has no effect on the actual battle other than to intimidate Horn, and prevent him from turning into a bird to escape.

Consequences

Having snuck into his manse and cut off the enemy from his men, the shikari are ready to complete their hunt. Wolf's Horn must be slain and the battle concluded in "Those Who Hunt Monsters..."





Those Who Hunt Monsters...

MENTAL -

PHYSICAL

SOCIAL •

Overview

The holy hunt has reached its righteous climax. The shikari have fought through barbarians and traitor tributary nations, and lost their valuable servant to demonic possession. Now it's time to face their wicked foe and slay him. What tales will they tell about this day?

Description

Horn waits in his hearthstone chamber. He rests, cross-legged, in the center of the atrium's earthen floor, equidistant from a ring of pillars at the chamber's edge. Sixteen in all: five showing Luna in her phases, five showing the sun in his, three for the forms of Horn's mistress, one depicting birth, another representing breath, and one empty.

The lunar Anathema takes a breath, each pillar lighting up with silver-blue streams of essence. "I am ready," he growls.

(If coming from "Students of Earth and Fire")

As the doors to his manse open wide, streams of essence light the narthex and adjoining corridor leading to the hearthstone chamber. Horn stands slowly, his claws dragging along the stone beneath him. "You have mercilessly slaughtered so many. You have come into a land that does not belong to you to hunt a monster who was not even there! Tell me, shikari, which one of us is truly the demon?"

(If coming from "Pupils of Wind and Water")

Horn's ear twitches and he snarls. "I can smell you, Terrestrials." He draws himself to his feet, enraged. "You come into my house, uninvited. You destroy generations of work in Dathesk. You will suffer for what you have done, and when you are done suffering, Sparrow will suffer in your stead."

Storyteller Goals

After everything they've been through, and everything Horn has been through, this is the moment of truth. This is the time for Horn to release all his anger upon the shikari and strike to kill. He is unreasonable and unrelenting.

Character Goals

This Lunar, though not their original target, has done his best to stymie the character's efforts and destroy them at every step. He has killed before. Were it not for him, Sparrow would still be their logistician, instead of a Forsaken. Horn must be destroyed.

Actions

Horn is ready for an attack. He has been resting in his Manse and is back to his full strength. He is in his war form and now knows his opponents. He will try to kill with as little effort as possible. He is not so foolish as to waste his time slaying an incapacitated foe out of spite. If he incapacitates a shikari, he'll focus on the next one instead of wasting the time delivering the *coup de grace*.

Above the hearthstone chamber there is an observatory. Horn will attempt to grab a character and throw him up there (preferably an Air-aspect, who would have the easiest time following) and single the shikari out up there, under a star chart and miniature map of Dathesk. If he gets a character up there, he'll use things like Lightning Stroke Technique to cut through their defenses quickly.

Horn will also try to lead the characters on a chase through the Manse, such as the one through the blazing hallway from "Pupils of Wind and Water." If the characters snuck in and his army is still outside, Horn will call them to him or bust open the door (requiring the same Feat of Strength the shikari had to go through). If he succeeds, this battle shifts to mass combat and Horn will use Charms like Maintaining the Pack and Moonlight Curtain Drawn to maintain his unit as a defensive barrier against the shikari.

Consequences

With the fall of Wolf's Horn, the shikari can breathe for a moment. They just felled an ancient and very powerful lunar. They've done the Realm's work this day. Now they must decide what to do with Sparrow.

...May Become Them

MENTAL -

PHYSICAL ...

SOCIAL •

Overview

Useless Sparrow was a good logistician. He did not ask to become Anathema and, even in what may be his last hours, he still feels loyalty and pride at his service to the Realm. He knows what now is, and he knows the Wyld Hunt must come for him. He knows his duty—to die for his Realm—but if he gave up that easily, he would never have been Chosen.

Sparrow does not want to die. He wants to fight for the future, now that he has the power to do so, and he wants to believe he can still serve. But will his once-masters see it that way? Will they allow him to go free and claim he died? Will they forsake the Realm and join him (as he will offer to any Dragon Blood who wants to spare him)? Or will they put their personal emotions aside and slay him?

Do they even have the strength left to accomplish such a thing? Sparrow may be newly Chosen, but he still has some power, some measure of strength inherent to his Exaltation. If they keep to the Immaculate warrior's path, do the shikari have the strength to lay him low?

Description

At the hearthstone chamber's far side there is a narrow door. A bar crosses this door, sealing Sparrow in the little room on the other side – though he is comfortable, at least. He has, in his left hand, an ancient daiklave still shining after all these centuries. He does not seem pleased to be holding it.

"I know why you're here, masters," he says somberly.

(Remove the last line if the characters sneak up on him.)

Storyteller Goals

While the climactic struggle lies in the "Those Who Hunt Monsters..." this scene is the emotional climax of the story. Remind the characters of everything they've learned about the Realm. Bring up her flaws and the flaws of the Hunt. Remember the words of Setod. Remember what the master taught them.

Use the memories of Sparrow's help to appeal to the characters' sense of pity and loyalty. Target characters with the highest Compassion and flash back to Cathak Setod's talking about the coming collapse of the Realm. Is it worth killing Sparrow over this? Is it worth a loyal servant's life? Remind them Setod said he feels some kinship with the Anathema. What if they're wrong? What if the Realm is wrong? What Horn said may have some truth to it, that the shikari came in and butchered his men.

The characters should also be reminded that Sparrow would not have Exalted if they had not brought him. This may open up a different line of reasoning: how did the All-Seeing Eye know a Forsaken would be here before the Forsaken was even Chosen? That's worth exploring, but also keep the characters' minds on the fact that they are the reason Sparrow Exalted. Provoke that introspection.

Character Goals

Decide what to do with Sparrow.

Actions

If the characters decide to spare Sparrow, there are no actions that need to be rolled. Let them have this emotional moment. If they decide he must die, then Sparrow fights to his very last breath. He is surprisingly adept at Exalted combat. Remember that he was a logistician for the Hunt for some time. He's seen Exalts fight Exalts many times.

Sparrow makes liberal use of his combo, Sparrow Strike Flight, and attacks in Flurries, usually no more than two or three attacks at a time. He'll channel his Virtues to try and offset penalties from Flurries.

Remember that while Sparrow is not a powerful Exalted combatant, he is still an Exalt and the shikari may be drained from their recent fight with Horn. However, if you do want him to pose a more thorough challenge, then give him Heavenly Guardian Defense and replace Dipping Swallow Defense in his combo with Heavenly Guardian (or link the two Charms, per **Glories of the Most High**).

Consequences

It's over. The Hunt is concluded. If Sparrow is dead (or they claim he's dead), it's time to return to the Realm. If he's alive and they leave with him, then it's time to forge a new path – one of life and hope away from the fading Realm.



Aftermath

After everything they've been through, things won't quite be the same for the brave shikari. This botched hunt may have just become one of the circle's finest hours, but there are still some unanswered questions. Potential plot threads include:

The All-Seeing Eye: Intelligence has been wrong before, but this time it's different. They had the location right, but the type of Anathema they were hunting was wrong. Everyone makes mistakes, but what's odd is the right type of Anathema popped up in the middle of the Hunt, and in the form of their logistician. That's a little too odd for coincidence and may provoke the characters to investigate the Eye, perhaps leading them to shake the foundations of the Realm by uncovering a conspiracy among their Sidereal viziers.

In Yu-Shan, the young Bronze Faction Sidereal who botched this up spends the next several weeks covering up his mistake. Will that be enough to protect to protect their target from inquisitive characters – a target whose very name has been stricken from the official records?

An Unconquered Friend: If they spared Sparrow's life and let him go, then they have a friend in the Threshold. Sparrow will never forget their kindness, which will shape his actions for years to come as he becomes a lone wanderer and righter of wrongs. The characters can sleep well, knowing they have a friend among Anathema. What happens if Sparrow becomes powerful enough to challenge the Realm someday?

The Pillar of Duty: If the characters forsake the Realm, Cathak Setod will not take this betrayal lightly. He will gather his considerable forces (including those Sidereals who he knows back the Hunt) and come after the shikari. Even with all his resentment towards the Realm, he cannot abandon her, and those who do must be destroyed.

The Functionary of Hateful Demise: Mayor Thurfas was a competent and very skilled bureaucrat. He was an effective and adaptable leader, even if he was out of shape. If the shikari burned Dathesk, or even if they just took Thurfas' life for payment, a Deathlord approaches the Mayor and offers him a chance for revenge. The Functionary of Hateful Demise accepts.

Experience

Each session awards 4 experience points. **In Hunting a Monster** has a couple extra awards after the story is over:

- Characters who succeed in all Bureaucracy actions in the first action gain 1 experience point.
- Characters who roleplay exceptionally well in the Scouring of Dathesk, no matter if they spare or burn the city, should gain 1 experience point.

If you run *In Hunting a Monster* as a multiple-session story, give strong consideration to giving out a 5 experience point Story Award (per **Exalted**, p. 273).

SCENE: Begging the Dragon



MENTAL — PHYSICAL ● ● SOCIAL ● ●

HINDRANCES

Cathak Setod

HELP

None

OTHER

None

STs

Introduce the hunt and its goals.
Use Setod to set the mood about the Realm

PCs

Learn the mission and its specifics.
Impress Cathak Setod and best him in a practice duel.

SCENE: Behold! Ruler of Very Little



MENTAL ● ● PHYSICAL — SOCIAL ● ●

HINDRANCES

Deploying Forward Base: Mayor feigning incompetence (-1 external penalty).

Most Righteous Requisitioning Method: Appearance too high or too low (1 or 5: -2 internal penalty).

HELP

Deploying Forward Base: Defeated Setod in prior scene (1 bonus success).

Most Righteous Requisitioning Method: Sparrow's government knowledge (2 bonus successes).

OTHER

Confluence of Savant's Thought, Geese-Flying-South Administration.

STs

Introduce Dathesk. Establish the character of Mayor Thurfas. Have Sparrow help the shikari. Juxtapose Mayor's screw-up with Realm's inefficiencies.

PCs

Establish a base of operations and secure resources for the Hunt.

SCENE: The Demon's Trail



MENTAL ● ● PHYSICAL — SOCIAL ●

HINDRANCES

Signs of the Demon:
No forward base (-2 external penalty)

HELP

Signs of the Demon:
Followers, Henchmen, or similar (1 die per)

OTHER

Presence Charms.

STs

Start the hunters on the trail and hint the target not a Solar.

PCs

Uncover signs of Anathema in Dathesk

SCENE: Great Holy Army



MENTAL — PHYSICAL — SOCIAL ● ●

HELP

Pressing Datheskians into service (-1 Drill & Valor)

None

OTHER

Presence and Socialize Charms

STs

Set the stage for the characters to shine in proselytizing an army.

PCs

Recruit holy warriors to fight evil.

SCENE: To Root Out Evil



MENTAL • • PHYSICAL — SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

Storm on the trail (-2 external penalty)

HELP

None

OTHER

Hostile Environment
Preparation Method,
Extension of the Water
Dragon's Blessing

STs

Hint that the Anathema is Lunar. Cultivate suspicion.

PCs

Find the Hrtrak Barbarians and seek clues of their Anathema.

SCENE: The Unholy Horde



MENTAL • • PHYSICAL • • • SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

Noisy debris (-1 external penalty)

HELP

None

OTHER

Soundless Action Prana,
Zone of Silence Stance,
Distracting Breeze
Meditation.

STs

Draw first blood (if they came for combat). Ensure the characters find the map to the temple for the next scene.

PCs

Destroy an Anathema stronghold or just take the map to the next part of the Anathema's trail.

SCENE: Where Once the Forsaken Stood



MENTAL • • • PHYSICAL — SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

No Linguistics (-2 internal penalty)

Shikari destroyed the pillars (-3 external penalty)

HELP

Established a headquarters (1 bonus success)

OTHER

None

STs

Reveal the truth behind Dathesk and that Mayor Thurfas is the Lunar's pawn.

PCs

Uncover their prey (and not get burned).

SCENE: Should the Sun Rise



MENTAL — PHYSICAL • • • • SOCIAL •

HELP

Sparrow becomes an Anathema

Sparrow Exaltes!

OTHER

None

STs

Build tension and reach an emotional crescendo with Sparrow's Exaltation.

PCs

Destroy the Anathema!

SCENE: Students of Earth and Fire



MENTAL — PHYSICAL • • SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

None

HELP

The enemy's will wavers
(increase his Valor difficulty by 1).

OTHER

None

STs Provide bountiful opportunities for player stunts to recover motes.

PCs Put an end to Horn's army.

SCENE: Pupils of Wind and Water



MENTAL • • • PHYSICAL • • SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

Scaling the Cliff: Party loosens the stones (-1 external penalty)

HELP

Scaling the Cliff: Find the hidden path (2 bonus dice)

OTHER

Incense Smoke Ladder, Dancing Ember Stride

STs Give the shikari a challenging parkour scene with plenty of stunting opportunities.

PCs Infiltrate Horn's manse and set up for the kill.

SCENE: Those Who Hunt Monsters...



MENTAL — PHYSICAL • • • • SOCIAL —

HINDRANCES

None

HELP

None

OTHER

None

STs Bring the hunt to a conclusion with a brutal combat.

PCs Destroy the Anathema.

SCENE: ...May Become Them



MENTAL — PHYSICAL • • • SOCIAL •

HELP

Differences between the shikari.

None

OTHER

None

STs Set the emotional climax of the scene. Get the characters to question the ethics of their next choice.

PCs Decide what to do with Useless Sparrow.



WOLF'S HORN

CHARMS

NAME	COST	NAME	COST
Knacks: Deadly Beastman		Dexterity –	
Transformation, Devastating Ogre		First Dexterity Excellency	1m/die
Enhancement, Flickering Star		Flight of the Sparrow	3m
Infusion, Internal Form Mastery, Life		Flowing Body Evasion	4m
of the Hummingbird, Honing the		Golden Tiger Stance	2m
Stolen Form, Prey's Skin Disguise,		Ground Denying Defense	3m
Subtle Silver Declaration	1m	Instinctive Dexterity Unity	2m+, 1wp
		Secure Cat Stepping	1m
Charms:		Third Dexterity Excellency	3m
Strength –		Wary Swallow Method	1m
Agitation of the Swarm Technique	2m	Wasp Sting Blur	2m/tick
Claws of the Silver Moon	4m, 1wp	Wind-Dancing Method	3m
Consumptive Worm Hungers			
Ferocious Biting Tooth	4m	Stamina –	
Impressions of Strength (All edges)	2m	Halting the Scarlet Flow	2m+
Second Strength Excellency	2m/success	Might Bolstering Blow	2m
Subduing the Honored Foe	4m	Ox-Body Technique	x3
Unstoppable Lunar Wound	2m/die	Relentless Lunar Fury	1m, 1wp,
			+2m/Fury-OK
		Steadfast Yeddim Meditation	2m+Third
		Stamina Excellency	3m

NOTES

Tell: Wolf eyes



NAME: Wolf's Horn

CASTE: Changing Moon

CONCEPT: Charismatic Revolutionary

ANIMA: Timber Wolf

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

ABILITIES

□ Athletics ●●●●○ □ Occult ●●●○○ □ Stealth _____
 □ Awareness ●●●○○ □ Performance _____
 □ Bureaucracy _____
 □ (Addressing His Cult +2) ●●●●○ □ (Avoiding Sight +1) ●●●●○
 □ (Constitution Drafting +2) ●●●○○ □ War _____
 □ Dodge ●●●●● □ Presence _____
 □ Integrity ●●○○○ □ (Pack Tactics +1) ●○○○○
 □ Lore ●●●○○ □ (Brainwashing +1) _____
 ■ Martial Arts _____ □ (Encouraging Independence +1) ●●●●●
 □ (Claws +2) ●●●○○ □ Socialize ●●○○○ □ _____
 □ Medicine ●●○○○ □ Survival _____
 □ (Tracking +2) ●●●●○ □ _____
 □ Resistance ●●●○○ □ _____

BACKGROUNDS

Artifact ●●●○○
 (Reinforced Breastplate)
 Cult (Datheak) ●●○○○
 Contacts ●●●○○
 (Datheak & Traders)
 Influence (Datheak) ●●●●●
 Heart's Blood ●●●●●
 Manse ●●●○○
 Reputation ●●○○○
 Solar Bond ●○○○○
 Tattoo Artifact ●●○○○
 (Hearthstone Bracers)

ANIMA

10m, appear as one person he knows
 for scene (illusion). +5 dice related
 actions.

LIMIT BREAK

□□□□□□□□□□
 Curse of the Raging Bull 5

VIRTUE FLAW

WEAPONS

Speed / Accuracy / Damage / Parry DV / Rate

Warform Claw: 5 17 14L/5 DV7 (13 dice) 3
 Warform Kick: 5 16 17L/5 DV5 (9 dice) 2

WILLPOWER

●●●●●○○○
 □□□□□□□□□□

DODGE DV

SOAK

B 16 L 16 A 10
 (in war form)

HEALTH

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

VIRTUES

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

ESSENCE

●●●●●○○○
 PERSONAL 20
 PERIPHERAL 48
 COMMITTED 8
 ESSENCE POOL _____

EXPERIENCE



CHARMS

NOTES



CASTE: Earth

CONCEPT: Legendary Crusader of the Hunt ANIMA:

ANIMA:

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

ABILITIES

<input type="checkbox"/> Archery	●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> Medicine	●●●○○	<input type="checkbox"/> Socialize	●●○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Athletics	●●●○○	<input type="checkbox"/> Melee	●●●○○	<input type="checkbox"/> Survival	
<input type="checkbox"/> Awareness	●●●○○	<input type="checkbox"/> Occult		<input type="checkbox"/> (Tracking +1)	●●●●○
<input type="checkbox"/> Dodge	●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> (Lunar Exalter +2)		<input type="checkbox"/>	○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Integrity	●●●●●	<input type="checkbox"/> (the Wyld +1)	●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/>	○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Linguistics		<input type="checkbox"/> Performance	●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/>	○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> (Native: High Realm; Forest Tongue, Low Realm, Riverspeak)	●●●○○	<input type="checkbox"/> Presence	●●●●○	<input type="checkbox"/>	○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Lore	●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/> Resistance	●●●●●	<input type="checkbox"/>	○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> Martial Arts		<input type="checkbox"/> Ride	●●●○○	<input type="checkbox"/>	○○○○○
<input type="checkbox"/> (Clinches +2)	●●●●●	<input type="checkbox"/> Sail	●●○○○	<input type="checkbox"/>	○○○○○

BACKGROUNDS

Artifact	●●●●●●
Backing	
(The Wyld Hunt)	●●●●●●
Breeding	●●○○○
Command	●●●○○
Connections	
(All-Seeing Eye)	●●○○○
(The Legions)	●●●●●●
(The Immaculate Order)	●●●●●○
(The Magistrates)	●●○○○
(The Threshold)	●●●○○
Manse	●●●●●●
Reputation	●●●●●○
Resources	●●●●●●

ANIMA

5m to soak Lethal with full Stamina.

+5 dice to resist knockback/grapple

If his feet are on ground, add 5 to

Stamina for all purposes.

LIMIT BREAK

□ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □ □

VIRTUE FLAW

WEAPONS

Speed / Accuracy / Damage / Parry DV/ Rate

Jade Grand Goremaul (Hundredweight)	4	11	21L/5	DV5	2
Punch	5	10	4B	DV6	3
Kick	5	9	7B	DV4	2
Clinch	6	11	4B	DV-	1

WILLPOWER

DODGE DV

2

SOAK

B 20 L 17 A 15

HEALTH

-0 □ ■ ■ ■ ■
-1 □ □ □ □ □ □
-2 □ □ □ □ □ □
-3 ■ ■ ■ ■ ■
-4 □
INCAPACITATED □

VIRTUES

COMPASSION TEMPERANCE

CONVICTION VALOR

ESSENCE

● ● ● ● ● C
PERSONAL 15 |

PERIPHERAL 21(40)_____

COMMITTED 19

ESSENCE POOL _____

EXPERIENCE

